How to Do a SARS-CoV-2 Antigen Rapid Diagnostic Test

Sample collection, testing and interpretation of SARS-CoV-2 Antigen RDTs

READ THE MANUFACTURERS’ INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Preparation for sample collection

A. New (unopened) individually wrapped sterile nasopharyngeal swab
B. Personal protective equipment—Gloves, gown, eye protection or face shield & medical mask
C. Pen for marking or labelling

Preparation for SARS-CoV-2 Antigen testing

A. New (unopened) COVID-19 Antigen Test Device
B. Timer
C. Extraction buffer tube and nozzle
D. Medical waste container
E. Disinfectant (Bleach and Alcohol)

Sample collection

1. Insert a sterile nasopharyngeal swab into the nasal cavity of the patient, reaching the surface of the posterior nasopharynx.
2. Swab over the surface of the posterior nasopharynx, rotating the swab 3–4 times to ensure a good sample. Leaving the swab in the nasal cavity for a few seconds will ensure absorption of the nasal secretions.
3. Withdraw the sterile swab from the nasal cavity.

SARS-CoV-2 Antigen testing

4. Insert the swab into an extraction buffer tube. While squeezing the buffer tube, stir the swab.
5. Remove the swab while squeezing the sides of the tube to extract the liquid from the swab.
6. Press the nozzle cap tightly onto the tube.
7. Apply the drops of extracted specimen to the specimen well of the test device. Add the exact number of drops specified by the manufacturer.
8. Read and record the test result after the specified period. Report the test result.
9. Dispose of the gloves, test device, swab and extraction buffer tube in the medical waste container. Disinfect the workstation with bleach and alcohol.

Interpretation of the test result

Positive
A line in “C” AND a line in “T” means SARS-CoV-2 is DETECTED

Negative
A line in “C” and NO LINE in “T” means SARS-CoV-2 is NOT DETECTED

Invalid
NO LINE in “C” and a line or no line in “T” means the test is INVALID. Repeat the test using a new (unopened) SARS-CoV-2 Antigen test device and a new sample.

Produced by the Foundation for Innovative New Diagnostics (FIND) from COVID-19 Antigen RDT manufacturers’ Instructions for Use. Guidance on content was obtained from the World Health Organization (WHO) Antigen-detection in the diagnosis of SARS-CoV-2 infection using rapid immunoassays-Interim guidance (11 September 2020)