

Frequently Asked Questions about Covid Testing on Chebeague
Chebeague Covid Testing Team (CCTT), sponsored by CUMC
Text message 347-656-7524, voice mail 207-264-0007
Team Captain, Jennifer Hackel, CNP - 846-9004
Updated 12/28/20

1. What is the current status of the Chebeague Covid Test Team (CCTT)?

The “boots on the ground” team of four nurses -Jenny Hackel, Nancy Hill, Ann Bowman, and Jackie Trask - continue to share daily on-call (see contact info in header.) Drs Kip Webb and Jim Cox-Chapman remain the physician consultants, and the team meets several times a month on zoom. It still stands that if anyone on the island is concerned that they might need to be tested, and cannot easily see their PCP on the mainland, they are encouraged to contact the CCTT team member on call, especially if they have symptoms. All patient information is kept strictly confidential.

2. What are the symptoms of Covid-19?

The symptoms of the virus include fever, chills, dry cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, muscle pain, fatigue, nausea, diarrhea, new loss of taste or smell, and severe headache. Anyone with symptoms will benefit from knowing if they have COVID-19 so they can be carefully monitored and prevent the spread to others. If you have symptoms, call your PCP first, but if you are not ill enough to need immediate medical attention, the CCTT can test you at home.

3. How do I contact the CCTT volunteer and what is involved in getting tested?

To reach the CCTT, text message 347-656-7524, or leave a voice mail at 207-264-0007. Be sure to leave your name and call back number. The CCTT volunteer will contact you to set up a “PCR” (nose swab) test time at your home in the next day or so. The PCR (polymerase chain reaction) test looks for the genetic material that is only present in the virus and is the gold standard test. The CCTT volunteer will bring you a nasal swab and coach you through getting a sample of cells from deep in your nose into a test tube. This will be sent in a sealed bag to the State lab. They will call you back when your results return in 48-72 hours (partly because it takes 24 hours to get the sample to Augusta.). You should stay in quarantine while waiting for test results.

4. What if I want to get tested but I have no symptoms and can freely go to the mainland?

The Maine Center for Disease Control (CDC) has made tests available around the state. Go to their website [here](#) to get the link for local testing site details, and call sites near you about your eligibility and to make a test appointment. This may be best for those coming to Chebeague who want to know they are negative before arriving. Feel free to call the CCTT to discuss.

5. Are there rapid tests on island, and how do they work? The CCTT was able to get a box of Binax NOW rapid tests to help with the potential outbreak that occurred at the Island Commons just prior to Thanksgiving. The rapid test identifies whether there are proteins present on a person’s nasal swab that match some of those in the COVID 19 virus (also known as antigen) within 15 minutes. The rapid tests are best used in a situation where a person has symptoms and works in critical infrastructure in the community to see

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whether or not Covid-19 is likely present. For instance, if a person is coming to work at the school and has “allergy symptoms” but no fever, the rapid test can help determine if they are likely to have Covid-19 and might spread the virus in that situation. The test can also be done to see if someone who came in contact with a confirmed case is negative in order to be cleared for essential work in the next 24 hours, since the PCR test takes days to return. The rapid tests are not as accurate as the PCR tests, and confirmation of results should be done in many cases. Your PCP or CCTT nurse can review the pros and cons of different tests with you. The situation described here, where a worker has symptoms that could be Covid-19, also underscores the importance of getting vaccinated against the flu, as this lessens the chances that the person’s acute symptoms are from the flu, and lessens the transmission of that virus.

6. What does it cost to get tested on Chebeague?

There is no cost to getting tested because the testing supplies have been provided by the State of Maine, and CCTT team members and sample transporters are all volunteers. However, the team does not provide medical care and wants every islander to have contact with a PCP.

7. What if I do not have a primary care provider (PCP) or health insurance?

The Covid-19 test done through the CCTT is a free test run at the state lab. You need no insurance to get this free test. However, everyone should have a PCP. You might consider signing on with Dr. Heidi Larson, who comes to Chebeague on Fridays. Alternatively, if you are a Maine resident, check this weblink to find out how to get insured: [health insurance link](#)

8. What are the chances the tests show the wrong results? There is a small chance that the test will be negative when you actually do have Covid-19; this is known as a “false negative”. If the test is negative and your symptoms are progressing, your PCP may suggest you get re-tested. While you are recovering, you should isolate yourself so that those in your household have limited exposure to whatever illness you may have. If you are unable to care for yourself without help, you should contact your PCP to plan your care. False positives (where the test is positive, and you do not have Covid-19) are rarer but do occur. Talk to your PCP about it.

9. If I have a positive test, then what?

First, you should isolate at home for 7-10 days as your symptoms resolve, or according to your PCP’s advice. Second, the State lab will notify the Maine CDC, who may have a contact tracer call you to try to make sure anyone with whom you have had close contact in the couple of days prior also gets tested, but you can speed up this process by reaching out to those with whom you have had contact and let them know you have tested positive so that they also get tested and go into quarantine until their tests return. The CCTT can

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help them get tested quickly if they are on Chebeague. Access further info at the CDC:
[CDC link](#)

10. Why is there a surge in cases now?

There are many reasons for the current surge. A key reason is that winter makes it harder for people to stay socially connected when it's too cold outside to gather. And indoor air is drier, making viral particles hang in the air longer, as well as making other people's airways drier and more susceptible to illness. Further, "Covid fatigue" is a real phenomenon, and refers to how people are losing their vigilance in physical distancing, hand hygiene and mask wearing. All of this means that we must be that much more careful and support each other in sticking with the protocols. Use technology to stay connected to friends and family, take up a new hobby, and use music, yoga, and creative expression to stay in balance. If you are feeling down and blue, call 211 to find out how to access mental health resources. You are not alone!

11. Have there been any outbreaks on Chebeague Island? I heard there was a case at the Island Commons.

Before Thanksgiving, the Island Commons announced a case reported by an off-island worker. They worked swiftly and diligently to test, trace and isolate everyone. We worked closely together and are very pleased to report that our testing support and their excellent leadership resulted in no known outbreak. As of today, we believe we have no known outbreak (as defined by three cases linked together.)

12. Will you offer vaccinations?

No, not at this time. We are available to help answer general questions about vaccines, the CDC recommendations including Maine's 4-part roll out plan and help anyone make their personal vaccination plan.