COVID-19 Testing Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why is testing important?
   Viral tests can tell someone if they have the virus that causes COVID-19. The sooner someone learns they have the virus, the sooner they can isolate from others to prevent the spread and receive any needed medical attention.

2. When should someone get tested?
   - As soon as possible if they have symptoms (fever, cough, trouble breathing, headache, chills, muscle pain, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, sore throat).
   - 3-5 days after exposure to COVID-19. Examples of exposure include: being within 6 feet for a total of 15 minutes or more with someone with COVID-19; hugging, kissing, or sharing utensils with an infected person; being sneezed or coughed on by an infected person; or attending large social gatherings.

3. What do the test results mean?
   - A positive result on a viral test means the person likely had COVID-19 at the time of the test.
   - A negative result on a viral test means the person likely did not have COVID-19 at the time of the test, or the test was taken too early in the infection to be detected. The virus can stay in the body without showing on a test for up to 2 weeks after exposure.

4. Where can I get tested for COVID-19?
   - Those with symptoms of COVID-19 should contact their healthcare provider for information.
   - Those without symptoms should contact their local tribal health department for the latest information on testing. COVID-19 tests are available at no cost.

5. Can someone catch the virus from getting tested?
   It is very unlikely that someone will get COVID-19 from getting a test. Viral tests involve a simple nose or mouth swab and will not expose the person to the virus. All testing sites require patients to wear masks and stay 6 feet apart. In addition, most testing sites are taking steps to circulate air to make testing safe for everyone.