

Pre-surgery COVID-19 testing

In line with Department of Health guidelines, all patients undergoing elective surgery or a procedure in a hospital need to be tested for COVID-19 prior to their admission.

This process also applies to parents/guardians accompanying paediatric patients and partners/ a designated support person attending a caesarean section.

This is an important precaution to ensure your safety—and the safety of other vulnerable people in our care—during your admission, and your Cabrini care team is here to support you during this process.

Further information about this process is outlined below, and impacted patients will also receive a SMS from Cabrini three to five days prior to their surgery outlining the steps to be taken in more detail (if you do not have a mobile, we will contact you via your home phone).

Why do I need to be tested?

Recent studies have shown the mortality and morbidity rates for coronavirus (COVID-19) positive patients undergoing both elective and emergency surgery are higher than otherwise expected, even when such surgery is relatively minor.

By undertaking a test prior to your surgery, our care team can better understand your current health condition. They will use this information to take the best precautions to ensure your safety before, during and after surgery and provide care appropriate to your condition.

What type of test do I need?

Patients (and where applicable, carers/partners) must have either a Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) or PCR test prior to their surgery.

It is the patient's responsibility to source a RAT from a local provider, such as a pharmacy or local testing site. Patients undertaking a RAT should do so one day prior to surgery, and then isolate until their admission.

Patients who are unable to source a RAT can either have a PCR test at a community provider three days prior to surgery (and then isolate until their admission) or contact Cabrini on 9508 1312 for further support.

Testing locations: www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/where-get-tested-covid-19

How do I provide my results to Cabrini?

On admission, patients will need to show admission staff a photo of their negative RAT, along with their Medicare card and the date RAT was completed or show an SMS with their PCR test result.

Patients who present for surgery without a negative test result will be managed on a case-by-case basis. This may include postponing non-urgent surgery.

What do I do if I have recently tested positive for COVID-19 or if I receive a positive result?

Patients who have tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 30 days will not need to undergo pre-operative testing. They will be directed to call Cabrini on 9508 1312 to discuss their surgery.

If a patient or their carer/partner tests positive on a RAT or PCR, they must contact Cabrini on 9508 1312. We will coordinate the appropriate response, in line with the patient's clinical urgency, and escalate accordingly.