

MEDIA RELEASE

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Health services and testing update: Alert Level 2

Where to get tested during Alert Level 2

Testing is free for people with COVID-19 symptoms in the Nelson Marlborough region. If you are unsure of whether you should get a test, call Healthline for advice: 0800 358 5453.

Here are your options for testing:

1. At your regular GP clinic (your family doctor). Appointments are needed, but there is no charge for testing. Phone ahead first if you are planning to visit your doctor and request a test. Golden Bay and Motueka GP clinics will increase their capacity for testing from Thursday 13 August.
2. After-hours clinics: The Medical and Injury Centre in Nelson and the Urgent Care Centre in Blenheim. After-hours centre information for Golden Bay, Motueka and Murchison is available online here: <https://www.nmdhb.govt.nz/health-services/after-hours-and-emergency-services/>
3. During Alert Level 2, testing will also be available at two community-based assessment centres (CBAC):

In Nelson:

- At the Tahunanui CBAC in the former Suburban Club building on 168 Tahunanui Drive
- Operating hours: 8am to 5pm from Thursday 13 August

In Blenheim:

- At the old netball courts, Horton Park, 29b Redwood St
- Operating hours: 8am to 5pm from Thursday 13 August

4. Testing is available when required for inpatients in hospitals and for people presenting to EDs in emergencies.
5. The public are advised to check the Nelson Marlborough Health website, or Facebook page, for the most up to date information about testing: www.nmdhb.govt.nz

Health and disability services at Alert Level 2

- Health and disability services will continue to be available under Alert Level 2

- There will be no changes to planned care – appointments, clinics and surgical procedures will go ahead. People should attend their scheduled appointments at the hospital unless they have been contacted and told otherwise. People who are unwell and may be infectious should not put others at risk – they should phone ahead to reschedule their appointment or to make special arrangements for urgent care.
- Staff will adhere to physical distance and infection prevention guidelines. Patients and visitors are asked to cooperate with Level 2 rules, and any requests to them from health workers.
- Mask guidance: Staff who need to work with patients at a close distance will wear face masks. Patients who have symptoms may be asked to wear a mask during their appointment or procedure, and while they are in the hospital building. Patients who do not have symptoms do not necessarily have to wear a mask for their appointment however.
- Patients and visitors may be asked screening questions, eg about whether they have been overseas recently, had contact with anyone who has been overseas recently, or had any potential recent exposure to COVID-19 such as being a close contact of a confirmed or probable case. They may also be asked if they have recently travelled to Auckland, or been in contact with someone who has.
- Hospitals will operate in line with the National Hospital Response Framework
- Some appointments will be offered by virtual consultation – this has been occurring during Alert Level 1 and will continue.

Information for hospital visitors and support people during Alert Level 2

Under Alert level 2 slight adjustments have been made to the Nelson Marlborough Health visitors' policy to protect patients and staff from any potential risk of exposure to COVID-19.

Under Alert Level 2 visiting policy:

- For most hospital wards, visitor numbers are limited to one visitor per patient at any one time. Patients can nominate up to three names of visitors who will be able to visit during their stay. Visitors are advised to check they have been nominated by a patient before visiting as they may be turned away.
- Visitors are not permitted at Nelson Hospital's Medical Admissions & Planning Unit (MAPU), Alexandra Hospital, Wahi Oranga at Nelson Hospital or day stay units at either Nelson or Wairau hospital.
- For maternity wards, women may have one person for labour and birth support, plus one visitor per day while they are in an antenatal or postnatal ward. Detailed information for maternity ward visitors will be on the NMH website homepage: www.nmdhb.govt.nz
- For high risk areas such as emergency departments, intensive care, high dependency units and special care baby units: Only one visitor and one visit per day will be allowed.
- People coming to a hospital for an outpatient, radiology, or laboratory appointment may bring one support person with them.
- Visitors will be screened for COVID-19 symptoms. This means they may be asked questions about their travel history and health status, at main entrances before they enter buildings.
- Anyone with symptoms, or who has had contact with a confirmed or probable cases in the last 14 days, will not be allowed to enter
- Visitors' names and contact details will be registered

- Visiting hours are between 2.30pm and 8.30pm Monday to Sunday, unless there is a prior arrangement with the ward charge nurse manager
- Visitors must enter through the main doors at each hospital
- Children under 16 are not permitted to visit except by prior arrangement with the ward or medical area concerned.
- Visitors must follow Alert Level 2 precautions: wash or sanitise their hands before and after visiting, and maintain two metre physical distancing from strangers and at least one metre from people including friends, family and whanau (no hugs).
- If a visitor is unwell or has flu-like symptoms they should stay home
 - Flowers are discouraged (and not allowed in some areas) but gifts, books, pens and toiletries are permitted (as long as these items go home with the patient)
 - Only one person may enter the building, after screening, to collect a discharged patient.

Requests for exceptions to the visiting policy level on compassionate grounds will be considered carefully and in line with the Ministry of Health's guidance and at the discretion of the charge nurse/midwife manager for the ward or area concerned.

Public health advice

Anyone with COVID-19 symptoms should stay at home until they have obtained medical advice or testing from Healthline or their GP. If you have been tested, follow the instructions given to you by the nurse or GP about what to do during the time you are waiting for your test results.

While at home, people with symptoms should ensure they take hygiene measures to reduce risk of transmitting their possible respiratory infection to other people in their households. This means thorough and regular handwashing and drying, covering coughs and sneezes, avoiding touching their face, and regular cleaning of surfaces that they touch with their hands.

[Read the Level 2 rules](#)

[Read about COVID-19 symptoms](#)

Ends

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