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Blue Cross and BCN preferred pharmacy network available Feb. 1 for over-the-counter, at-home COVID-19 tests



What you need to know

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan and Blue Care Network are adding new options for members who have our pharmacy coverage to get over-the-counter, at-home COVID-19 tests. Here are some key points:

- As we [announced earlier](#), the federal government is offering four free tests to all households at [covidtests.gov](https://www.covidtests.gov).^{*} We will continue to remind audiences of this availability.
- Blue Cross and BCN are launching a **preferred pharmacy network** for over-the-counter, at-home COVID-19 tests, effective Feb. 1, 2022. The network enables commercial members with Blue Cross or BCN pharmacy coverage to obtain a number of free COVID-19 tests when purchased in person at a preferred pharmacy. The preferred COVID-19 test network includes Walmart, Rite Aid and Sam's Club pharmacies. Members must get the tests through the pharmacy counter by presenting their Blue Cross or BCN ID card.
- For reimbursement of purchases at **nonpreferred pharmacies**, a new form will be available at bcbsm.com on Feb. 1, 2022, that uses our pharmacy benefit manager to process these claims. Commercial members with Blue Cross and BCN pharmacy coverage will be able to use this form to apply online for reimbursement at \$12 or the cost of the test, whichever is lower.

How to find a preferred pharmacy

The preferred network for over-the-counter, at-home COVID-19 tests will include pharmacies within Walmart, Sam's Club and Rite Aid stores. Beginning Feb. 1, 2022, new information will be posted about the preferred network at bcbsm.com/coronavirus.

Groups without pharmacy benefits through Blue Cross and BCN are not eligible

Customer groups who do not have Blue Cross or BCN pharmacy benefits must work with their own pharmacy benefit manager to set up a way to obtain tests. These customer groups should be encouraged to communicate to their employees about how they can obtain a test at no cost through their pharmacy benefit manager.

Additional information

- Tests must be authorized by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.
- Tests must be purchased on or after Feb. 1, 2022, to qualify for the preferred network.

- Up to eight qualifying at-home tests can be obtained per member each month.
- An order from a qualified health professional is not required to obtain over-the-counter, at-home tests from one of the network pharmacies.

Please note

- Reimbursement does not apply for tests used for employment purposes.
- The new program does not include Medicare Advantage plans. Please visit the [senior COVID-19 site](#) that we've created just for our Medicare members to learn about how they can access COVID-19 testing in other ways.
- Some COVID-19 tests kits include two tests per box. Those kits would count as two tests.

Blue Cross and BCN continue to pay for COVID-19 testing in other instances

- Blue Cross will still cover other types of COVID-19 diagnostic tests if they are FDA authorized and **ordered by a qualified health professional**.
- Coverage is under the medical plan.
- This is also explained at bcbsm.com/coronavirus.

When to use COVID-19 test kits

Testing is an important tool to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Public health experts and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend that Americans use at-home tests if they begin to have symptoms, at least five days after coming in close contact with someone who has COVID-19 or are gathering indoors with a group of people who are unvaccinated or at risk of severe disease.

Action item

Share this information with your clients as needed. Continue to monitor bcbsm.com/coronavirus for updates.

*Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan doesn't own or control this website.

Questions? Contact your Blue Cross sales representative or managing agent.