

May 12: COVID-19 Clinical Update

NM Expands Testing

This daily communication is intended to facilitate the sharing of important clinical information during the COVID-19 healthcare crisis and to help respond to questions from physicians across Northwestern Medicine.

In today's issue, you will find new information about virology and serology testing.

NM EXPANDS COVID-19 TESTING

In the past two weeks, NM has increased SARS-CoV-2 testing volumes from roughly 450 per day to a high of 800 tests. We now test the following individuals:

- Inpatients upon admission
- Labor and Delivery patients
- Most surgical and procedural patients
- Symptomatic patients who are discharged from the ED
- Symptomatic ambulatory patients who meet high-risk criteria
- Healthcare workers who were part of an exposure or are symptomatic

Testing capacity continues to expand. Please find the most up-to-date criteria on the "Testing Resources" pages of [NM Interactive](#) (login required) and [Physician Forum](#) (no login required).

Virology testing – outpatient ordering

Most ambulatory SARS-CoV-2 tests are ordered via the NM COVID-19 Hotline at **312.47.COVID**. As testing capacity expands, we will transition to normal ordering workflows on Wednesday, May 13.

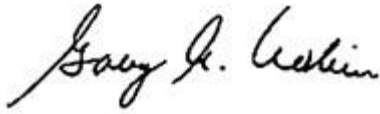
- Refer to the [Testing Guidelines Dashboard](#) for criteria.
- Find tip sheets on how to place the SARS-CoV-2 order on [Testing Resources](#).
- The individual who places the order will communicate testing locations and hours to the patient.
- Results will be routed to the ordering provider, either directly or via the centralized results pool.

Serology testing

Serology testing helps determine whether an individual has antibodies to SARS-CoV-2. It is unknown at this time whether developing antibodies to the virus will provide protection against future infections. NM is currently evaluating serology testing for healthcare workers.

In addition, NM is currently planning to make serology testing available for patients in the ambulatory environment. Physicians will be able to place an order in Epic and direct patients to any NM lab collection site. More information regarding healthcare worker testing and the planned opening for ambulatory patient testing are expected within the next week.

Thank you for your extraordinary dedication and collaboration in providing exceptional care to our patients, and for supporting one another during this unprecedented crisis. If you have questions or would like to share the story of an NM hero, please email us at covid-19md@nm.org.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Gary A. Noskin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Gary" and last name "Noskin" clearly legible.

Gary A. Noskin, MD
Senior Vice President, Quality
Northwestern Memorial HealthCare
Chief Medical Officer
Northwestern Memorial Hospital