



## Tests, vaccination and treatment

We have collated information here about the situation regarding testing, antibody tests, vaccines, medicines and treatment of Covid-19.



Foto: Johnér/Jens Lindström.

### Sampling and tests

To increase contact tracing and reduce the spread of infection, [the Government wants more people to be tested](#) for Covid-19 throughout the country. The Public Health Agency of Sweden has therefore been tasked with ensuring that it is possible to carry out tests on everyone with symptoms of Covid-19 and tests to identify those who have had the disease.

There are two types of test for Covid-19:

- **PCR test** – used to see whether you have or have recently had an active Covid-19 infection.

- **Serological test** – (antibody test) instead shows whether you have had Covid-19 and developed antibodies against the virus, and thus have full or partial protection against the disease.

## Testing

The regions are responsible for conducting PCR tests in cases of active infections. The test sample is often taken by a healthcare professional. Sometimes, it is possible for people to take a PCR test sample themselves at home – so-called self-sampling. However, there are no serological tests (antibody tests) that an individual can carry out themselves at home that are recommended by the Public Health Agency of Sweden. Contact your region for more information on who can get tested in your area. The intention is that everyone will be offered antibody testing for the usual patient fee.

[Links to the regions' information on testing.](#)

Find out more about how testing takes place at [1177 Healthcare Guide](#) (in Swedish).

## Prioritised target groups

In order to prevent healthcare and social care services being affected by the sharp increase in the level of tests and sample collection, the Public Health Agency of Sweden has prioritised those target groups who should be tested first.

Prioritised target groups for testing of active Covid-19 infection:

1. Patients, recipients of care and in cases of disease control measures
2. Personnel working in healthcare and social care services
3. Personnel employed in other essential services
4. Other relevant sections of society

The Public Health Agency of Sweden on recommended [prioritisation in cases of active Covid-19 infection](#) (in Swedish).

Prioritised target groups for testing for antibodies:

1. Personnel employed in the care of the elderly or people with disabilities and in regional and municipal healthcare
2. Risk groups, i.e. individuals aged 70 years and older, as well as individuals (regardless of age) who have one or several diseases that may increase the risk of a serious course of disease if they become infected with Covid-19.
3. Personnel employed in essential services
4. Other individuals in the community aged 18 and over.

The Public Health Agency's [guidelines for antibody detection](#) (in Swedish).

If you work in healthcare, social care services or other essential service, you should first ask your employer about the situation regarding testing in your workplace.

## **Antibodies against Covid-19**

A serological test can show whether you have had Covid-19 and developed antibodies to the disease. If you have no symptoms and have IgG antibodies, it means that you have a lower risk of being infected by Covid-19 and thus a lower risk of passing the infection on to others.

For those who belong to a risk group or are aged 70 years or older and have antibodies, or a have a loved one with antibodies, this means an opportunity to socialise more with others. However, every individual must always make their own judgement based on the individual situation and continue to comply with the general recommendations for reducing the spread of infection in the community.

The Public Health Agency of Sweden currently deems that [the protection that antibodies can provide](#) may last up to six months from the time an individual has received a positive test result.

## **Avoid buying self-testing kits**

The Swedish Medical Products Agency [advises against buying self-testing kits](#) for active Covid-19 infection that are being marketed for use in a home setting. These tests do not comply with the agency's requirements and can therefore do more harm than good as an incorrect result may lead a person to transmit the infection to others while under the false belief that they are healthy. The Public Health Agency of Sweden also [advises against the use of self-testing kits](#) for Covid-19.

## **National strategy for sampling and testing**

The Public Health Agency of Sweden has developed a [national strategy for expanding sampling for and analysis of Covid-19](#), by order of the Government. The strategy will support regions, county administrative boards and other actors in their work of enabling the expansion of sampling for and diagnosis of Covid-19, primarily during the phase when rapid spread of infection can be seen.

## **Vaccination and medicines**

At present there is no vaccine or approved medicine against Covid-19. The Swedish Medical Products Agency is collaborating with other medical products agencies in Europe and around the world to investigate different medical treatments and to contribute to work on the development of a vaccine.

The Swedish Medical Products Agency's [questions and answers on Covid-19 and medicines](#) (in Swedish).

## Treatment of Covid-19

Most people who experience the Covid-19 illness will recognise [the symptoms](#) of a normal cold or a bout of flu and do not need to seek medical care. A small group of those who become infected fall seriously ill and may need hospital care. If your condition worsens suddenly or you experience breathing difficulties even when resting, contact the health service immediately.

### Self-care if you have mild symptoms

If you have mild symptoms, 1177 Healthcare Guide offers tips on things you can do to feel better:

- Drink a lot of fluid. This is particularly important if you have a cough or fever.
- Use extra pillows to make the top end of the bed higher.
- You will usually feel better if you use fever-reducing medicine when you have a high temperature.
- Get plenty of rest, but avoid lying still for too long as this worsens the ability of your lungs to function and can impair recovery from the illness.

More advice is available at [1177 Healthcare Guide](#) (in Swedish).

### Treatment in the event of serious illness

Some people who get Covid-19 become seriously ill with pneumonia and can find it difficult to breathe. If you fall seriously ill, you will be given treatment to support the function of your lungs and other organs that might be affected. This may, for example, involve your being given extra oxygen or assistance with breathing via a respirator. [1177 explains here \(in Swedish\) how patients are treated in a respirator.](#)

### Rehabilitation after Covid-19

[The period of medical care](#) may be long for patients who develop Covid-19, especially if they have been in intensive care. In some cases, symptoms can persist for a long time after a person has 'recovered' from Covid-19. If you have been infected and experience persistent physical or psychological problems, you may need to contact the health service. Your healthcare centre or 1177 Healthcare Guide can tell you more about whom you should contact about rehabilitation.

The National Board of Health and Welfare has produced [information for healthcare professionals](#) containing practical advice on exercise and treatment after Covid-19 in order to respond to the growing need for rehabilitation after Covid-19 infection.

### Warning about misleading products

The Swedish Food Agency is [encouraging the public](#) to be alert regarding food supplements and other food items that are claimed to cure or prevent Covid-19. Many products have emerged during the pandemic, mainly online. However, claiming that food supplements or other food items either

cure or protect against Covid-19 is illegal. There is no scientific evidence for this. The Swedish Food Agency is collaborating with other government agencies to stop such sales.

If you encounter these kinds of products, you can submit a report to the municipality's food inspectors or send an email to the Swedish Food Agency at [registrator@slv.se](mailto:registrator@slv.se).

**PUBLISHED** 1 JUL 2020 12:51

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