



ALBEMARLE REGIONAL HEALTH SERVICES
Partners in Public Health

711 Roanoke Ave. Elizabeth City, NC 27909

NEWS RELEASE

March 25, 2020
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact Information:
Amy Underhill, Public Information Officer
252-338-4448
aunderhill@arhs-nc.org

SYMPTOMS AND TESTING FOR COVID-19

Elizabeth City, NC – Albemarle Regional Health Services (ARHS) is working diligently to inform the community about the status of COVID-19, also known as Coronavirus disease 2019. You can help stop COVID-19 by knowing the signs and symptoms: fever, cough, and shortness of breath. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure.

What to do if you are sick:

- Stay home and monitor your symptoms – if your symptoms worsen and you need medical care, **CALL** before visiting.
- Separate yourself from other people in your home, consider planning for and creating a “sick” room or space.

-more-

- Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue, dispose of them, and wash your hands.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily.

Most people who get COVID-19 will recover without needing medical care. Some people are at **higher risk** of getting very sick with COVID-19. People at higher risk should call their doctor if they develop symptoms of fever or cough. You are at higher risk if you:

- Are 65 years or older
- Live in a nursing home or long-term care facility
- Have a high-risk condition that includes:
 - Chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
 - Heart disease with complications
 - Compromised immune system
 - Severe obesity — body mass index (BMI) of 40 or higher
 - Other underlying medical conditions, particularly if not well controlled, such as diabetes, renal failure or liver disease.
- Women who are pregnant should be monitored since they are known to be at risk for severe viral illness.

Who needs to be tested?

Most people do not need a test. When you leave your home to get tested, you could expose yourself to COVID-19 if you do not already have it. If you do have COVID-19, you could give it to someone else, including people who are high risk. Your doctor can help you decide if you need a test. There is no treatment for COVID-19. For people with mild symptoms who don't need medical care, getting a test will not change the course of treatment.

NCDHHS has expanded testing criteria for COVID-19. Only those who meet the following criteria should ask their doctor or local health department about being tested for COVID-19 through the NCSLPH:

1. Have fever **or** lower respiratory symptoms (cough, shortness of breath) **and** close contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case within the past 14 days; OR
2. Have fever **and** lower respiratory symptoms (cough, shortness of breath) **and** a negative rapid flu test.

To slow the spread of COVID-19 and reduce the number of people infected, communities should be following the guidance set by local, state, and federal officials to reduce frequency of contact and increase physical distance between persons, thereby reducing the risks of person-to-person transmission.

ARHS encourages the community to visit the following websites for the most up - to - date and credible information:

Albemarle Regional Health Services - <http://www.arhs-nc.org/>

North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services - <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/>

Center for Disease Control - <https://www.cdc.gov/>

For more information, please contact Amy Underhill, ARHS Public Information Officer at 252-

338-4448 or aunderhill@arhs-nc.org.

Albemarle Regional Health Services is dedicated to disease prevention and the promotion of a healthy environment to reduce morbidity, mortality, and disability through quality service, education, and advocacy.

-###-