

20 May 2020

Coronavirus testing in Hertfordshire expanded

This week the COVID-19 testing service in Hertfordshire has been expanded to include even more people who may have developed coronavirus.

From Monday 18 May, the government extended the criteria for COVID-19 testing. **Now anyone aged over five years old who is in the first few days of having suspected symptoms can have a test.**

In addition, another symptom has been added to the list of signs that someone might have contracted coronavirus. As well as a new continuous cough or a high temperature, a loss of, or change in a person's normal sense of taste or smell has been included.

Tests are effective if people are swabbed in the first three days of having suspected coronavirus symptoms. They cannot detect whether somebody has had coronavirus in the past.

To help to meet the need for drive-through testing in Hertfordshire, an additional testing day has been arranged by local NHS organisations and will take place in Watford every Thursday. Testing at each site will open at 10am and run until 4pm.

To book a test, go online to www.gov.uk/coronavirus and enter your details. You will be sent a booking code. **The booking system will only show you details of test locations which are available in the following 24hrs.**

When all the available tests slots have been booked at a particular test site, the site will not appear on the national list. Additional tests are added to the site regularly, so check-in throughout the day if you are not successful at booking a local drive-through or mail-order test the first time you try. .

Hertfordshire test sites are all open between 10am and 4pm and are now as follows:

- on Thursdays in Watford at the Central Watford leisure centre, WD17 3HA
- on Saturdays in Hertford at County Hall, Pegs Lane, SG13 8DQ
- on Sundays in Watford at the Central Watford leisure centre, WD17 3HA
- on Mondays in Stevenage, off Six Hills Way, SG1 2DF. Please follow the signs to the test centre, to ensure that you do not mistakenly join the queue for the Household Waste Recycling Centre.

Please bring a mobile phone to the test centre if you have one. Drive-through tests are available at a range of other locations on different days of the week across the country. Book online or order a mail order test via www.gov.uk/coronavirus.

Notes to Editors

1. Hertfordshire's local resilience forum (LRF) is a multi-agency partnership made up of representatives from local public services, including the emergency services, local authorities, the NHS, the Environment Agency and the Highways Agency, as well as other partners in the military and voluntary sector who provide a valuable contribution to LRF work in emergency preparedness. The LRF plans and prepares for, and coordinates the response to, localised incidents and national emergencies. It works to identify potential risks and produces emergency plans to either prevent or mitigate the impact of any incident on local communities.

2. Testing is now in place in care homes and nursing homes where a resident has suspected COVID-19 symptoms. Tests are carried out within 24 hours and results are available within 72 hours.

3. Drive-through tests for people who are eligible are available at a range of other locations on different days of the week across the country. Book online via www.gov.uk/coronavirus.