Key facts about vaccinations and testing

<u>Vaccinations</u>

Coronavirus can cause COVID-19, a disease that is potentially life-threatening in the worst cases. Many people still suffer from health problems long after they have recovered from this disease. Along with observing social distancing and hygiene regulations and wearing a face mask, vaccinations are the best protection against this disease. Vaccination is voluntary and costs nothing. The vaccines used in Germany are safe and highly effective. They have passed an EMA (European Medicines Agency) approval procedure and have been thoroughly tested.

The prioritisation schedule set by the government was repealed on 7 June.

All German citizens aged 12 or over may now receive a vaccine against COVID-19.

There is currently not enough vaccine available to vaccinate every citizen immediately. You can register for a vaccination and you will be given an appointment as soon as possible.

If you would like to be vaccinated, you can arrange an appointment by telephone or over the internet. In Lower Saxony, there is a vaccination centre in every region and municipality. This is where you will receive your vaccination **after** you have **been given** an appointment.

The regional government has set up a telephone hotline which is open from Monday to Saturday from 8.00 am until 8.00 pm. You can use it to make an appointment at a vaccination centre or put your name on a waiting list. Your appointment details will then be sent to you automatically.

The telephone number is +49 (0) 800 99 88 665.
You can register for a vaccination appointment online at any time at www.impfportal-niedersachsen.de.

Here you can also put your name down on a waiting list or cancel an appointment. For example, if you are on the waiting list but have already been given a vaccination appointment by your GP surgery, you should cancel your appointment. This means appointments at vaccination centres can be made available for other people, who can then get vaccinated more quickly. A 'Cancel appointment/place on waiting list' function has been added to the vaccination portal for this purpose. If you want to cancel your appointment, you must first provide your telephone number. You will then be given a code. This code must be entered during the following cancellation procedure, along with your date of birth.

You can also get vaccinated against COVID-19 at doctors' surgeries Please speak to your GP about this.

Company doctors may also vaccinate their employees. Please ask your employer if this is available to you.

Testing

There are a range of tests that make it possible to determine whether someone has COVID-19. This is important because people are not always aware they are carrying the virus, and may possibly infect others.

There are three types of test:

1. those that must be carried out by medical staff, and which are usually performed in doctor's surgeries when it is suspected that you may be infected (PCR tests)

2. those that specially trained staff can carry out (rapid antigen tests)

3. those you can do yourself at home (self-tests).

Rapid antigen tests are available at many doctor's surgeries, test centres, pharmacies and dental practices. The Federal Government pays for at least one rapid antigen test per week for every citizen. You may take also more than one test a week free of charge. Click here to find out where you can get tested in your area. Click here to see which doctors' surgeries offer testing.

Rapid antigen tests and self-tests provide additional security, but they do not completely guarantee that you are not infected with the virus. Therefore, even if your test is negative, **please observe** the relevant regulations to protect yourself and others against the virus.

Important: if you have **had** a rapid test and it comes back positive, **please** go straight home and do not leave under any circumstances. Call your GP immediately. A PCR test must be carried out in all cases. This is the only way to either confirm or dismiss a **suspected COVID-19 infection**.