

# Healthy Georgia Collaborative

## Medical Associations Webinar

May 26, 2020 – 6:00 PM EST

# Welcome!

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Department of Public Health



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Georgia Department of Public Health

## Attendees:

- American Academy of Pediatrics- Georgia Chapter
- American College of Physicians- Georgia Chapter
- Georgia Academy of Family Physicians
- Georgia Dental Association
- Georgia Hospital Association
- Georgia's Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs)
- Georgia Nurses Association
- Medical Association of Georgia

# Agenda

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Contact tracing program overview

10

Guidance to report testing

12

Guidance to educate patients

16

Q & A

## Housekeeping:

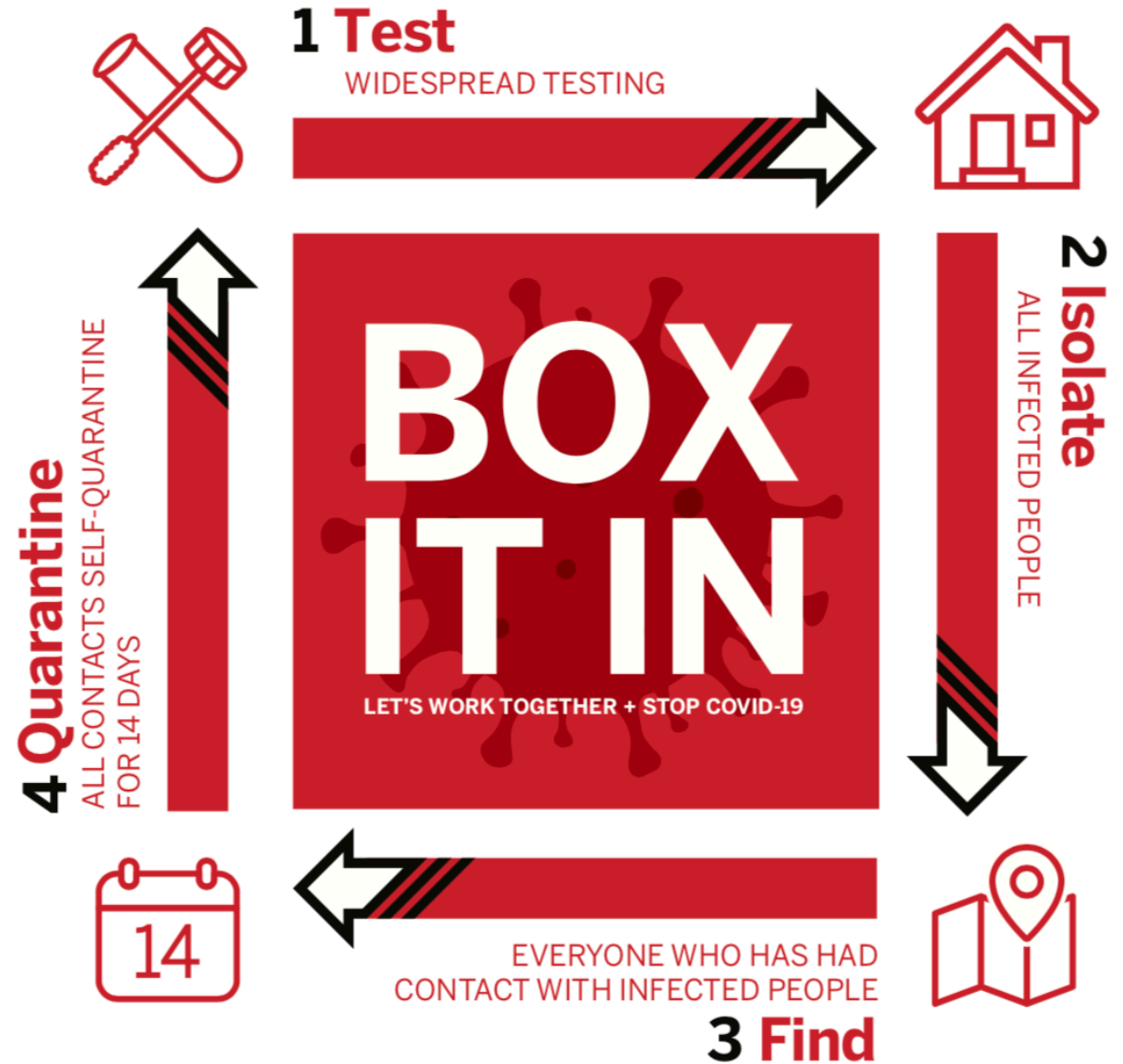
- Everyone's line will be muted to reduce audio feedback
- Please send questions to the chat
- 20-minute Q&A at the end
- Session will be recorded and posted after
- Presentation will be shared afterward



Healthy **Georgia**  
Collaborative

# Together we can stop the spread of COVID-19

Our success in this fight depends on public health authorities, the medical community, and residents working together, following evidence-based guidelines and participating in public health programs like testing and monitoring.



\*Adapted from Resolve to Save Lives, an initiative of Vital Strategies.

# Four priorities for the Healthy Georgia Collaborative

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## Focus area

## Outcome

Integrated **strategy** and governance



Rapid, coordinated response across state agencies, the medical community and private sector

**Workforce** development and training



Trained contact tracers deployed across every county

**Technology**, data and analytics



Streamlined tracing and monitoring efforts, and accurate, automated reporting

**Communications** and community outreach



Broad public trust in and adoption of public health measures

# Progress to date (since May 15)

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*Latest as of May 25*

**490+**

Active contact tracers,  
targeting to ramp up to  
1,000 by mid-June

**4,900+**

Total case interviews  
conducted

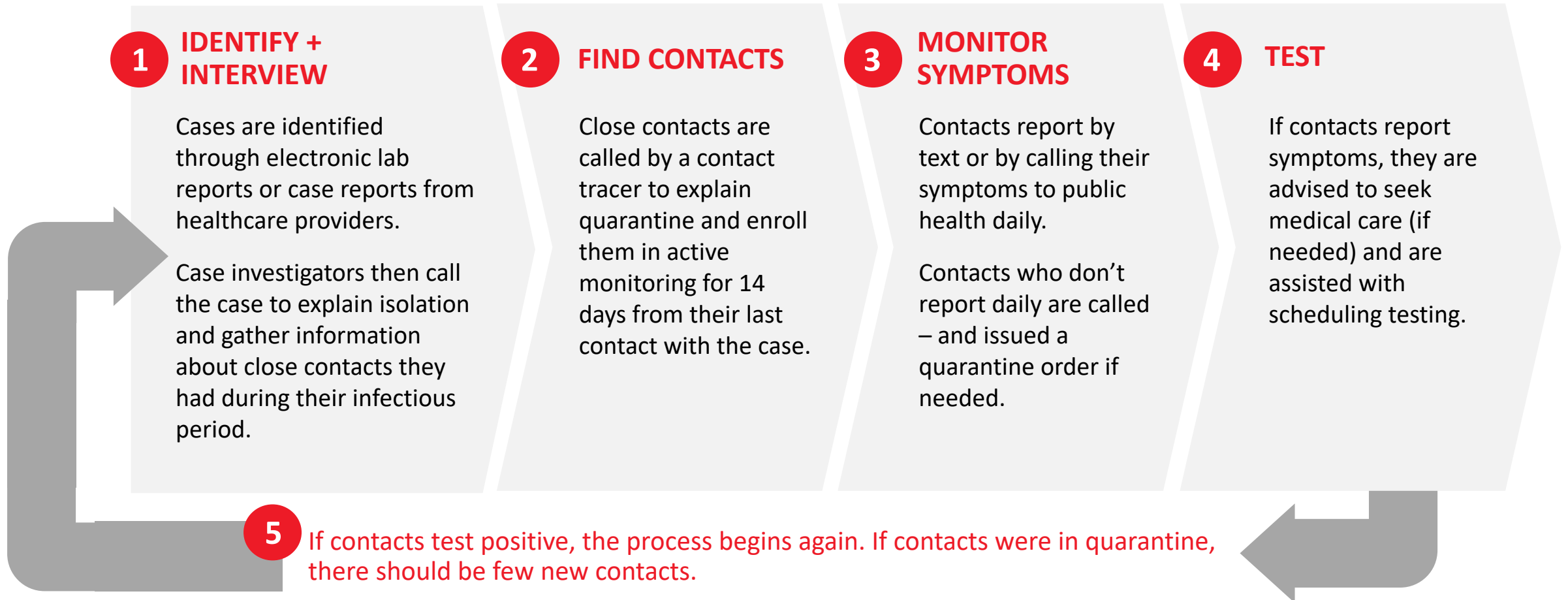
**12,600+**

Contacts identified

**2.76**

Average number of  
contacts per case

# Contact tracing process





# We need your help

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1

**Report positive** test results with **complete case data** to help us rapidly isolate cases, and locate and quarantine contacts

2

Help us educate cases and contacts about **what to expect** and **why contact tracing is so important**

## Definitions:

- **Isolation:** Separating persons known or suspected to be infected
- **Quarantine:** Separating persons known or suspected to be exposed to infection

# Reporting Test Results to DPH

# Reporting test results

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## How to report:

- Enter a case report into the State Electronic Notifiable Disease Surveillance System (SENDSS)
- Call your local District Health Office, or 1-866-PUB-HLTH
- Negative test results are now reportable as well, more information about how to report these tests will be coming soon

**The more information you can provide,  
the easier and faster DPH can respond to  
stop community spread**

## For positive results, you are required to include:

- Patient name
- Address
- Phone number and email
- Race/Ethnicity
- Gender
- Date specimen collected
- Was the patient hospitalized?
- Complete pre-existing conditions as stated in case report form
- Symptoms
- Symptom onset date
- Does the patient live or work in a congregate setting?
- Is the patient a health care worker/first responder?

# Educating Patients

# For patients who test positive for COVID-19

## Isolate yourself and help DPH stop the spread:

- Educate positive cases that their cooperation is critical for isolating (staying home to prevent the spread of disease) and identifying close contacts to prevent spreading disease.
- Expect a health professional from DPH to reach out to interview them about where they might have been and who they might have recently come into contact with. Start a list now so they can remember when DPH calls.
- Recommend they proactively reach out to friends and family who might have been exposed, so they can take preventative measures now. DPH will also notify contacts of their exposure to COVID-19.
- Direct them to DPH resources:

<https://dph.georgia.gov/isolation-contact>

## COVID-19 FAQs

What you need to know about:  
**CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019** (COVID-19)

**Q: What is COVID-19?**  
A: Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. The virus that causes COVID-19 is a novel coronavirus that was first identified during an investigation into an outbreak in Wuhan, China.

**Q: How does COVID-19 spread?**  
A: COVID-19 spreads the same way the flu and other respiratory diseases spread, through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes.

**Q: What are the symptoms of COVID-19?**  
A: Patients with COVID-19 have mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms of fever, cough and shortness of breath. In severe cases, patients with COVID-19 have developed pneumonia in both lungs.

**Q: Is there a vaccine for COVID-19?**  
A: There is currently no vaccine to protect against COVID-19. The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19.

**Q: Who can be infected with COVID-19?**  
A: Diseases can make anyone sick regardless of their race or ethnicity. People of Asian descent, including Chinese Americans, are not more likely to get COVID-19 than any other American. Help stop fear by letting people know that being of Asian descent does not increase the chance of getting or spreading COVID-19.

**Q: How can I help protect myself from COVID-19?**  
A: The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19. The same measures that are urged to prevent the spread of any respiratory virus are increasingly important for all Georgians.

- Wash your hands often with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Stay home if you're sick.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Get a flu shot!
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

**Q: How is COVID-19 treated?**  
A: There is no specific antiviral treatment recommended for COVID-19. People with COVID-19 should receive supportive care to help relieve symptoms.

People who think they may have been exposed to COVID-19 should call their healthcare provider **before** going to any provider's office, emergency department or urgent care.

For more information: [dph.georgia.gov/novelcoronavirus](https://dph.georgia.gov/novelcoronavirus)  
[cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html](https://cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html)

**DPH**  
GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Visit [dph.ga.gov](https://dph.ga.gov) for additional resources

# For identified contacts or patients who think they have been exposed

## Self-quarantine and enroll in symptom monitoring:

- Expect DPH to call them or reach out by other means if they do not answer
- They will be asked to self-quarantine in their home for 14 days from their last exposure – this is mandatory
- DPH will ask them to monitor and report their symptoms for 14 days from their last exposure
- Direct them to DPH resources:  
<https://dph.georgia.gov/contact>

## Healthy Georgia Collaborative FAQs

What you need to know about:

### COVID-19 + CONTACT TRACING

**Q: What is contact tracing?**

A: Contact tracing is a tool used by Public Health to quickly identify people who have been exposed to an infectious disease (COVID-19, measles, Ebola, TB, STDs) and alert their contacts of their exposure.

**Q: Why is contact tracing done?**

A: The goal of contact tracing is to help prevent the further spread of infection, to identify hotspots of infection, and to protect friends, families and communities from potential infection.

**Q: Is contact tracing confidential?**

A: Confidentiality is critical to the success of contact tracing. Contact tracing in Georgia is 100% confidential — the identity of the person who tests positive and the information on those who might have been exposed will not be shared. Georgia's contact tracing does not use technology to track movements.

**Q: How is contact tracing done?**

A: Trained public health staff work with people diagnosed with COVID-19 to help them recall everyone who they have had close contact with while they were infectious. Public health staff then alert these exposed individuals (contacts) as quickly as possible to prevent additional spread of the disease.

**Q: How will contacts be notified?**

A: A trained DPH staff member will notify the contact by text or phone that they may have been exposed to COVID-19 and encourage them to self-quarantine to prevent the spread of the disease.

**Q: What are contacts asked to do?**

A: Contacts must stay at home and maintain social distancing (at least 6 feet) from others they live with, including animals, until 14 days after their last known exposure. Contacts should check their temperature twice daily and monitor for symptoms.

• Fever • Cough • Chills • Muscle Pain  
• Shortness of breath / difficulty breathing  
• Sore Throat • New loss of taste or smell

If contacts develop symptoms, they should call their local health department to schedule an appointment for a COVID-19 test, seek medical care if needed, or call 911 if there is a medical emergency.

**Q: Is there a way to report my symptoms electronically?**

A: There is a web-based portal that allows identified contacts to easily answer questions about their health and their symptoms related to COVID-19. Contacts will receive a daily text message for 14 days reminding them to report if they have symptoms through the monitoring tool, and they will also receive information about what to do if they are or become sick. Individuals who do not report daily will be contacted by DPH. For people who do not wish to use the online system or receive texts, they can call DPH directly to report their symptoms.

**Q: How has contact tracing been used previously?**

A: Contact tracing was used during the 2014 Ebola virus outbreak, as well as in the SARS outbreak in 2003. Contact tracing is also used to combat sexually transmitted disease, measles and tuberculosis.

For more information about contact tracing:  
[dph.georgia.gov](https://dph.georgia.gov) or call 1-866-PUB-HLTH  
(1-866-782-4584)



Visit [dph.ga.gov](https://dph.ga.gov) for additional resources

# Key messages to remember

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- We are all in this together
- DPH is your source for testing and contact tracing information
- If you believe you have been exposed or have symptoms, self-quarantine and get tested
- If you test positive, isolate yourself from others and expect DPH to reach out and interview you
- If you have been identified as a potential contact, expect DPH to reach out to monitor your symptoms
- Your identity and personal health information are always 100% confidential

**Biggest challenge for contact tracing:**

**Getting residents to answer the phone when DPH calls**

# Questions