

**Date:** July 10, 2020  
**To:** Primary care providers, family practice providers  
**From:** Children's Minnesota  
**Subject:** Children's Minnesota surgical COVID-19 testing practice

As a result of the current COVID-19 public health emergency, Children's Minnesota has instituted the practice that all surgical patients' COVID-19 status be provided to Children's Minnesota before their surgical procedure. If we are unable to verify a patient's COVID-19 status, we are forced to use our short supply of N95 masks while treating the patient as positive, or use our very limited supply of same days tests reserved for inpatients. While we try to prevent this, it is possible the procedure/surgery may be delayed or rescheduled. Of course, emergent situations would be the exception. Your assistance in the process of getting your patients tested prior to their procedure is very appreciated.

Tests would ideally be completed within 3 days of surgery to help ensure the child is healthy for a safe surgery and would preferably take place in primary care at the same time as the history and physical is performed, saving the family extra visits. Children's Minnesota is happy to test patients through our COVID Swab Centers if primary care clinics are not testing or do not have the ability to get test results in 3 days. In some situations, test results can be accepted up to 96 hours before procedure.

In all cases it is imperative that families socially isolate after their test is obtained to reduce the risk of contracting COVID-19 between the swab time and procedure time. Anesthesia is including a pre-op question at the time of surgery to ask about the patient's social distancing compliance between the test and the surgery, given the possible 2 day incubation period for COVID-19.

### **COVID-19 Testing Protocol Order**

Tests may be performed at Children's Minnesota or at another testing location, if preferred. Children's Minnesota will contact the patient family to schedule the COVID-19 test at Children's Minnesota before surgery. There may be rare times when Children's Minnesota will contact the patient's primary care clinic to assist with submitting orders for patients to be testing in their community.

### **Children's Minnesota Swab Centers**

We are helping patient families to schedule tests at the Children's Minnesota drive-up swab centers in Minneapolis and St. Paul, where the child gets the swab without even leaving the car. The swab centers are offered in two locations:

- **St. Paul Swab Center at the mobile clinic**  
233 Grand Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55102  
Entrance to the parking lot is on Thompson Street. Look for the mobile clinic bus in the parking lot ([View a map](#))
- **Minneapolis Swab Center**  
2545 Chicago Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55404  
Parking lot at Midtown Doctors Building ([View a map](#))

### **Hours**

Monday through Friday: 7:30 a.m.–4 p.m.  
Saturdays in Minneapolis only: 8 a.m.–noon

## Testing options outside Children's Minnesota

If a family is unable to travel to Children's Minnesota for their test, the patient's pediatrician or family practice doctor may be able to help facilitate testing at their own clinic. As previously mentioned, we recommend the COVID-19 testing be done at the same appointment as the pre-op physical, if possible. If your clinic does not offer COVID-19 testing, with an acceptable time to result, Children's Minnesota will work with patient family to locate a testing site on the [Minnesota Department of Health website](#) to ensure that the testing center fits our criteria. Children's Minnesota may contact the patient's primary care clinic to sign the testing order and forward it to the testing site.

We may ask our colleagues in greater Minnesota and out of state to help with ordering COVID-19 testing for patients in the patient's local community health systems.

Families have two options to submit their test results to Children's Minnesota:

- Bring printed documentation of the test results on the day of surgery to show they've had a COVID-19 test.
- Ask the test center to fax the results to the Children's Minnesota surgery center where you will have surgery before arrival (if possible)
  - **St. Paul:** 651-220-7220
  - **Minneapolis:** 612-813-7704

**Note:** We can't accept verbal test results.

In the event that a patient arrives for their surgery without getting a test, or fails to bring their test results from their testing site, we have **limited** rapid COVID-19 tests available on site. The patient will be asked to arrive 2 hours before the scheduled surgery to complete the swab and to process the results.

## Negative test results

The surgeon and primary care provider will not be notified if the patient's test result is negative and the pre-surgical process continues as usual.

## Positive test results

If positive COVID-19 results are identified the day before surgery, the surgeon or on-call surgeon partner will receive a call from a Children's Minnesota pre-operative registered nurse to discuss whether the surgery can move forward, or if it will be delayed or canceled.

- **If the decision is made to cancel the surgery**, the surgeon will contact the family and notify them of the positive COVID-19 test result, and communicate that the surgery has been canceled.
- The surgeon will contact the primary care provider and notify them that the patient is COVID-19 positive and that surgery has been canceled, if applicable.
- **If the surgery is not canceled**, the surgeon will contact the family to communicate the test results and confirm that the surgery will continue as previously scheduled. A Children's Minnesota pre-op registered nurse will then contact the family for the standard pre-op call with final details, per the usual process.

## Patient questions and resources

If your patient has any questions about this process, please direct them to call the COVID-19 hotline at 952-99-COVID (952-992-6843).

Patients can visit [childrensmn.org/surgeryinfo](https://childrensmn.org/surgeryinfo) to access [Preparing for Surgery: COVID-19 Test](#) resource.