You have been tested because your risk of having COVID-19 is higher than most Albertans. We know it can be frightening to wait for test results and you are likely worried about your well-being and the well-being of people around you. Even though you are at higher risk, it is still very likely that your symptoms are caused by one of the many other common viruses that cause respiratory symptoms, such as the influenza virus.

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses. They cause respiratory illnesses in people, ranging from the common cold to severe pneumonias. COVID-19 is a disease caused by a new type of coronavirus that was not previously detected in humans, and is the cause of the respiratory outbreak in China and other countries. At this time, COVID-19 does not appear to be as severe as some coronaviruses, such as SARS. Many patients have reported only mild symptoms. COVID-19 is believed to be spread by coughing, sneezing or direct contact with a sick person.

It may take several days for your test results to come back. You will receive a call back when your test results are available. In the meantime, there are several important things you can do to protect your health and prevent the spread of illness:

- **Isolate yourself at home.** You may return to your usual activities only when advised to do so by Public Health.
  - This means that you need to stay home from work, school, daycare, and all other activities outside your home.
  - Do not have any visitors over to your home.
  - For more information on self-isolation: [https://open.alberta.ca/publications/self-isolation-information-sheet](https://open.alberta.ca/publications/self-isolation-information-sheet)
- Wash your hands often and well.
- Avoid close contact with people (staying at least 2 meters away) – we recognize this may be difficult to do for others in your household, but please do your best.
- Cover your cough and sneezes with a tissue, sleeve or elbow and then wash your hands.

You can lower the risk of transmission to household members and people in your community if you self-isolate, stay at least 2 meters away from others and practice the steps above to prevent spreading disease.

You do not need to change your living arrangements (e.g., have family members move to another home). If you or your household members are concerned about the possibility of spreading COVID-19, the following measures may be helpful while awaiting test results:

- Do not share sleeping arrangements.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces frequently that are often touched in shared spaces within the home such as bathroom surfaces, doorknobs, remote controls, phones, etc.
- Do not share personal items such as toothbrushes, cutlery, drinking straws, face/hand/bath towels etc.
It is not necessary for members of your household to stay home unless advised to do so by Public Health. If your test results are positive, your household members may need further assessment and follow up by Public Health.

If your symptoms become worse or you have other concerns, please contact Health Link (811). If you need urgent medical attention, call 911 for an ambulance. Immediately tell the operator that you have been identified as a person under investigation for COVID-19.

Thank you for your cooperation.