

Press Release

Hamilton County Health Department



Web: health.hamiltontn.org



****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****

May 4, 2021

Say Yes! COVID Test Chattanooga Program Offers Free, Rapid, Self-Administered Tests to Hamilton County Residents to Reduce COVID-19 Spread

Residents can order their free COVID-19 test kits while supplies last at CovidTestChattanooga.org or by calling 423-209-8383

HAMILTON COUNTY, TN – The Hamilton County Health Department today launched the Say Yes! COVID Test At-Home Testing Challenge, which provides households within Chattanooga and throughout Hamilton County with access to free, rapid COVID-19 test kits that they can self-administer in the comfort of their home. Say Yes! COVID Test encourages residents to use the tests three times a week, regardless of symptoms, to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and keep the community healthy.

“Free, rapid, self-administered testing will give Hamilton County residents one more way to help reduce the spread of COVID-19, along with wearing a mask, hand washing, staying six feet away from others, and vaccination,” said Dr. Fernando Urrego, interim health officer for the Hamilton County Health Department. “Many communities were considered, and only two were selected for this exciting opportunity. Our area can always be relied on for strong community support, so I expect that many of our households will rise to the challenge and Say Yes! COVID Test.”

The initiative is a [cooperative effort](#) from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and community partners, with state and local health departments connecting the opportunity to the local community. Researchers at NIH-supported University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Duke University will work with CDC and NIH to use publicly available data to determine if the local testing efforts slowed the spread of COVID-19.

Rapid, self-administered testing has potential to disrupt the “silent spread” of COVID-19 that occurs when people are infected, but don’t yet have symptoms. Testing three times a week offers the best chance of identifying COVID-19 infection and isolating early. The COVID-19 test kits are provided free of charge, and the entire testing process can be managed privately at home. Tests require a quick

swab inside each nostril, and results can be read in just 10 minutes. The maker of the tests, Quidel, is the same company that made the first rapid flu tests used by doctors' offices in the United States.

Each test kit supports home testing three times a week for two household members. Individuals who have not yet received the COVID-19 vaccine or who have the highest risk of exposure to COVID-19, such as people working or going to school outside the home, are ideal candidates for participation, but anyone over the age of 8 is welcome to participate. The testing challenge lasts for at least a month, or until all tests are used. Test users can also choose to take part in an optional research study to complete surveys and earn up to \$50 in gift cards.

Hamilton County residents can visit the website CovidTestChattanooga.org to order test kits for doorstep delivery or call the Hamilton County Health Department at 423-209-8383 for more information.

Test kits will also be available for pickup locally at the following locations.

- CEMPA Community Care
- Chattanooga Market
- Dodson and Southside Community Health Centers
- Hamilton County Health Department – 3rd Street
- Junior League of Chattanooga
- Hamilton Place Mall and Northgate Mall
- Super Carniceria Loa
- Ladies of Charity Thrift Store
- LifeSpring Community Health
- Pediatric Health Care Associates
- Sequoyah Health Center

Visit CovidTestChattanooga.org to view days and hours of operation.

If you have questions about the Say Yes! COVID Test project, or want to find a distribution site near you, call the Health Department's COVID-19 hotline at 423-209-8383. To read this press release in Spanish, visit our Spanish Facebook page at facebook.com/SaludHamiltonTN.

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