



COVID-19 RAPID TEST CONCESSIONAL ACCESS (CRTCA) PROGRAM – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOR PATIENTS

Stay COVIDsafe - If you have COVID-19 symptoms, **do not** go to a pharmacy to collect a rapid antigen test. Instead, check your state or territory health authority’s [directions](#) on what to do. In most cases, this will mean you should go straight to a COVID-19 testing centre.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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1. Patient Eligibility Questions

1.1 Who is eligible to receive a free Rapid Antigen Test (RAT)?

You are eligible under the program if you hold one of the following eligible concession cards:

- Pensioner Concession Card;
- Commonwealth Senior Health Care Card;
- Health Care Card (including Low Income Health Care Card); or
- Department of Veterans' Affairs Gold, White or Orange Cards.

To access your allocation of RATs under the Commonwealth Government's program, you or your carer must provide your eligible concession card number in person to a Participating Community Pharmacy. If you already receive deliveries from your Community Pharmacy (excluding via the Home Medicines Service) they will still need to sight your eligible concession card at the time of delivery, and record necessary details via a manual paper log. You will need to show either your hard copy card or the card on your Centrelink app.

You must also provide verbal consent to the Participating Community Pharmacy for them to record your concession card details into their pharmacy software (ProjectCOVID) for supply, compliance and Community Pharmacy reimbursement purposes.

1.2 I am on a concession card, but my spouse is not, are they eligible for free RATs?

No. Only patients who hold a valid concession card are eligible for free RATs under the program.

1.3 I have a concession card but I know it is no longer valid to due changes in my circumstances. Am I still eligible?

No. Only patients who hold a valid concession card are eligible for free RATs under the program.

1.4 I'm a CTG patient. Am I eligible?

If you also hold a valid concession card then you are eligible for free RATs under program.

If you are a CTG patient but do not hold a valid concession card (see list under Question 1.1 for the eligible concession card types) then you are not eligible for free RATs under this program.

1.5 Are there age limits? e.g. My daughter/son has a valid healthcare card but they are only 2 years old. Are they eligible?

There is no age limit for the program. As long as they a valid concession card number then they are eligible for free RATs under the program.



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- 1.6** My concession card is coming through mail but I have the number. May I present the number and not the physical card?

No. The pharmacy must sight either your physical concession card or your electronic concession card via the Centrelink app prior to being able to supply any free RAT kits to you under the Commonwealth Government program.

2. General Program and RAT Supply Questions

- 2.1** I currently have symptoms. Do I go to a pharmacy to pick up a free RAT?

No. **Be COVIDSafe** – if you have any COVID-19 symptoms you should attend to your nearest COVID-19 testing site, or utilise RATs you already have in your possession.

DO NOT go to a pharmacy to pick up a RAT test if you have symptoms, or are considered a Close Contact/High Risk exposure.

Testing sites will provide you with either a PCR or RAT for free. These will not count towards your monthly/six-monthly limit of RATs under this program. Testing clinics can be found using the [Healthdirect website](#).

- 2.2** I'm an eligible patient. How many RATs am I allowed through the program?

On 11 March 2022, National Cabinet announced an extension to the CRTCA Program, you will now be able to access up to 20 RATs in total over the life of the Program, from 24 January 2022 to 31 July 2022, with no more than 5 RATs to be provided in any given month.

Please note pharmacies can only provide each eligible patient with one supply of 2 or one supply of 5 tests in the one day. Pharmacies are not able to provide you with a single test kit under this program. Therefore, if in any given month if you receive two supplies of two tests (i.e 4 tests in total) you will need to then wait until the following month to receive additional free tests. This also means that depending on how many tests you receive at the time of each supply, it may not be possible for you to receive a total of 20 tests over the duration of the program. For example, if you receive 4 tests in March, 5 tests in April, 5 tests in June and 5 tests in July you will only receive a total of 19 tests.

- 2.3** If I used all of my RAT kits that I am permitted to receive under the program and need more, can I get more?

Eligible patients can receive up to 20 RATs over the life of the program, with no more than 5 RATs in any given month.

If you have already received your total allowable number of RATs then a pharmacy may provide you with tests however these will not be covered under the Commonwealth Government's program and you will be required to pay the pharmacy's retail price.



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2.4 Does the monthly/six-month limit apply to each person on my concession card or is it per card regardless of how many people are on it?

Each patient who has an eligible concession card number can receive up to 20 RATs over the life of the program, with no more than 5 RATs in any given month.

For example, if you and your two children are on one concession card you can receive a total of 15 RAT kits per month (5 for you and 5 for each of your children) up to a maximum of 60 RAT kits over the life of the program (20 for you and 20 for each of your children).

2.5 Can I get two nasal tests and two saliva tests on the same day?

Eligible patient can only receive a maximum of 5 RATs per day regardless of the type of RAT (nasal or saliva). The testing style of each RAT will vary from pharmacy to pharmacy depending on stock availability.

2.6 If I have COVID-19 symptoms and get free RAT tests from a testing clinic does this go towards my limit of 20 in the six-month period?

No. The tests available at testing clinics do not count towards your allowable limit of free RATs under this program.

2.7 What if the RAT tests are inconclusive or faulty? Does it still count towards my limit or can I obtain replacements through the pharmacy?

Unfortunately if a RAT test is inconclusive or faulty it will still count towards your limit under this program. You may wish to contact the manufacturer if you believe the RAT you received was faulty.

2.8 How often can I get the RATs?

On 11 March 2022, National Cabinet announced an extension to the program, with all eligible concession card holders now able to access up to a maximum total of 20 RATs over the life of the program.

You can get a maximum of 5 RATs per month which are phased as follows:

- Month 1: 24 January 2022 to 28 February 2022
- Month 2: 1 March 2022 to 31 March 2022
- Month 3: 1 April 2022 to 30 April 2022
- Month 4: 1 May 2022 to 31 May 2022
- Month 5: 1 June 2022 to 30 June 2022
- Month 6: 1 July 2022 to 31 July 2022

This means if you have received 5 tests during a month then you must wait until at least the next month to receive further free tests. You can then pick up your further free tests at any time during the new month.

For example:

- If you receive 5 RATs on 27 January 2022 (Month 1) then you cannot receive further free tests until on or after 1 March 2022 (Month 2).



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- If you receive 5 RATs on 31 March 2022 (Month 2) then you can receive another 5 RATs on or after 1 April 2022 (Month 3).

2.9 I've waited until July to pick up any free RATs. As the program is continuing until 31 July can I pick up all 20 RATs in July?

No. Eligible patients can receive up to 20 RATs over the life of the program, but no more than 5 RATs in any given month.

2.10 I had a valid concession card and picked up some of my free RAT allocation but my concession is now no longer valid. Can I still collect the remaining tests for the month/six-month period?

No. If your concessional status changes during the month you are no longer eligible to receive any further free RATs under the Commonwealth Government's program.

2.11 I have lost my supplies and really need them. Can I get more?

Eligible patients can receive up to 20 RATs over the life of the program, but no more than 5 RATs in any given month.

If you are not already up to your limit for the month/six-month period then yes, you can pick up more from the pharmacy providing this does not put you over the monthly/six-monthly limit.

If however, you have already picked up your limit then no, you cannot get more free RATs under this program regardless of whether you lost your supply.

If you require more tests you would need to buy them from the pharmacy.

2.12 Are all pharmacies participating in this program? If not, how do I find out where to get these RATs?

Participation in this program is optional for pharmacies.

There is no list available of which pharmacies are participating in this program however the Guild's Find a Pharmacy website (<https://www.findapharmacy.com.au/>) may show which pharmacies in your area have RATs in stock.

Alternatively, you can also search for your local pharmacy on <https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/australian-health-services> and check with your local pharmacy about whether they are participating in the program.

2.13 I'm currently overseas but my concession card is still valid. Can someone pick it up on my behalf and mail it to me?

No. Federal legislation prohibits COVID-19 RATs to be sent overseas by post even if the person sending it is your relative and the RAT is for your personal use.

For more information see *Biosecurity (Human Biosecurity Emergency) (Human Coronavirus with Pandemic Potential) (COVID-19 Rapid Antigen Tests) Determination 2022* available at:

<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2022L00019>



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2.14 Are retail stores other than community pharmacies participating in this program?

No. Only community pharmacies can participate in this program, which is jointly funded between the Commonwealth Government and the State/Territory Governments of Australia.