

## Frequently asked questions regarding LFTs and self-isolation

### 1. Why did the self-isolation policy change from 10 days to 7 days?

Previously a self-isolation policy of 10 days for cases was required because people continued to shed live virus for the 10 days, which could mean passing infection onto others. Evidence now shows that the risk of infecting others and shedding live virus can be reduced if a person is asymptomatic on day 6 and tests negative on day 6 and day 7. Hence the self-isolation period has been reduced to 7 days providing these conditions are met.

### 2. What happens if I still have symptoms on day 6?

You must remain in self-isolation for 10 days.

### 3. What do you mean by symptoms?

We mean symptoms like high temperature, cough, runny nose or sore throat, headache and muscle aches. We know that tiredness can last a while after Covid infection so you can have a test done on day 6 if you still feel tired.

Similarly a cough can last for a longer duration so if your cough is non-productive of sputum you can attend day 6 testing.

### 4. Is it necessary to call 111 to arrange my Lateral Flow Test (LFT)?

111 are available to provide medical advice for anyone at any time, however testing no longer needs to be arranged through this service.

Free COVID-19 tests are provided by the Gibraltar Health Authority for:

- Individuals who require a pre-admission tests prior to surgery.
- Identified vulnerable individuals who display symptoms and remain at high risk of poor health outcomes.
- Health and social care workers that remain in close contact with vulnerable cohorts.

Those who are not eligible for free LFTs can purchase test kits themselves from pharmacies and other commercial outlets.

Testing is recommended for *anyone* who is querying COVID-19 symptoms.

### 5. Do I need to report my LFT results?

All Lateral Flow Test results should be reported, irrespective of the result being positive or negative. This allows Public Health to monitor infection within the community, identify outbreaks quickly and implement control measures where necessary to prevent further spread. Read more on the Public Health website: <https://healthygibraltar.org/news/reminder-reporting-lft-results/>

### 6. How do I arrange testing for day 6 and 7?

Testing for days 6 & 7 should be done using your home LFT kits. These 2 tests should be **24 hours apart** (the 24 hour gap increases the ability to detect if you are still shedding live virus). You can come out of self-isolation following the negative test result on day 7 test.

If you do not have a supply but are eligible for free GHA COVID-19 tests please call 111.

7. What if either of these 2 tests results are positive?

You must continue to self-isolate for the full 10 days and you do not require a test on day 10 to end your self-isolation.

8. Do I need to continue to self-isolate between my day 6 & 7 day tests?

Yes.

9. What evidence can I use for example to show my employer I have tested negative?

If you need to confirm your test result please call 111 for guidance (you may require a confirmatory test or be directed to email [111sicknote@gha.gi](mailto:111sicknote@gha.gi)).

10. Do close contacts of positive cases need to be isolated?

Close contacts do not need to isolate. They are however advised to avoid contact with anyone they know who is at higher risk of becoming severely unwell if they are infected with COVID-19, especially those with a severely weakened immune system.

Health workers who have been a close contact should inform their employer immediately and their situation will be risk assessed. This advice should be followed for 10 days after known exposure to a confirmed positive case.

11. Will you reduce the self-isolation period further for cases to 5 days?

We will keep the evidence base under review in terms of how much live virus shedding continues beyond day 5 and review the policy in light of this. It will remain at 7 days for now.

12. My question isn't listed above who can I ask?

If your question isn't answered above please email it to [health.promotion@gha.gi](mailto:health.promotion@gha.gi) and we will respond to it as soon as we can.