



**CASCADE MEDICAL**  
PARTNERS IN YOUR HEALTH

## **COVID Testing Guidelines: Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What has changed?**

Cascade Medical will now ONLY test for COVID-19 for patients who have encountered a high-risk exposure, or are experiencing symptoms consistent with COVID-19.

### **Why has this changed?**

Cascade Medical is taking this pre-emptive step to protect our stock on hand of testing kits. We are confident we will have enough testing materials for all suspected of high-risk exposure and infection throughout this pandemic. However, if we proactively test every person who wants one due to travel or holiday gathering considerations, it is likely we will encounter a shortage of testing kits.

### **What does “high-risk exposure” mean?**

You have experienced a high-risk exposure if you have been within 6 feet, masked or unmasked, for a *total* of 15 minutes over the course of 24 hours with someone who has tested positive for COVID. A single 15-minute exposure **or** multiple exposures totaling 15 minutes over the course of a 24-hour period both count.

### **I was told I needed to get a negative COVID test before meeting with family for the holidays.**

It’s important to understand a negative COVID test will not necessarily “clear” you for a COVID-free gathering, and may even give you and your family a false sense of security. A negative test means you did not have enough of a viral load to trigger a positive result *at the moment you took the test, likely days prior to your event*. There is still a very real chance you could be infected with the virus and bring it to your event even if you received a negative result.

### **I bought plane tickets to travel somewhere that requires a negative test before entering that location. What do I do now?**

We certainly empathize with the unique challenges COVID presents to many during this holiday season. Because each location boasts individual testing requirements and guidelines (and some only accept negative COVID tests from certain providers), we recommend logging on to the Center for Disease Control to check [state, territorial, tribal](#) as well as our own [Chelan-Douglas Health District](#) for information before you travel.

Additionally Cascade Medical would highly encourage you, if possible, to reconsider any holiday plans taking you out of the area, as we anticipate the next few weeks will present the highest risk of community transmission of COVID since the pandemic began. We can’t stress this enough – please consider spending the holidays, just this once, at home with your immediate family.

### **I feel like I am symptomatic or believe I’ve had a high-risk exposure.**

Please call us at 548-5815 to schedule an appointment to receive a COVID-19 test. Thank you for all you do to keep our communities safe!