

Rapid lateral flow testing for COVID-19

What is an antigen?

A unique feature of the virus that our immune system recognises.

How does the test work?

Swabs from the nose and/or throat are mixed with a solution which is tested at home in a hand-held device to identify the presence of specific SARS-CoV-2 **antigens**. Generates results in 15 to 30 minutes.

What does the test tell us?

Who **currently** has an infection and is likely to be infectious to others, but nothing about someone's immune response.

When is the test used?

Regularly when you don't have symptoms; if you've been in close contact with someone with COVID-19; to end self-isolation. Will detect an active infection when the virus is in the body.



The test won't work at the very start or towards the end of an infection when viral antigens are low.



How accurate is it?

When used correctly, lateral flow tests provide good accuracy when the virus is present in high levels.

