VICTORIA State Government

Wednesday, 18 August 2021

IS IT A COUGH OR A COVID COUGH? ONLY A TEST CAN TELL

The Victorian Government will today launch a new ad campaign encouraging Victorians to always see their cold symptoms as possible coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms and to get tested as soon as any symptoms appear.

Aiming to drive up testing numbers across the state, the new campaign *Only a test can tell* will launch across all media platforms in the coming days, including television and radio networks today. It will run indefinitely.

Data shows that even 18 months into this pandemic, many people still assume that their cold and flu symptoms are not related to COVID-19 and less than half the number of people who experience cold and flu symptoms get tested.

The campaign is about building community awareness of when to get tested, so people can act as soon as any symptoms appear and take the early steps needed to avoid being infectious out in the community.

There are multiple mystery cases in this outbreak, which means coming forward to get tested is one of the most important things Victorians can do to help us get on top of it as soon as possible.

With around 30,000 tests processed each day over the last few days, we know we can do better – there is a particular call out if you live, work or play in the Port Phillip or Glen Eira, in that inner south area, please come forward to get tested – even if it's a minor scratchy throat.

While getting tested is our short-term way out of this outbreak, getting vaccinated is our long-term way out of this pandemic. That's why the Victorian Government is aiming to administer 1 million doses in the next five weeks.

Increasing our vaccination coverage in Victoria is particularly important given the current COVID-19 outbreaks and the potential for further interstate incursions this year.

There are more than 200,000 COVID-19 vaccine appointments available now and more are always coming online. If you have any questions or concerns you can talk to a GP, pharmacist or to a senior and experienced immuniser at our state-run sites. The best vaccine you can get, is the one that you can get now.

All Victorians are encouraged where possible to book their vaccination appointment by visiting portal.cvms.vic.gov.au or by phoning the Coronavirus hotline on 1800 675 398.

To find the nearest testing centre near you visit coronavirus.vic.gov.au/where-get-tested-covid-19.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Health Martin Foley

"What we need from this testing campaign is for Victorians to see their cold symptoms differently – to not ignore them or shrug them off as nothing but to see their similarity to coronavirus symptoms and get tested."

"We're imploring every single Victorian to come forward and get tested if they have the slightest of symptoms – whether it's a headache or a slight sniffle – you may not think it's coronavirus, but only a test can tell."

"Getting vaccinated is our long-term way out of this pandemic. There are a million things that we miss while we're in lockdown – and each of those is a reason to get vaccinated."

For more information on where you can get tested or vaccinated visit coronavirus.vic.gov.au.