
Express COVID-19 Testing



A new coronavirus test can detect infection in as little as five minutes and be used in almost any healthcare setting because of its small size and portability.

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As John Frels, vice president of research and development at Abbott Diagnostics, said in a [comment](#) to Bloomberg, starting 1 April, the company will supply 50,000 tests a day. The test detects fragments of the coronavirus genome, which takes only five minutes when it's present at high levels. To definitively rule out an infection can take up to 13 minutes.

The test is based on Abbott's ID Now platform, which is a common point-of-care test currently available in the U.S. (over 18,000 units nationally). The platform is used to detect influenza, strep throat and respiratory syncytial virus. For the test, a nasopharyngeal swab is taken, which is then mixed with a chemical solution to release virus's RNA. The mixture is inserted into an ID Now system, a small lightweight box, which identifies and amplifies select sequences of the coronavirus genome and ignores contamination from other viruses.

Abbott also provides another testing system, m2000 RealTime, to diagnose the infection. The system can analyse up to a million tests a week, but it takes longer to get the results.

Other companies and research teams are also rolling out faster testing systems. For example, a team from the University of Oxford's Engineering Science Department and the Oscar Suzhou Centre for Advance Research (OSCAR) [has developed](#) a COVID-19 test which produces highly accurate results in half an hour and only requires a standard heat block to work. Henry Schein Inc. [is offering](#) an antibody rapid blood test, known as Standard Q COVID-19 IgM/IgG Rapid Test, for administration at the point of care. The test delivers results within 15 minutes from a pinprick with no instrumentation required.

If you want to share your experience and perspective on COVID-19, [please do](#).

If your company is interested in engaging with our [COVID-19 community](#), please send us an [email](#).

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