Get Free COVID-19 Tests Sent to Your Home!

Every household can order four free COVID-19 tests through a federal website that launched a day ahead of schedule. Here are other options for free tests.

January 18, 2022 By Trent Straube

The test is in the mail! Every household in the United States is now eligible to order four free at-home tests for COVID-19. The tests are available via the federal website COVIDtests.gov, which officially launches Wednesday but was up and running a day early. Each order includes four individual COVID-19 tests to be shipped via the U.S. Post Office starting late January.

According to the website, the at-home COVID-19 tests:

- Are rapid antigen at-home tests, not PCR;
- Can be taken anywhere;
- Provide results within 30 minutes (no lab drop-off required);
- Work whether or not you have COVID-19 symptoms;
- Work whether or not you are up to date on your COVID-19 vaccines;
- Are also referred to as self-tests or over-the-counter (OTC) tests.

Ordering the tests is simple: Just complete a form with your name and mailing address.

For people who cannot order via the website, the government plans to launch a hotline, CNN reports, at a yet to be determined date.

In another effort to help people access COVID-19 tests, the Biden-Harris administration set up a program that allows people with health insurance to pick up over-the-counter tests at preferred pharmacies and retailers for free as of January 15. Anyone charged for a test after that date can submit a claim to their insurance company for reimbursement. According to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, health plans will reimburse up to $12 per test for a total of eight tests per month for each person on the health plan.

However, CNN notes that some Medicare enrollees are not eligible to pick up free tests from retailers; such enrollees can have testing done in a lab for free. Check with your provider if you're not sure.

Of course, free COVID-19 tests have been available at over 20,000 locations across the country for some time. To find a site near you, visit the HHS.gov coronavirus section, which lists local pharmacies and includes links to local health centers and state resources offering free tests.

The push for free tests arrives as the omicron variant roils the nation, causing over 99% of new cases. Currently, the nation is averaging about 777,453 daily COVID-19 cases and 1,797 deaths, based on data from John Hopkins University reported in CNN.

For a roundup of related news, visit COVIDHealth.com, where you will find articles such as:

- "Is My Cloth Mask Good Enough? The 2022 Edition"
- "FDA OKs Second COVID Antiviral Pill for Limited Use"
- "Long Covid Is Pitting Patients Against Doctors. That's a Problem"
- "Questions About COVID-19? Start Here."

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