

# Cheshire West & Chester Council

## Media Release



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### **Take time to test and help protect family and friends**

Residents in Cheshire West and Chester without COVID-19 symptoms are asked to take time to test twice weekly to keep the infection rate down and the community safe.

Regular testing identifies the one in three people who have the virus without any symptoms and so who could be spreading the virus unwittingly.

While vaccines are the best way to protect people from Coronavirus, no vaccine is 100% effective. Even if they have had the vaccine, asymptomatic residents should continue to test themselves twice a week for COVID-19.

Rapid Lateral Flow Tests (LFTs) are for people without symptoms of the virus. They show results in around 30 minutes, are easy to access and free to all.

There are three walk-in testing centres in the borough at Chester Cathedral, the Dingle Centre in Winsford and Stanney Oaks Leisure Centre in Ellesmere Port, and no appointment is necessary. Test kits to do at home can also be collected at these locations, as well as at Northwich, Neston, Frodsham and Ellesmere Port libraries, Dee View Distribution Hub near Chester Retail Park and the mobile library van at Tarporley, Tattenhall, Malpas and Tarvin. For more information visit: [www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/c19testing](http://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/c19testing).

Alternatively, free test kits can be picked up at most pharmacies, with a map of participating venues at: [maps.test-and-trace.nhs.uk](https://maps.test-and-trace.nhs.uk), order online at: [www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests](https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests) or by calling: 119 (open from 7am to 11pm and free to call).

If you test positive you must self-isolate immediately along with everyone in your household and book a PCR test to confirm your result at: [nhs.uk/coronavirus](https://nhs.uk/coronavirus) or by calling: 119.

If you take a PCR test within two days of the positive LFT result, and the PCR result is negative, you and your household will no longer be required to self-isolate.

If the test is positive, you and your household must continue to self-isolate for 10 full days after the positive LFT. Day 1 is the day after your LFT test.

Help, support and advice is available on the Council website to help you during this period at: [www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/selfisolationsupport](http://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/selfisolationsupport) or call the Council's helpline on: 0300 123 7031.

Cllr Louise Gittins, Leader of Cheshire West and Chester Council, said: "We all want to take time for our friends and family now that restrictions are easing and the infection rate is low. It is essential that we also take the time to test twice a week regardless of whether we are vaccinated or not.

"Vaccines are a wonderful breakthrough but may not offer complete protection and it is not clear how effective they will be against new variants which are emerging all the time.

"Regular testing cuts the risk of spreading without knowing.

"I've picked up my home test kits from Neston Library and am testing twice a week and logging my results with the NHS COVID app – it's easy once you get the hang of it and gives you peace of mind.

"Together with vaccines, hands, face, space and fresh air, testing is a core part of returning to a life as normal as possible, as quickly as possible."

In the seven days up to 14 May, there were 34 positive cases of COVID-19 in the borough, a rate of 10 per 100,000 people.

Anyone with symptoms of COVID-19, including a new, continuous cough, high temperature or loss or change to your sense of smell or taste, should self-isolate immediately and book a PCR test at: [nhs.uk/coronavirus](https://nhs.uk/coronavirus) or by calling: 119.

The Council also advises residents to book a PCR test as a precaution if you have other symptoms that may be related to COVID-19.

These can include shortness of breath, muscle or body aches, fatigue, sore throat, headache, nasal congestion or runny nose, diarrhoea, nausea or vomiting. However, it is important to remember that these are very common symptoms, and most people who have these symptoms will not have COVID-19.

When booking choose the option that the local council has asked you to get a test. If you only have these other symptoms, you do not need to self-isolate unless you test positive for COVID-19.