
Laboratory Update

01 December 2020

Pre-departure COVID-19 testing for travel to China

The Chinese Embassy has updated its requirement for pre-departure travel testing (refer <http://www.chinaembassy.org.nz/eng/zxgxs/t1836558.htm>). From 10 December 2020, passengers must complete one COVID PCR test (swab) and one COVID IgM antibody test (blood) within 2 days of boarding their flight, providing negative results of both.

From Monday 7 December, COVID IgM antibody test will be available at Labtests for the purposes of pre-departure testing only for those travelling to China.

Time-frame for Testing and Results

In order for results to likely be available, pre-departure testing must be ordered at least 48 hours before the result is required. Turnaround time for test results may be longer during times of increased demand for testing, as our primary focus is processing PCR samples for public health purposes.

Note: PCR samples received within 24 hours of departure will not be processed within the required timeframe.

Labtests cannot provide or arrange urgent courier pickups for pre-departure samples. Turnaround time for results can be improved if samples are sent directly to the laboratory (e.g. delivered by taxi or the passenger themselves).

Payment

Patients need to pay the practice directly for all associated costs of sample collection and analysis of all tests requested. Labtests will invoice medical centres for testing as per the standard invoicing process.

- Novel Coronavirus PCR: \$138
- Covid IgM antibody: \$96.25
- Labtests bleed fee (IgM testing only): \$14

Note: All prices are GST inclusive

Laboratory Forms

Manual Request Forms: Clinical details must be provided such as “Pre-departure COVID-19 Test” and include departure date. Please state “PAID” on the request form.

eOrder: If using eOrders, select “Chinese Travel – COVID PCR swab and COVID IgM serology”, in the funding category select “Patient to pay”. Clinical details must be provided such as “Pre-departure COVID-19 Test” and include departure date.

For Medical Practices Collecting PCR Swabs Only

COVID IgM antibody is a blood test. Please ensure that the passenger has a copy of their test request form if presenting to a Labtests collection centre for their COVID IgM antibody sample collection. Passengers will be required to provide their passport for identification purposes.

For Passengers to China who test positive for Covid IgM antibody

Should the individual test positive for COVID IgM, a repeat test on an alternative laboratory platform will be required. To facilitate this, the medical practice should issue the passenger with the **Repeat IgM Test request form**. This will ensure that when the sample is received in the laboratory it is not tested on the same platform as the initial COVID IgM sample. Passengers must pay the medical practice for the testing, Labtests will invoice the medical practice (\$96.25 for laboratory testing only, \$110.25 for bleed fee + laboratory testing).

More Information

Further information is available on our website for both [Referrers](#) and for the [Passengers](#). Please continue to check our website for ongoing updates.