



# COVID-19 Update

## New free Medicare over-the-counter test initiative

We would like to share an update on Medicare's new COVID-19 home test initiative. Originally announced in early February, this program has now officially launched. As of April 4, 2022, Medicare will cover up to eight over-the-counter COVID-19 tests each calendar month, at no cost to retirees.

CMS is providing this coverage through Medicare Part B for all beneficiaries, including those enrolled in Medicare Advantage plans. Medicare Advantage customers may need to show their red, white, and blue Medicare card to get their free over-the-counter COVID-19 tests.

Each person, through their Medicare Part B coverage, can get up to eight free over-the-counter tests for the month of April any time before April 30, and can then get another set of eight free over-the-counter tests for each calendar month that follows until the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency ends. The tests will be covered at no cost to retirees as long as they go to an eligible pharmacy or health care provider that participates in this initiative. However, if they get more than the eight covered over-the-counter COVID-19 tests in any calendar month, they will be responsible for the costs of the additional tests that calendar month.

Organizations participating in the new COVID-19 over-the-counter test initiative include: Albertsons, Costco Pharmacy, CVS, Food Lion, H-E-B Pharmacy, Hy-Vee Pharmacy, Kroger, Rite Aid, Stop & Shop, Walgreens, and Walmart. Retirees can call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) to find out if their pharmacy is participating. TTY users can call 1-877-486-2048.

For more information, please see this fact sheet:

<https://www.cms.gov/newsroom/fact-sheets/medicare-covers-over-counter-covid-19-tests>

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