

Laboratory Update

16 February 2021

COVID-19 Pre-departure travel - testing and resulting

Labtests receives up to 2,000 COVID-19 swab requests per day. We cannot guarantee results for travellers in less than 72 hours from time of collection, although results are often reported sooner. It is important that all patients presenting for this test are advised of this by the referrer. Some referrers are requesting a one hour turnaround time (TAT). This is not possible. We are unable to process urgent requests for this test as it is extremely time consuming to find an individual specimen and this slows down the TAT for all specimens.

Covid-19 Pre-departure testing process for travellers

Labtests continues to receive a high volume of enquiries regarding pre-departure testing for travellers. To assist with frequently asked questions please note the 4 step process for pre-departure testing as follows:

Step 1: Consider the appropriate time to have your sample collected.

- ✓ Sample should be collected as early as possible within the required pre-departure / pre-arrival timeframe (as defined by the destination country).
- ✓ Allow up to 72 hours from sample collection to when the result is required. Results are often available sooner, however a faster time to result cannot be guaranteed.
- ✓ This is the only testing service available, it is not possible to request or pay an additional fee to guarantee a quicker turnaround time.

Step 2: Contact your local medical practice/GP to have your sample collected

- ✓ You do not need to be a registered patient.
- ✓ The medical practice will collect payment at the time you have the sample collected.
- ✓ Labtests does not perform the swab collection.

Step 3: Sample delivery from medical practice/GP to laboratory

- ✓ Standard practice is that your sample will be picked-up by a routine Labtests courier.
- ✓ If you wish to shorten the turnaround time for the test result the sample can be delivered directly to the laboratory by taxi or the traveller themselves. To facilitate rapid identification write 'Traveller COVID swab' on outside of the biohazard bag.
- ✓ This direct delivery option is only available Monday to Saturday: 9:30 am to 2 pm and Sunday: 9:30 am to 12 midday.
- ✓ The laboratory address is: Labtests, Specimen Services, 37-41 Carbine Rd, Mount Wellington.

Step 4: Results will be sent to the medical practice/GP within 72 hours of the sample collection

- ✓ Results are reported as soon as they are available so phoning the laboratory to expedite is not required.
- ✓ Labtests provides the result to the referrer.
- ✓ Individuals requiring their results for travel or any other purpose must contact their referrer.
- ✓ Examples of the COVID-19 test reports are available on the Labtests website.