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Mark Lancaster · Neighbor · 1 hour ago
Hi Everyone!
Increase Covid-19 Testing Sites | Can someone help me understand why Cambridge doesn't have a testing site or why we don't have a mobile testing site in response to Covid-19 testing?

As a nurse, I know personally that any successful response against a pandemic is based on "test, trace" that is gold in some places like city-state that has no pandemic.

We are home to one of the most advanced medical institutions in the world. But we are settling ourselves up for a disastrous second wave.

Cambridge residents are being tested in other cities because we are not accommodated and what is unknown? Because there is no place and the City Council has not an ear to it. Answer is the testing with regards to on demand testing is not available in Cambridge.

Question is **Why? #Cambridgeproblem**

Like · Comment · Share · 1 Like · 1 Comment

Michael Kelley · Neighbor · 1 hour ago
Mark Lancaster Cambridge Health Alliance is doing testing. https://www.mass.gov/news/coronavirus-testing-in-massachusetts-for-people-who-are-symptomatic
1 Like · Reply · Edit · Delete

Sam Lazarus • Western Harvard Square
Exactly. This is my point. You tried to do the right thing and the system couldn't support you. If we can't support you, then we can't support a surge. Plain and simple.
9 hr ago Like Reply 3

See 3 more replies

Kathleen Puckett • Mid-Cambridge
Beth Versoy : politicians have learned that they need to kneel down and flatter mein führer in order to get anything for their states. "Thanking Trump" is demanded.
8 hr ago Like Reply 2

Sarah Stewart • Avon Hill
I've now been tested three times in Cambridge and each time has been easy. Right now it's hard to book a test, but if you simply go to a test center (I went to the one on Rindge Ave) you can go right in - or at least I did. The test result came back 25 hours later. I'm not sure you can count this as failure... my experience is that the Cambridge city government has been exceptionally efficient and expert. The lab that's working with the city govt is the Broad, and I don't think you can get better than that for scientific expertise.
8 hr ago Like Reply 3

Sam Lazarus • Western Harvard Square
That's great, Sarah. This is a marketing problem then. This thread is littered with people who did not know you could walk-in for a test. That strikes me as a massive problem as people then see a barrier to getting a test promptly.
8 hr ago Like Reply 3

Joan Hill • Riverside
And you still need to be able to get there.
8 hr ago Like Reply 1

Add a reply...

Judy Giordano • Huron Village
I got tested at CHA back in April - called and made an appointment
8 hr ago Like Reply 2

Alexandra Grassian • Mid-Cambridge
I think this is only for folks with primary care doctor at CHA?
8 hr ago Like Reply

See 6 more replies

Sarah Stewart • Avon Hill
I think you are meant to book an appointment, and that is a problem because you have to wait. But if you really think you have been exposed (I'd had a flight and a family memorial, albeit outdoors) you can walk in.
8 hr ago Like Reply 1

Sarah Stewart • Avon Hill
I would echo the comment from the person who mentioned the daily Cambridge city govt Covid-19 email - it has up to date information about testing. It also gives the overall figures for Cambridge and links to the state stats. Worth signing up.
8 hr ago Like Reply 5

Alexandra Grassian • Mid-Cambridge
I agree with this. I had to get tested tuesday due to cold symptoms and couldn't send my kids to daycare until I got the test. I had to wait in line for 2hrs at Carewell and they refused all insurances that day, so it was all out of pocket. this isn't sustainable for the winter months.
8 hr ago Like Reply 2

Mary Campbell • Cambridge Commoners
Just curious—why didn't you go to the free site at Assembly Square? I've never had to wait 2 hours or anything like it.
7 hr ago Like Reply 1

Alexandra Grassian • Mid-Cambridge
Mary Campbell i didn't realize they took walkins. Also Carewell offers a rapid test, so I had results same day
7 hr ago Like Reply 2

Alexandra Grassian • Mid-Cambridge
Mary Campbell if I had to wait two days for results, I would have had no childcare until I got the negative results. This is true for parents, kids and teachers, and so I really feel this is entirely unsustainable as almost every kid and teacher in our daycare now has a cold (and as they do most of the winter!)
7 hr ago Like Reply 1

Mary Campbell • Cambridge Commoners
Alexandra Grassian the same day—that could be worth the wait! I'm now getting mine free at my university, where they're using the Broad's gentle tests—self-administered, just a half inch into your nose, painless, and we get results in well under 12 hours. Those aren't public, but since the Broad is collaborating with the city I assume they're coming soon. They're not at-home tests yet, but I assume that's because most people getting them are students and they want to supervise them, especially so they'll maintain the 2x weekly routine. Only 1 student infected so far, early on, instantly isolated, and no staff or faculty, so it seems to be working.
6 hr ago Like Reply

Alexandra Grassian • Mid-Cambridge
Mary Campbell that's great to hear!
6 hr ago Like Reply

Mary Campbell • Cambridge Commoners
Alexandra Grassian Yes I get it re: the 2 days, but that's why some I know get tested on Friday, so they can stay home for the weekend or whatever their days off are. Still the real solution is obviously what they're doing at universities, the gentle tests that take 6-12 hours to report. I'm hoping to find out on STAT how close we are to that, will report back!
Edited 6 hr ago Like Reply 2

Mary Campbell • Cambridge Commoners
Alexandra Grassian and I forgot to mention, they're at least as accurate as the tests that reach practically to your brain and take longer to process!
6 hr ago Like Reply 1

Rebekah Bjork • Western Harvard Square
Mary Campbell those are the test the city uses. The broad has been doing the city testing. Brandeis is lucky to get such fast turn around though (has that been consistent or just during the move in testing?)! I got 12 hours once at MIT last week but its usually about 24 just like my experience with the city ones. Both the lower nasal and upper nasal are PCR its just that we have learned that we can detect from lower nasal region just as well.
6 hr ago Like Reply

Rebekah Bjork • Western Harvard Square
The processing time really comes down to staff numbers and instrument numbers in the lab. The broad could afford to massively hire staff and invest in capital equipment to increase their instrument numbers and thus speed up processing. Not all labs could afford to do that.
6 hr ago Like Reply

Rebekah Bjork • Western Harvard Square
(Obviously there is a limit on how fast it can get too since each processing step has a minimum time that is inherent to the step not matter how many people stand around watching it :)
6 hr ago Like Reply

Mary Campbell • Cambridge Commoners
Rebekah Bjork That's interesting. It's the case at Brandeis anyway that we are getting results in far less time than you at MIT (I've heard reports of 2 hours, though mine have been 6, 8 and 11)—and we're the cash-poorest university in MA! We also seem to have the lowest number of infections so far (1). I had read that this test was simpler to process. Not the case?
6 hr ago Like Reply

Rebekah Bjork • Western Harvard Square
Mary Campbell if its the PCR test it should all be the same as far as processing. It may simply be a matter of how they load the samples into the machines. I am sure there is a logic and it could be that a school with fewer samples ends up with some sort of priority just bc they can be all loaded at once or something? Who knows!
6 hr ago Like Reply 1

Mary Campbell • Cambridge Commoners
Rebekah Bjork OK thanks. Yes we're still getting very fast results, but my last test took 11 hours, longer. Btw I got tested twice via the free city tests done in collaboration with Broad, in May and June, and they were definitely pencil-up-the-nose brain-piercers! So I guess they weren't always providing the easy/painless/self administered type to the general public.
5 hr ago Like Reply

Rebekah Bjork • Western Harvard Square
Mary Campbell oh funny it must have changed for July - i was super anxious but then it was lower nose :) the lower nose is relatively recent I can definitely see an early summer switch happening. One of my coworkers got a result super fast yesterday - I am guessing it all comes down to how samples get loaded for the automated steps :)
5 hr ago Like Reply 1

Arthur Gaer • Mid-Cambridge
Rebekah Bjork I had COVID test done at my doctor's at the end of June, and it was the one that went way up my nose, very unpleasant. When I started taking the Harvard tests at the beginning of September it was the outer nasal tests, so I'm guessing between the end of June and sometime in July the lower nasal tests were FDA approved? Just as it wasn't till the middle of September that Harvard got FDA approval for the self administered lower nasal test.

(I'd imagine that nobody would approve a self-administered upper nasal test—because it would be close to impossible to do properly!)
4 hr ago Like Reply

Rebekah Bjork • Western Harvard Square
Alexandra Grassian the rapid test is an antigen test - that has a higher false negative rate than the PCR. For kids with cold symptoms in the fall and childcare/school etc its tough b/c keeping them home for every sniffle isn't sustainable but sending back kids who do have covid but were cleared by a false negative isn't great either. Hopefully a greater sensitivity rapid test will become available (or something of similar sensitivity that is cheap and easy to do at home so people could test daily and then get a more sensitive test if there are symptoms)
4 hr ago Like Reply 1

Alexandra Grassian • Mid-Cambridge
Rebekah Bjork i totally agree none of this is sustainable!!! Luckily multiple kids had the same symptoms and all tests came back negative so that seems pretty reassuring this time around
3 hr ago Like Reply 1

Add a reply...

Gaylen Morgan • Huron Village
Testing for COVID-19 is a mess on the Federal level because of incompetent and careless governance. Given that, I am not surprised it's a bit tricky here, especially for people who can't easily get to a testing site.
7 hr ago Like Reply 3

Doriana Chialant • Mid-Cambridge
I agree
7 hr ago Like Reply

Margaret Rueter • Porter Square
I have been tested three times and have had a great experience. I feel like the city is doing a good job. I believe the only reason they take walk ins is if there seems to be time. I had heard this also. Also, if you go to the testing site and see (like now) they they are fully booked you can keep an eye out for the Friday before there are no more bookings. This is usually when new dates are announced for scheduling. Though I am on mailing lists for this information I have been able to get testing dates planned ahead for both traveling and my daughter's wedding needed, this way. I think, we're I worried I really might be ill I would go through my PCP.
7 hr ago Like Reply 1

Margaret Rueter • Porter Square
There are definitely systemic testing issues of internet, language, transportation, illness, etc. These need be addressed in a much bigger way by more than the city. I believe CHA is very involved on this level.
7 hr ago Like Reply 1

Pam Wickham • Huron Village
Check with Cambridge Health Alliance as well.
6 hr ago Like Reply

Lawrence Bailis • Western Harvard Square
I doubt if any jurisdiction is doing a better job. What more do you want for free tests for people who do not have symptoms. Cambridge makes tests available by appointment a few times a week? I t think walk-ins could expose people to lots of people who may be sick.
6 hr ago Like Reply 1

Sam Lazarus • Western Harvard Square
I've lived in jurisdictions that are doing a better job. Those appointments fill up constantly. We can't be putting up barriers to anyone being able to receive an on-demand test.

There are ways around your concerns including different sites for presenting symptoms or not. Would you really be happy if our current infrastructure was all we had going into a second wave? Or should we be challenging our elected officials to do better?
5 hr ago Like Reply

Beth Versoy • Cambridge Commoners
Sam Lazarus when the initial wave hit there were more testing times, days etc. I would imagine and expect that when a second wave hits they will ramp up the testing
5 hr ago Like Reply 1

Sam Lazarus • Western Harvard Square
That's good to know. However, right now there are not enough appointments. So it's hard to know how they are managing capacity in a transparent way.
4 hr ago Like Reply 1

Add a reply...

Sally Arnold • Porter Square
Dan Estrada You are joking, right?
6 hr ago Like Reply

Martha O'Mara • Mid-Cambridge
I just went on-line on the city's free covid testing (link on city website) and there are no appointments available at all.
5 hr ago Like Reply 3

Sam Lazarus • Western Harvard Square
Exactly. That's my point in a nutshell. If our public resources become a closed door re: Covid-19 testing then we're in massive trouble.
5 hr ago Like Reply

Martha O'Mara • Mid-Cambridge
and I just tried on My Chart at CHA which I belong to - even checking "I have symptoms/been in contact (which is not true but I want to see the result) and it would not schedule me a drive-through test. It may be that tests are being diverted to essential city workers??? My son is at Curry College and he is being tested weekly. Most local colleges are having tests processed by the Broad.
5 hr ago Like Reply 2

Add a comment...