

Framework for the Provision of Rapid Antigen Screening for COVID-19 in Clinical and Non-Clinical Settings

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Developed by	Office of Deputy Secretary, Health System Strategy and Planning
Consultation	NSW Health Pathology Health Infrastructure Public Health Response Branch
For use by	<p>This document provides guidance for Rapid Antigen COVID-19 Screening in clinical and non-clinical sites in NSW during the COVID-19 response.</p> <p>These guidelines recognise that individual facilities will need to tailor their response to local patterns of disease and available resources. For those industries, schools and other non-health care settings this document provides high level guidance.</p> <p>These guidelines should be used to support pandemic planning for the COVID-19 response.</p>

Purpose

This Framework has been developed to guide the delivery of high quality, safe and appropriate rapid antigen screening for COVID-19 in non-clinical and clinical settings in order to:

- Support the uptake of frequent COVID-19 testing in high priority settings
- Increase the proportion of people who can access frequent testing
- Reduce the number of people with undiagnosed COVID-19 infection in priority settings.

The Chief Health Officer has confirmed that, where the requirement for a rapid antigen test applies, of a kind approved by the Chief Health Officer, the approved process is set out in this document under the [Rapid Antigen Testing Indicative Process](#).

Background

NSW Health has implemented a range of measures to promptly identify cases of COVID-19 infection and prevent transmission in NSW, including rapid antigen screening and conventional laboratory (PCR) testing.

Should a person in NSW be confirmed to have COVID-19 infection, NSW Health has procedures in place to identify people they have been in close contact with. Those people are provided with advice about self-isolation to minimise spread of infection.

The NSW Government is committed to working with industry, aged care facilities, other health providers and schools to introduce rapid antigen screening, to mitigate against outbreaks in workplaces and schools.

Where application of rapid antigen testing is not appropriate to undertake at a particular site, a range of other screening options can be explored to detect COVID-19. This includes PCR testing, point of care PCR testing and highly pooled saliva/PCR screening.

Rapid antigen screening is another tool to support the pandemic response but does not replace the usual mask-wearing, hand hygiene and distancing rules that need to remain in place, as well as the need for vaccination and ongoing education of the community. This includes not coming to work or school if unwell, isolating if instructed to by NSW Health and, where necessary, verbal screening of people to ensure they have not attended a venue of concern.

The rapid antigen test is quick and easy. Typically, it involves a nasal swab (using a small cotton bud-like instrument) that is then placed into a chemical solution and the solution is tested on the receptacle, which displays a result within 10-15 minutes. This [link](#) provides an overview of how the test works.

Rapid antigen screening can be performed onsite in selected workplaces and schools under appropriate supervision to ensure advice is available on the process for testing and how the result is interpreted.

Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) conditions must be followed in relation to the nature of supervision and training that is required to undertake testing.

Please review these [Frequently Asked Questions](#) on the TGA site as they cover issues such as the role of the health practitioner, training of staff, and models of testing supervision. For example, a health practitioner, medical practitioner or paramedic must be available (either in person, or available on the phone or by videoconference) to provide assistance or advice, as required, to people under their supervision in the correct use of the device and the interpretation of the test results.

Rapid antigen screening is one pathway to increase testing for COVID-19; particularly for people who reside and/or work in a priority setting. The addition of rapid antigen screening to the mix of options in NSW increases access to screening for COVID-19 as well as provides extra convenience to people who are required to test more frequently.

When rapid antigen screening may be appropriate

Rapid antigen tests performed at frequent intervals have been used internationally and in Australian industries for some time as an indicative screen for COVID-19 in their asymptomatic employees.

Frequent rapid antigen screening can reduce the number of new infections in the community, especially amongst people who do not show any symptoms. To maximise the public health benefit, screening individuals two to three times per week is recommended.

The benefits of rapid antigen screening are relative to the amount of disease that is present in a population (prevalence), with greater benefit from settings with high prevalence. At low levels of prevalence, the risk of having a false-positive test results will exceed the public health benefit.

Although these tests have some limitations when compared to the nose and throat swabs undertaken with a laboratory PCR test, rapid antigen screening can be performed easily and onsite with results available within minutes.

The choice of target populations and how tests are performed are important considerations. Mass screening in samples of the population alongside contact tracing can focus the containment effort in affected communities and can assist with relaxing lockdown restrictions.

When rapid antigen screening is not appropriate

If a person has flu-like symptoms or [symptoms](#) associated with COVID-19, or is a close or casual contact for COVID-19, rapid antigen screening should not be used, and the person should be directed immediately for a laboratory-based PCR test for COVID-19. The location of PCR testing sites across NSW can be found [here](#).

A person who has had a confirmed COVID-19 infection in the past and has recovered and is able to return to work, and has no symptoms for COVID-19 is exempt from having a COVID-19 test for six months after their infection (unless otherwise directed by NSW Health). NSW Health will ensure any individual for which this applies will be provided an appropriate exemption when it needs to be applied.

Service Model

Therapeutic Goods Administration approved tests

Only rapid antigen test devices registered by the Therapeutic Goods Administration can be used for COVID-19 testing in Australia. Screening must be conducted in accordance with any product conditions placed on the test by the TGA. Information on directives for registered tests is available from the [TGA website](#).

Please note that in line with current directives, self-testing at home remains prohibited. Rapid antigen testing must be performed in conjunction with a health practitioner who can conduct or oversee the performance of the testing and provide immediate clinical advice if required. See “Supervision of Testing and Workforce” section of this Framework for more information.

Supply for rapid antigen tests and supervision directives are also set out on the [TGA website](#).

Use of rapid antigen tests

Rapid antigen testing for COVID-19 should be used as a **screening test** and is not suitable for use as a **diagnostic test**. Rapid antigen screening should be conducted two to three times per week with individuals in identified priority settings.

A person who receives a positive rapid antigen test result needs to have an urgent PCR test on a second collection to determine whether COVID-19 is in fact present.

When a person has a positive rapid antigen test result, they must be notified immediately to NSW Public Health on 0407 930 113. The Public Health Unit will advise on safe transport to a local COVID-19 testing facility where the person will have priority access to a PCR test.

The person with a positive rapid antigen test result must remain in isolation until a definitive result is available.

Where a person declines a rapid antigen test at their place of work or school, then it is recommended that they do not enter the site until they can provide evidence of a COVID-19 test in the past 72 hours.

Information on what supports for people who live in NSW and cannot earn an income because they must self-isolate or quarantine or are caring for someone with COVID-19 can be found [here](#).

Sites for rapid antigen testing

Rapid antigen testing is designed to be done in a range of sites including non-clinical and clinical settings such as construction sites, educational institutions, fixed and temporary community-based sites, aged care residential facilities and commercial businesses such as food production sites.

Industries and schools can implement rapid antigen testing screening and may engage a third party provider to manage this process.

NSW Health has established guidance for workplaces and schools conducting rapid antigen screening onsite. The Therapeutic Goods Administration sets out regulations that apply to [rapid antigen test kits](#) and [conditions of supply](#).

General procedures for how to use a testing device are set out on the Appendices of this document. NSW Health recommends following the manufacturer's instructions for the kits purchased as individual devices may vary. Procedure examples provided by NSW Health are as indication of how the test kits are used generally.

Conditions for the provision of safe and high-quality rapid antigen screening

- The testing environment is fit for purpose. All equipment is in good working order, all procedures are carried out accurately, efficiently and safely and the wellbeing and confidentiality of the individual is respected, especially in relation to test result.
- The Standard Operating Procedure set out below for rapid antigen screening in NSW is adopted by sites providing rapid antigen screening for COVID-19 (inclusive of clinical and non-clinical settings).
- The Standard Operating Procedure includes:
 - establishing appropriate clinical governance
 - the standard workplace health and safety assessment
 - information on administering a test and delivering a test result
 - establishing a mechanism for confirmatory testing for individuals who receive a positive test result
 - reporting of data to NSW Health if requested.
- All health practitioners and persons under their supervision must be trained in the correct use of the device and the interpretation of the test results. A health practitioner remains responsible for the conduct of testing and must be available to provide assistance or advice as required to persons under their supervision in the correct use of the device and the interpretation of the test results (either in person, or available on the phone or by videoconference).

Evaluation and Monitoring

Appropriate evaluation and monitoring must be undertaken for each site providing rapid antigen testing for COVID-19.

This is essential to support best clinical practice and for monitoring the impact and outcomes of implementing rapid antigen testing for COVID-19 in NSW.

Details around the type of information to be collected and reported is set out in the Standard Operating Procedure.

Standard Operating Procedure for the Provision of Rapid Antigen Screening for COVID-19 in Clinical and Non-Clinical Settings



Overview

Rapid Antigen COVID-19 screening sites can be established to mitigate against outbreaks in workplaces, aged care facilities and schools as well as increasing local testing capacity. This document provides guidance on how to establish a COVID-19 screening site safely and efficiently during the COVID-19 response.

Objectives

The objectives of establishing a rapid antigen COVID-19 screening site include:

- To promote early detection of community-acquired COVID-19 cases by maintaining a testing schedule for individuals every two to three days; and
- To support and encourage workers in industry and students in schools to get tested by making testing access easy and convenient.

Establishing Rapid Antigen Testing COVID-19 screening sites can provide increased testing capacity to areas of need, promote testing in areas with low testing rates and to mitigate against outbreaks in priority settings including workplaces, aged care facilities and schools.

Rapid antigen screening is one pathway to increase testing for COVID-19; particularly for people who reside and/or work in a priority setting. The addition of rapid antigen screening to the mix of options in NSW increases access to screening for COVID-19 as well as provides extra convenience to people who are required to test more frequently.

Location

Rapid Antigen COVID-19 screening sites are located on a safe and easily accessible site.

The officer responsible for each site will need to determine the suitability of the proposed Rapid Antigen COVID-19 testing location to ensure it is both safe and easily accessible. It will also need to be sign posted so workers and students can find it easily and are appropriately spaced while waiting to be tested.

Signage and instructions about social distancing, checking in and checking out and mask-wearing can be downloaded from the [NSW Government website](#) to assist with consistent messaging. General and [industry specific](#) materials, as well as translated materials are also available.

If it is determined that a location may be suitable for a Rapid Antigen COVID-19 screening site, a site checklist (see Appendices) should be completed to ensure other relevant factors have been considered prior to set-up. The chosen site should be monitored and checked daily for any environmental changes.

The key questions below should be considered when determining the suitability of the site.

- Is there access to utilities including power, wi-fi and water?
- Is the site mobility friendly (if required)?
- Is the site well-lit?
- Consider security of any equipment/structures that may be left unattended after-hours.
- Are there staff amenities within proximity including a toilet (both male and female)?
- Does the site offer weather protection e.g. ability to erect awning or marquee for sun, wind and rain during testing?

Management of sites

Rapid Antigen COVID-19 screening sites are run safely and efficiently. An [Indicative process for Industry diagram](#) is available in the Appendices to help guide rapid antigen testing of workers.

The officer responsible will need to ensure site governance is established and communicated to workers and students and the health professionals and supervisors overseeing the testing process.

The key questions below should be considered for safe and effective management of site staff who are undertaking and supervising the testing process.

- Is there an agreed orientation process for all health professional and supervising staff to the site?
- Is their sufficient staff mix to ensure wait times for workers and students is minimised and allowance for staff breaks?
- The ratio of health practitioners to people under their supervision will vary from site to site depending on the size and complexity of the site as well as the experience of the staff in performing the test.
- Are all health professional and supervising staff aware of the need to correctly use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)? Is enough PPE available including surgical masks, surgical gloves and a safe disposal process for waste materials?
- Is their suitable hand sanitising stations for workers and students set up to avoid congestion?
- Are QR codes clearly established to assist with the check in and check out process and spaced sufficiently to avoid congestion?

Vulnerable populations

Provide Rapid Antigen COVID-19 screening in a culturally safe manner.

COVID-19 testing is a core strategy in limiting the spread of COVID-19 in the NSW population. It is vital that all parts of the population can access testing when appropriate. With regards to Rapid Antigen COVID-19 testing, vulnerable populations may include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds and those who may have mobility issues or other special needs.

The key questions below should be considered to support Rapid Antigen COVID-19 testing for vulnerable populations.

- Is there an opportunity for members of the Aboriginal health workforce to be trained to perform swabs?
- Are testing sites in the area mobility friendly? Particularly where students and workers are known to have mobility issues.
- Have opportunities to promote COVID-19 testing within existing health activities for vulnerable populations been considered and implemented?
- Is translated material available as required to assist with messaging?

Signage and communications

The screening clinic has clear signage indicating the Rapid Antigen COVID-19 screening site's location and instructions for users whilst on site.

The officer responsible will need to ensure planning of appropriate signage to indicate the location of the site and any other relevant information. Advice for workers and students ahead of screening should be considered. An example of messaging for individuals is listed here, together with supporting fact sheets for industry and schools.

Depending on the needs of the local community, signage in alternate languages should also be considered.

Signage should be weatherproof and secured to objects with consideration of work health and safety principles.

Signage and instructions about social distancing, checking in and checking out and mask-wearing can be downloaded from the [NSW Health website](#) to assist with consistent messaging.

General and [industry specific](#) materials, as well as translated materials are also available.

The key questions below should be considered when developing and publishing communication or signage.

- Has the location and hours of the site been communicated to the target audience?
- Do workers and students have access to instructions as to site process?
- Have information brochures for individuals been developed and distributed?
- Has appropriate signage been set up upon entry to the site?

Equipment, consumable and waste management

Rapid Antigen COVID-19 screening sites and site staff have adequate access to identified resources and re-supply pathways and are aware of escalation pathways.

The officer responsible will need to determine the anticipated demand for stock and the logistics for safe storage and re-supply of both test kits and supporting materials like PPE. Staff working on site should be familiar with the location of stock and stock ordering procedures.

Waste management on site should be considered and planned.

- Used test kits are considered Biohazard Waste and do require special disposal arrangements. For more information on Biohazard go to: <https://www.cec.health.nsw.gov.au/keep-patients-safe/COVID-19>.
- Used PPE is considered general waste (materials are not recyclable) and do not require special disposal arrangements, however it is recommended that waste be disposed of safely and in sealed rubbish containers. Regular emptying of rubbish containers should be undertaken to avoid overflow or the need to touch used materials again, once disposed of.

The key questions below should be considered when developing plans for equipment and waste management.

- Have supply chains for stock been established and communicated to relevant staff, including escalation pathways for stock shortages?
- Is there an agreed process for removing waste safely from the site?

Testing site operations

Registration processes, privacy concerns and traffic movement within the site are clear and effective.

Information should be available to workers and students that use the site to inform them of their privacy and how personal information will be used.

Where NSW Health seeks any testing data to evaluate the program, no personal health data is used without consent.

The key questions below should be considered when documenting and communicating the operational processes of the site.

- Have flow pathways been clearly mapped out and communicated to staff to ensure there is no congestion in testing sites?
- Does the flow of traffic take into consideration the need for physical distancing at all times – is this clearly signposted/documentated?
- Have site registration processes (such as QR code check in and check out) been clearly documented and communicated to workers, students and test site staff?
- Have considerations been made as to how site operations should change during periods of surge activity? Have these processes been agreed?
- Are new staff provided with site processes and protocols during orientation?

Supervision of testing and workforce

Supervision is a key responsibility for controlling the risks to worker and student safety and welfare that may arise while providing a testing service. Supervision of testing goes to the professional conduct of a health practitioner.

Once appropriately trained in the correct use of the device, persons under the supervision (either in person, or available on the phone or by videoconference) of a health practitioner may perform the test.

The relevant health practitioner responsible for supervision of testing is required to ensure all people performing the test (including sample collection, performing tests and interpreting test results) under their supervision are appropriately trained in all matters related to good testing practice, including:

- infection control practices, including assessment of any site-specific work, health and safety risks;
- the collection of samples, or where applicable the supervision of self-collection in order to verify patient identification, sample collection, test performance and test results;
- the correct use of the device and interpretation of test results;
- protocols for recording results and requirements for notification of positive results;
- protocols and referral processes for recollection and confirmatory testing; and
- protocols for reporting any problems or adverse events associated with performance of the test to the Therapeutic Goods Administration.

A health practitioner remains responsible for the conduct of testing and must be available to provide assistance or advice as required to persons under their supervision in the correct use of the device and the interpretation of the test results (either in person, or available on the phone or by videoconference).

The ratio of health practitioners to people under their supervision will vary from site to site depending on the size and complexity of the site as well as the experience of the staff in performing the test.

Employers and industries implementing rapid antigen testing screening for their workforce may engage a third party provider to manage this process.

Where samples are self-collected by individuals, the collection must be supervised to verify patient identification, sample collection, test performance and the interpretation of test results.

[Definition of a health practitioner](#) (from the Therapeutic Goods Act 1989):

“health practitioner” means a person who, under a law of a State or internal Territory, is registered or licensed to practice in any of the following health professions:

- (a) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practice;
- (b) dental (not including the professions of dental therapist, dental hygienist, dental prosthetist or oral health therapist);
- (c) medical;
- (d) medical radiation practice;
- (e) nursing;
- (f) midwifery;
- (g) occupational therapy;
- (h) optometry;
- (i) pharmacy;
- (j) physiotherapy;
- (k) podiatry;
- (l) psychology
- (m) paramedic

The TGA has confirmed that a **Paramedic** is also deemed a “health practitioner” for the purpose of rapid antigen testing.

Support Workers

In addition to health practitioners and trained staff engaged to oversee the testing process, and dependent on numbers of students and workers requiring testing in a period, organisations should consider support services including a concierge function and/or COVID safe marshal for logistics and crowd control; and administration staff to support the process.

Management of results

Positive Results

In line with the [Rapid Antigen Testing Indicative Process](#), a person who receives a positive rapid antigen test result needs to have an urgent PCR test on a second collection to determine whether COVID-19 is in fact present.

When a person has a positive rapid antigen test result, they must be notified immediately to the NSW Health Public Health Unit (PHU) on 0407 930 113.

The PHU will advise on safe transport to a local COVID-19 testing facility where they will have priority access to a PCR test.

The person with a positive rapid antigen test result must remain in isolation until a definitive result is available. People with a confirmed positive test will have their results reported immediately to the PHU in line with high-risk results procedures.

Negative Results

In line with the [Rapid Antigen Testing Indicative Process](#), where a person receives a negative result, they must have the test result registered with testing supervisor; the person can then check out of rapid antigen testing site and go to their work site.

Individuals must continue to follow the latest health advice and restrictions in their area.

If individuals develop any symptoms, even if mild, they must immediately get a standard COVID-19 test and isolate until they get a negative result from NSW Health.

Reporting of data

NSW Health's Agency for Clinical Innovation are overseeing an evaluation of the usage of rapid antigen testing to capture useful insights that will help further enhance the uptake of the technology and measures its effectiveness against stated public health objectives.

A number of industry and school sites have been asked to collect and report basic data in line with the evaluation plan.

In summary, evaluation questions will focus on:

- Is implementation of RAT proceeding successfully?
- How effective is RAT in achieving its objectives?
- What needs to be considered in rolling out RAT more broadly?

Proposed data collection will include:

- Daily online data entry for that day's test data from each site (SurveyMonkey)
- One-off survey to be completed by manager at each site
- Followed up by short phone interviews also with site managers

Appendices

A. Testing clinic site checklist

B. Training materials and links

C. Supervisor Competency Assessment Checklist

D. Supporting communications materials

A - Screening site checklist

ITEM	COMPLETED (tick / cross)	DATE
SITE REQUIREMENTS		
Connection to essential utilities		
Clear signage to identify clinic location		
Signage to indicate process / directions to individuals including entry, exit, registration location etc.		
Adequate space for QR code registration space outside or immediately inside building allowing for adequate social distancing		
Adequate space to allow social distancing when lining up prior to receiving test (1.5m between people clearly marked / indicated)		
Adequate space to maintain social distancing in entire area		
Signage to reinforce social distancing requirements		
Wheelchair access - where required		
Accessible toilets with social distancing signage		
Undercover wet weather area (allowing for social distancing)		
One-way flow i.e. one entry and one exit		
Adequate ventilation for enclosed spaces		
SCREENING REQUIREMENTS		
Privacy considerations		
Bench or table for storage		
Garbage bin - secured and emptied regularly		
Adequate numbers of tables and chairs for testing staff (allowing for social distancing)		
PPE REQUIREMENTS		
PPE for workforce (surgical mask, gloves)		
Masks for support staff		
Masks for all individuals awaiting test (to sit at registration tables)		
Signage to reinforce appropriate mask use		

EQUIPMENT & ICT REQUIREMENTS

Tape to mark social distancing requirements		
Hand sanitiser for registration space and waiting areas		
Information sheets for patients		
Wifi for QR codes and downloading information; Mobile range to make calls to PHU if required for positive test results		
Stationary		

STAFF INSTRUCTIONS

Staff orientated to site and workflows		
Staff provided with re-stocking of kit supplies process		

An “**Indicative process for Industry**” diagram is available at **Appendix D** to help guide rapid antigen testing of workers

B - Training materials and links

A range of training materials have been developed by NSW Health Pathology to support rapid antigen testing in non-clinical settings:

1. [Handwash Guideline Poster](#)
2. [Handrub \(Sanitiser\) Guideline Poster](#)
3. [Anterior Swab Collection Procedure](#)
4. [Quality Control Procedure](#)
5. [RAT Test Procedure and Interpretation of Results](#)

C - Supervisor Competency Assessment Checklist

Element	Operator must understand the rationale and procedural task	Trainee	Supervisor
1. Site preparation	5.1. Prepares necessary equipment and supplies 5.2. Supplies and inventory are adequate for site 5.3. Checks expiry dates of tests and accessories 5.4. Ensures test and supply inventory is managed and records maintained	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Workplace safety	2.1. Site design is fit for purpose 2.2. Privacy aspects are adequate 2.3. Understands site workflow 2.4. Hand washing / sanitising between clients 2.5. No eating, drinking, smoking permitted on site 2.6. Personal protective equipment 2.7. Workplace (surface and waste) decontamination procedures 2.8. Disinfectant management/preparation procedures 2.9. Accident/incident reporting 2.10. Site emergency procedures (fire, evacuation) 2.11. Waste disposal procedures (for clinical waste)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Worker/student consultation	3.1 Welcomes individual 3.2 Introduces self and designation 3.3 Checks correct client information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Communication	4.1 Communicates effectively 4.2 Uses pleasant and respectful manner, uses language appropriate to client's level of understanding, uses open body language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Professional conduct	5.1 Understands and operates within the professional conduct of the responsible service 5.2 Maintains professional boundaries and does not disclose personal information - maintains client confidentiality 5.3 Maintains a professional and friendly demeanour	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Immediate management plan - performance of test	6.1 Offers rapid antigen test 6.2 Validates test overall result 6.3 Completes Result Worksheet 6.4 Arranges ongoing management - where applicable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

D - Supporting communications materials

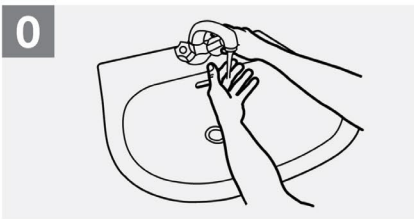
1. [Information for schools and students](#)
2. [Information for employers and employees](#)
3. [Letter for consumers](#)
4. [Testing brochure - general](#)
5. [Fact sheet for industry](#)
6. [Indicative Flowchart Process for Industry](#)
7. [Information for workers on their rapid antigen result](#)
8. [Information for Construction Workers](#)

How to Handwash?

WASH HANDS WHEN VISIBLY SOILED! OTHERWISE, USE HANDRUB

 Duration of the handwash (steps 2-7): 15-20 seconds

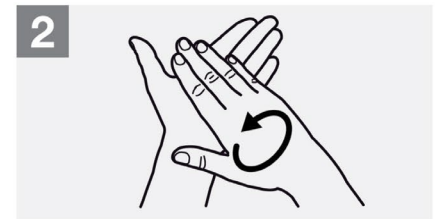
 Duration of the entire procedure: 40-60 seconds



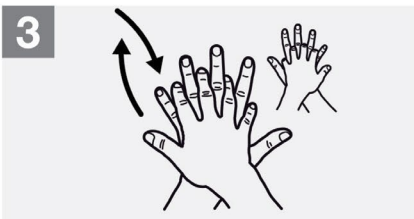
Wet hands with water;



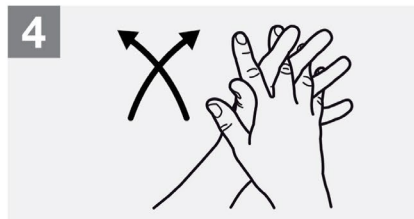
Apply enough soap to cover all hand surfaces;



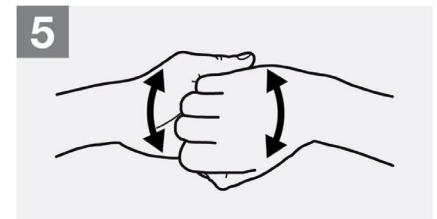
Rub hands palm to palm;



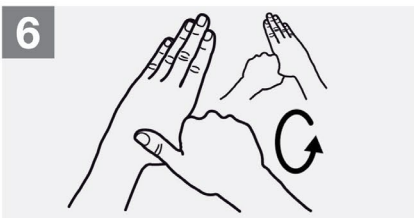
Right palm over left dorsum with interlaced fingers and vice versa;



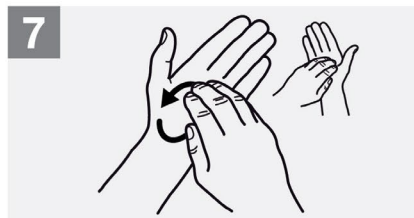
Palm to palm with fingers interlaced;



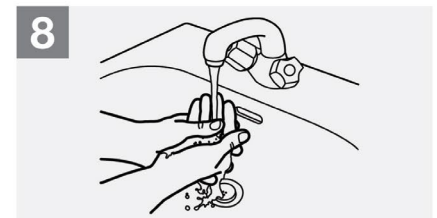
Backs of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked;



Rotational rubbing of left thumb clasped in right palm and vice versa;



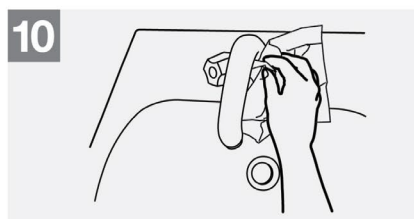
Rotational rubbing, backwards and forwards with clasped fingers of right hand in left palm and vice versa;



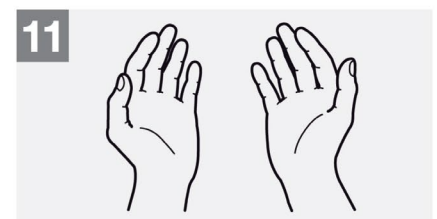
Rinse hands with water;



Dry hands thoroughly with a single use towel;



Use towel to turn off faucet;



Your hands are now safe.



World Health Organization

Patient Safety

A World Alliance for Safer Health Care

SAVE LIVES

Clean Your Hands

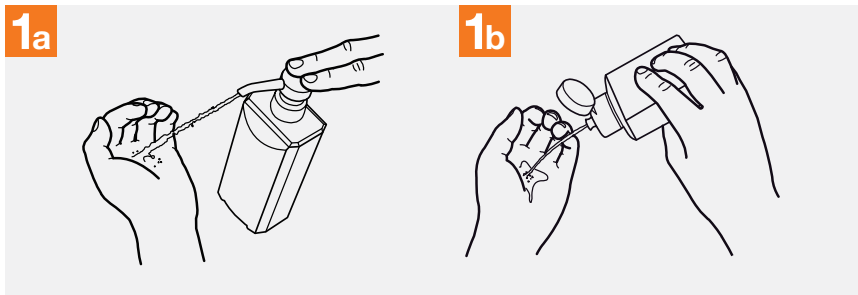
Based on the 'How to Handwash', URL: http://www.who.int/gpsc/5may/How_To_HandWash_Poster.pdf © World Health Organization 2009. All rights reserved

May 2009

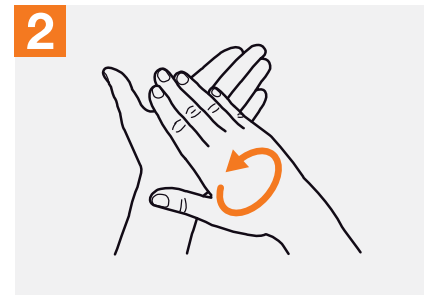
How to Handrub?

RUB HANDS FOR HAND HYGIENE! WASH HANDS WHEN VISIBLY SOILED

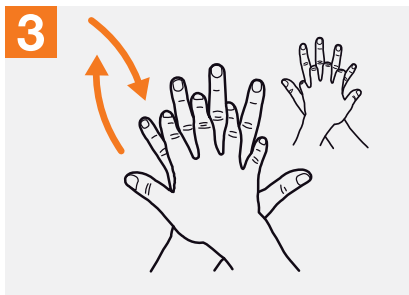
 **Duration of the entire procedure: 20-30 seconds**



1a Apply a palmful of the product in a cupped hand, covering all surfaces;



2 Rub hands palm to palm;



3 Right palm over left dorsum with interlaced fingers and vice versa;



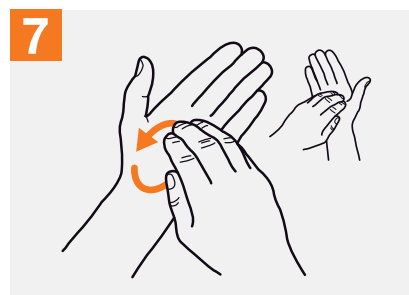
4 Palm to palm with fingers interlaced;



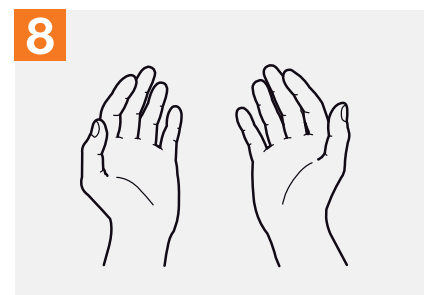
5 Backs of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked;



6 Rotational rubbing of left thumb clasped in right palm and vice versa;



7 Rotational rubbing, backwards and forwards with clasped fingers of right hand in left palm and vice versa;



8 Once dry, your hands are safe.



World Health Organization

Patient Safety

A World Alliance for Safer Health Care

SAVE LIVES

Clean Your Hands

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WHO acknowledges the Hôpitaux Universitaires de Genève (HUG), in particular the members of the Infection Control Programme, for their active participation in developing this material.

May 2009

How to Collect an Anterior Nasal Swab for COVID-19 Rapid Antigen Testing (RAT)

The first steps

1 Gather equipment

You will need:

- Contents of your RAT kit
- A suitable surface
- Biohazard waste bag
- Hand sanitiser



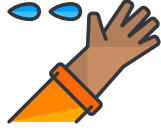
2 Prepare your area

- Ensure your area is free from food, drink and unnecessary objects
- Clean your surface
- Remove the contents of the RAT kit and place onto the cleaned surface



3 Blow nose & wash hands

Excess blood or mucous on the swab can interfere with results, therefore blow your nose and then wash your hands with soap and water or use hand sanitiser



What's the difference with this swab?

Unlike many of the COVID-19 tests which require a more invasive nasal swab, such as those performed in COVID-19 clinics or hospitals, this is a simple self-test using an anterior nasal swab. It is a more comfortable, shallow, less invasive swab.

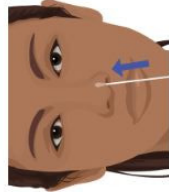
Collecting the swab

4 Remove the swab from the package.

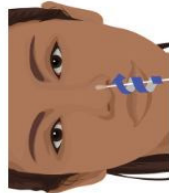
Do not touch the soft end tip with your hands or anything else.



5 Insert the soft end of the swab into one of your nostrils no more than 2-3cm.



6 Slowly rotate the swab 5 times over the inside surface of your nostril.



7 Gently remove the swab and repeat step 6 in your other nostril. It should take you roughly 15 seconds to fully collect your sample.



8 Gently remove the swab and select the extraction vial provided in your RAT kit.



9 Peel back the foil and place the swab into this vial.



For information on running your test and interpreting your results please see "Test Procedure and Results Interpretation" document

CareStart RAT Quality Control Procedure - COVID19

Frequency

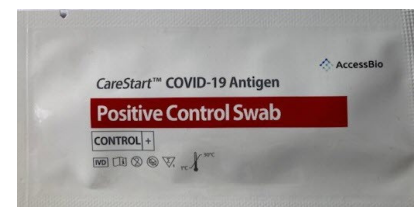
The quality control swabs should be run once with every new lot, shipment and each new user. Both positive and negative control swabs should be run.

Note: The CareStart Test kit will come already QC passed but when you open the box you will need to run the QC again before handing out the test kits.

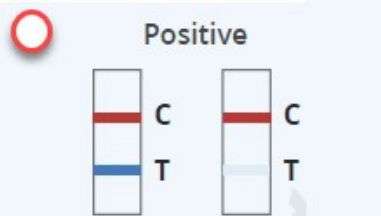
Materials required

From the **new** CareStart kit take out the following:

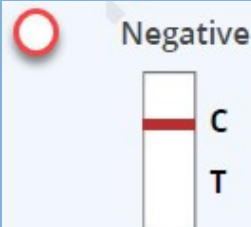
- 2 x extraction vials and extraction caps
- 2 x device tests
- 1 x positive and negative control swab
- PPE (gloves, mask, bluey)
- Stopwatch
- Biohazard waste bag



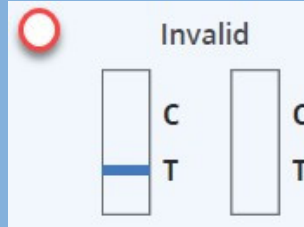
Quality control results



Positive control swab should show a result the same as the image above



Negative control swab should show a result the same as the image above



If one or more of the control swabs fails to give expected results:

1. Check that the device test or control swabs have not expired
2. Ensure test device and control swabs have been stored correctly
3. Please **DO NOT PERFORM ANY TESTING** until the issue is resolved. Contact the manufacturer or distributor.

CareStart RAT Quality Control Procedure - COVID19

Quality control procedure

Ensure you use correct PPE process when running the control tests

Important: Run the negative control swab first before the positive control swab.

1. Place materials on a bluey
2. Remove the negative control swab from the pouch
3. Peel off the aluminum foil seal from the vial
4. Place the negative swab into the vial and rotate the swab vigorously **at least 5 times**
5. Remove the swab by rotating it against the vial whilst squeezing the sides of the vial to release the liquid from the swab.
Properly discard the swab according to your site's guidelines for managing biohazard waste (e.g. biohazard waste bag)
6. Close the vial by pushing the cap firmly onto the vial and mix thoroughly by flicking the bottom of the tube
7. Invert the vial and hold the sample vertically above the sample well. Squeeze the vial gently. Allow **3 drops** of the sample to fall into the well
Note: Make sure you have the device test on a flat surface.
8. Read and interpret the results at **10 minutes and no longer than 15 minutes (see quality control results and action steps for failed results).**
9. Properly discard the test device according to your site's guidelines for managing biohazard waste (e.g. biohazard waste bag)
10. Repeat the same process above for the positive quality control swab

CareStart Rapid Antigen Testing (RAT) Test Procedure and Results Interpretation

What's in the RAT kit

- Swab
- Extraction vial
- Extraction cap
- Test device

What else you need

- Hand sanitiser
- Mask
- Gloves
- Biohazard waste bag

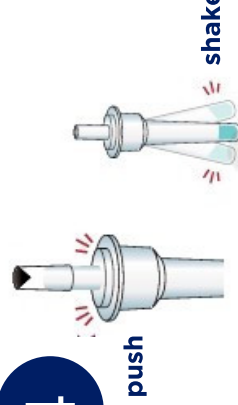
Procedure

1



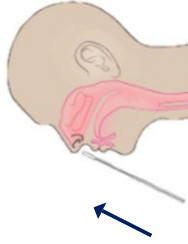
- Perform hand hygiene as per guidelines
- Place the test device on a flat surface
- Remove swab from packaging

4



- Close the vial with the provided extraction cap and push firmly till you hear or feel a click
- Mix thoroughly by flicking the bottom of the vial

2



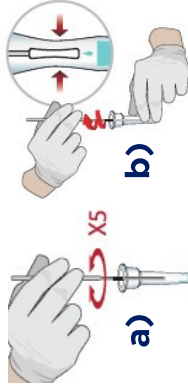
- Insert swab into one nostril until you feel a slight resistance (about 2-3cm)
- Slowly rotate swab 5 times over the surface of the nasal passage
- Slowly remove swab from nostril while rotating it
- Repeat above on other nostril with same swab

5



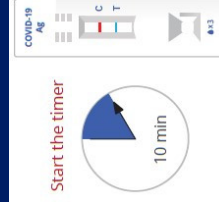
- Invert vial and hold the sample vertically above sample well
- Squeeze the vial gently and allow 3 drops of the sample to fall into the well
- Read and interpret the results after 10 mins

3



- Peel off the foil seal from extraction vial
- a) Place swab into vial and rotate the swab vigorously at least 5 times
- b) Remove swab by rotating against vial
- Discard swab in biohazard waste bag

6



- Check your result using the back of the pamphlet
 - Dispose of your test kit following guidelines
 - Wash your hands when finished
- Note: test results should NOT be read and interpreted after 15 mins**

COVID-19 rapid antigen testing and screening in schools

Information for schools

Benefits of rapid testing

Rapid antigen tests are important screening tools to help you protect your students and teachers, their families and the community against the spread of COVID-19.

Not everyone who has COVID-19 will show symptoms. Studies suggest that people without symptoms may still cause COVID-19 transmission in a significant number of cases. You can help reduce the risk of outbreaks through regularly testing and screening.

Regular rapid antigen tests provide an extra layer of defence against the spread of the virus, along with COVID safe behaviours such as frequent handwashing, physical distancing, wearing a mask and vaccination

Students at selected schools will have access to COVID-19 rapid antigen tests, to help give them the confidence to safely attend school.

The use of rapid antigen tests as a screening tool is another layer of protection. It's not a substitute for other public health measures. These include mask wearing, hand hygiene, getting tested if you have any symptoms, physical distancing, proper ventilation and getting the COVID-19 vaccine.

Rapid antigen tests are quick, easy and safe. They provide results in 10 to 15 minutes.

Rapid antigen test kit access

NSW Health is supporting education partners to introduce rapid antigen tests for students as part of the initial rollout of Rapid Antigen Testing for COVID-19.

Education partners providing rapid antigen testing will need to:

- procure rapid antigen test kits as prescribed by NSW Health that are Therapeutics Goods Administration (TGA) approved
- screen students according to the guidelines set by the TGA and in line with advice from NSW Health
- collect and report on usage if requested by NSW Health

Information collected will be used to help streamline and improve the rapid antigen testing process.

As the initial rollout progresses, the NSW Health will continue to provide guidance to support implementing [rapid antigen testing](#).

Information for students and parents

Why rapid antigen testing is being implemented in schools

Screening students at least twice a week can help to quickly identify and isolate those who have COVID-19, including those who don't have any symptoms. Early identification helps to prevent the potential spread of COVID-19 in your school, homes and in your communities.

Rapid antigen tests detect proteins from the virus that causes COVID-19. They're fast and easy to use. Results are provided within 10 to 15 minutes.

There are no side effects from this type of test. You may just feel some mild discomfort as the swab is taken.

If you've been vaccinated, you should still take part in the screening initiative. The vaccines are safe and effective and reduce your chance of spreading the virus to those around you by about 90 per cent.

How is rapid antigen testing different to other testing

There are two kinds of tests used by NSW Health to detect COVID-19, **diagnostic** and **screening** tests.

Rapid antigen tests are a **screening test** that are used to potentially identify positive cases earlier to help reduce the spread of the virus and prevent outbreaks. When used regularly, rapid antigen tests may help identify individuals who may be infectious early on. Individuals can be pre-symptomatic or asymptomatic but still carry the virus and may transmit it to others.

A standard test such as polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests, is a **diagnostic test**, and can confirm if someone has COVID-19, with results available in 24 hours. These tests take a deep nasal sample and throat sample and are tested in laboratories.

A positive rapid antigen test doesn't mean you necessarily have COVID-19, it means you need to get a standard (PCR) test straight away.

If you get a positive test result

If you get a positive rapid antigen test result, you must immediately get a standard test (called a PCR test) at a NSW testing clinic to confirm the result of your screening test. Rapid antigen tests will detect most cases of COVID-19 but are not as accurate as a PCR test.

Isolate until you get a negative result from NSW Health. Isolating immediately can help break chains of transmission and limit the spread of COVID-19 at your workplace.

If you get a negative test result

Continue to follow the latest health advice and restrictions in your area.

If you develop any symptoms, even if mild, you must immediately get a standard COVID-19 test (PCR test) and isolate until you get a negative result from NSW Health.

If you have symptoms of COVID-19 or are a contact of someone with COVID-19

Students with symptoms of COVID-19 should not attend school. You must immediately get a standard COVID-19 (PCR) test at any COVID-19 testing clinic in NSW and isolate, including from your household members, and follow the advice given by NSW Health.

The only way to rule out COVID-19 is to have a PCR test, even if you have only mild symptoms.

Is personal data collected

Any testing data collected will only be used to help NSW Health make public health decisions.

None of your personal health data is used without your consent.

COVID-19 rapid antigen testing and screening in workplaces

Information for employers

Benefits of rapid testing

Rapid antigen tests are important screening tools to help you protect your employees, customers, their families and the community where they live.

Not everyone who has COVID-19 will show symptoms. Studies suggest that people without symptoms may still cause COVID-19 transmission in a significant number of cases. You can help reduce the risk of outbreaks by regularly testing and screening your employees.

Regular rapid antigen tests provide an extra layer of defence against the spread of the virus, along with COVID-safe behaviours such as frequent handwashing, physical distancing, wearing a mask and vaccination

To ensure more workers have quick and easy access to COVID-19 rapid tests, NSW Health is supporting industry partners to provide rapid antigen tests for use as part of workplace screening initiatives.

Rapid antigen tests are quick, easy and safe. They provide results in 15 minutes.

Rapid antigen test kit access and conditions

The use of rapid antigen tests as a screening tool is another layer of protection. It's not a substitute for other public health measures. These include mask wearing, hand hygiene, getting tested if you have any symptoms, physical distancing, proper ventilation and getting the COVID-19 vaccine.

Employers can implement rapid antigen testing screening for their workforce and may engage a third-party provider to manage this process. NSW Health has established guidance for workplaces conducting rapid antigen screening. Industry partners who provide rapid antigen testing for workers need to:

- procure rapid antigen test kits as prescribed by NSW Health that are Therapeutics Goods Administration (TGA) approved
- screen employees according to the guidelines set by the TGA and in line with advice from NSW Health
- collect and report on usage if requested by NSW Health

Information collected from sites will be used to help streamline and improve the rapid antigen testing process.

When a person has a standard COVID-19 test at a clinic, they must [self-isolate](#) (home quarantine) until they receive a negative result or until advised by NSW Health.

As the initial rollout progresses, the NSW Government will continue to provide guidance to support industry in implementing [rapid antigen testing](#).

Information for employees

Why rapid antigen testing is being implemented in your workplace

Your employer has implemented a regular workplace screening initiative to protect you, your family, your colleagues and customers.

Screening employees at least twice a week can help to quickly identify and isolate those who have COVID-19, including those who don't have any symptoms. Early identification helps to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in your workplace and in your community.

Rapid antigen tests detect proteins from the virus that causes COVID-19. They're quick and easy to use. Results are provided in 10 to 15 minutes.

If you've been vaccinated, you should still take part in your workplace screening initiative. The vaccines are safe and effective and can significantly reduce your chance of spreading the virus to those around you.

How is rapid antigen testing different to other testing

There are two kinds of tests, **diagnostic** and **screening** tests.

Rapid antigen tests are a **screening test** that are used to potentially identify positive cases earlier to help reduce the spread of the virus and prevent outbreaks. When used regularly, rapid antigen tests may help identify individuals who may be infectious early on. Individuals can be pre-symptomatic or asymptomatic but still carry the virus and may transmit it to others.

A standard test such as polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests, is a **diagnostic test**, and can confirm if someone has COVID-19, with results available in 24 to 48 hours. These tests take a deep nasal sample and throat sample and are tested in laboratories.

A positive rapid antigen test doesn't mean you necessarily have COVID-19, it means you need to get a standard (PCR) test straight away.

If you get a positive test result

If you get a positive rapid antigen test result, you must immediately get a standard test (called a PCR test) at a NSW testing clinic to confirm the result of your screening test. Rapid antigen tests will detect most cases of COVID-19 but are not as accurate as a PCR test.

Isolate until you get a negative result from NSW Health. Isolating immediately can help break chains of transmission and limit the spread of COVID-19 at your workplace.

If you get a negative test result

Continue to follow the latest health advice and restrictions in your area.

If you develop any symptoms, even if mild, you must immediately get a standard COVID-19 test (PCR test) and isolate until you get a negative result from NSW Health.

If you have symptoms of COVID-19 or are a contact of someone with COVID-19

Do not undertake a rapid antigen test and do not attend the work site. You must immediately get a standard COVID-19 (PCR) test at any COVID-19 testing clinic in NSW and isolate, including from your household members, and follow the advice given by NSW Health.

The only way to rule out COVID-19 is to have a PCR test, even if you have only mild symptoms.

Is personal data collected

Any testing data collected will only be used to help NSW Health make public health decisions.

None of your personal health data is used without your consent.

COVID-19 NSW community testing Information for Rapid Antigen Testing

It is critical that NSW maintains high rates of COVID-19 testing to contain the spread of the virus, and quickly identify any community transmission.

To support access to testing for selected workers and students, a new [Rapid Antigen Testing](#) site has been set-up at your workplace or school. NSW Health is working closely with industry and schools to ensure the screening process is as easy and as fast as possible to minimise disruption.

Rapid antigen tests for students and workers who do not have any [COVID-19 symptoms](#), will be performed onsite with results available within minutes. Tests will be undertaken for all individuals twice a week.

Remember, if you have symptoms of COVID-19, you must not attend work or school. You will need a PCR test from a [COVID-19 testing clinic in NSW](#).

NSW Health has provided guidance to ensure each rapid antigen test site maintains infection control standards and COVID-safe measures.

Testing helps NSW Health contain potential spread by identifying any positive cases early. Thank you for your support.

For any enquiries please contact **<industry or school contact - name and job title>**.

For further information on COVID-19, please visit the [NSW Government website](#) or call the NSW COVID-19 hotline on **13 77 88**.



What is Rapid antigen testing?

Rapid antigen testing is a screening tool to help detect COVID-19 in people without any symptoms.

For those with symptoms of COVID-19, you must attend a testing clinic for a standard test (called a PCR test).

Why rapid antigen testing is being implemented in your workplace

Your employer has implemented a regular workplace screening initiative to protect you, your family, your colleagues and customers.

Screening employees at least twice a week can help to quickly identify and isolate those who have COVID-19, including those who don't have any symptoms.

Early identification helps to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in your workplace and in your community.

If you've been vaccinated, you should still take part in your workplace screening initiative. The vaccines are safe and effective and reduce your chance of spreading the virus to those around you by about 90%.



For the latest information on COVID-19, visit nsw.gov.au/covid-19 or call the National Coronavirus Helpline on 1800 020 080 (24-hour help line)

Financial support for individuals and households

If you're affected by COVID-19 and experiencing financial difficulty, visit nsw.gov.au/covid-19/financial-support for information on what financial support is available.

**In a health emergency
call Triple Zero (000)**

COVID-19

**Information for
workers/employees**

Rapid antigen testing for COVID-19



What does the test involve?



The rapid antigen test is quick and easy. It involves a nasal swab (using a small cotton bud) that is then placed into a chemical solution and the solution is tested on the receptacle, which displays a result within 15 to 20 minutes.

Rapid antigen tests detect proteins from the virus that causes COVID-19.

If you get a positive test result

If you get a positive rapid antigen test result, you must immediately get a standard test (called a PCR test) at a NSW testing clinic to confirm the result of your screening test.

Rapid antigen tests will detect most cases of COVID-19 but are not as accurate as a PCR test.

Isolate until you get a negative PCR result.

Isolating immediately can help break chains of transmission and limit the spread of COVID-19 at your workplace.

If you get a negative test result

Continue to follow the latest health advice and restrictions in your area.

If you develop any symptoms, even if mild, you must immediately get a standard COVID-19 test (PCR test) and isolate until you get a negative result.

If you have symptoms of COVID-19 or are a contact of someone with COVID-19

You must immediately get a standard COVID-19 (PCR) test at any COVID-19 testing clinic in NSW and isolate, including from your household members, and follow the advice given by NSW Health.

The only way to rule out COVID-19 is to have a PCR test, even if you have only mild symptoms.

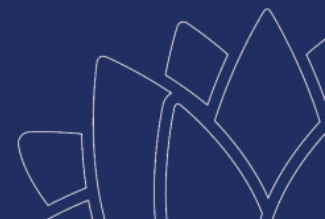


Is personal data collected

Any testing data collected will only be used to help NSW Health make public health decisions.

None of your personal health data is used without your consent.

Rapid Antigen Testing for industry



Rapid antigen tests are quick and easy and help detect COVID-19 in people who do not have symptoms.

What is Rapid Antigen Testing?

Rapid Antigen Testing is a screening tool to assist in the detection of COVID-19 in people without any [symptoms](#) of COVID-19. For those with symptoms of COVID-19, it is most important that you attend a [testing clinic](#) for a [PCR NAAT test](#).

The Rapid Antigen Test is quick and easy. It involves a nasal swab (using a small cotton bud) that is then placed into a chemical solution and the solution is tested on the receptacle, which displays a result within 10 to 15 minutes.

Why are we using Rapid Antigen Testing?

Rapid antigen tests performed at frequent intervals have been used internationally and in some Australian industries for some time as an indicative screen for COVID-19 in their asymptomatic employees.

Although these tests have some limitations when compared to the nose and throat swabs undertaken with a PCR test, rapid antigen tests can be performed easily and onsite with results available within minutes.

What is the accuracy rate of Rapid Antigen Tests?

Rapid antigen tests will detect most cases of COVID-19. A negative test does not completely exclude COVID-19, and you should have a PCR test if you develop symptoms or are identified as a close or casual contact of someone who has COVID-19.

What if my Rapid Antigen Test is positive?

If you receive a positive Rapid Antigen Test result, you must get a standard [COVID-19 test](#) (PCR test). This can be done at your workplace by a health professional, with the sample tested at an accredited laboratory, or you must go to a specified NSW testing clinic immediately to confirm the result of your screening test. You must isolate until you get a negative PCR result. A PCR test is more sensitive than a Rapid Antigen Test and effectively excludes the concern that some rapid antigen tests may show a positive result when in fact there is no infection present.

Isolating immediately after your positive result, or if symptomatic, can help break chains of transmission and limit the spread of COVID-19 at your workplace.

What if my Rapid Antigen Test is negative?

You must continue to follow the latest health advice and restrictions in your area.

If you develop any symptoms, even if mild, you must immediately get a standard [COVID-19 test](#) (PCR test) and isolate until you get a negative result.

What if I have symptoms?

If you have symptoms of COVID-19, you must not attend work. You will need a PCR test. You can get a PCR test at any [COVID-19 testing clinic in NSW](#). You must isolate, including from your household members, until you receive a negative result from your test.

The only way to rule out COVID-19 is to have a PCR test, even if you have only mild symptoms.

Where can I get a Rapid Antigen Test?

Rapid antigen tests will be performed onsite in selected workplaces under appropriate supervision to ensure advice is available on the process for testing and how the result is interpreted.

As the initial rollout progresses, the NSW Government will continue to provide guidance to support industry in implementing [rapid antigen testing](#).

What Rapid Antigen Test kits are available in Australia?

The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has registered a number of devices for use under the supervision of a health care professional (<https://www.tga.gov.au/legal-supply-covid-19-test-kits>). Devices that have not been approved by the TGA cannot be used in Australia.

Will my data be collected?

Data collected related to testing will only be used to inform Public Health decisions. None of your personal health data is used without your consent.

RAPID ANTIGEN TESTING INDICATIVE PROCESS



If you have ANY symptoms (e.g. fever, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, runny nose, loss of taste or loss of smell), please travel from your home to a COVID-19 testing clinic for a PCR test and self-isolate until medical clearance is provided

1 Worker arrives on site and checks in via QR code

2 Worker waits in socially distanced designated area for a rapid antigen test

3 Worker takes self-administered rapid antigen test

Test results after 10 minutes

Worker to register test result with testing supervisor

Electronic proof of test issued

Worker to check out of rapid antigen testing site and scan QR code into work site

If test result is **NEGATIVE**

If test result is **POSITIVE**

Positive Test Result

- If a worker returns a positive test result, they must immediately leave the site via designated travel path and travel to the nearest COVID-19 testing clinic for a PCR test
- All necessary notifications to be made to the Public Health Unit via t. 0407 930 113
- Worker must undertake a PCR test and follow Health advice (e.g. self-isolate until medical clearance is provided) before they can safely return to the site

Worker to register test result with testing supervisor

Public Health to be notified by employer and worker to leave site

Worker to travel to local COVID-19 testing clinic for PCR test

Worker to follow Health advice until medical clearance is provided

Advice for workers on their rapid antigen test result

It is critical that NSW maintains high rates of COVID-19 testing to contain the spread of the virus, and quickly identify any community transmission.

Rapid antigen tests for workers who do not have any [COVID-19 symptoms](#), are being performed at work sites with results available within minutes. It is recommended that tests be undertaken for individuals two to three times a week.

If your result is **NEGATIVE** ...register your test result with the testing supervisor; make sure you have electronic proof of test result; and then check in via the usual QR code to your work site.

If your result is **POSITIVE** ...register your test result with the testing supervisor; arrangements will be made for you to have an urgent PCR test at a local [COVID-19 testing clinic](#); after the PCR test, clinic staff will provide more information on self-isolating while you wait for your PCR result. With a negative PCR result you can return to work.

Remember, if you have symptoms of COVID-19, you must not attend work. You will need a PCR test from a [COVID-19 testing clinic in NSW](#).

Testing helps NSW Health contain potential spread by identifying any positive cases early. Thank you for your support.

For further information on COVID-19, please visit the [NSW Government website](#) or call the NSW COVID-19 hotline on **13 77 88**.

COVID-19 surveillance testing

Information for workers on construction sites

COVID-19 testing requirements still apply to people from [Local Government Areas of concern](#) entering construction sites in Greater Sydney. The full set of construction rules and restrictions can be found [here](#).

The [NSW Government's announcement](#) of 20 August 2021 concerning authorised workers, does not remove the existing requirements for people from LGAs of concern entering construction sites.

If you live in or are temporarily staying in one of these affected areas, you must not enter a construction site in Greater Sydney unless you have:

- **Two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine** or
- **One dose of a COVID-19 vaccine** at least 21 days prior or
- **One dose of a COVID-19 vaccine** within the past 21 days and you have been tested for COVID-19 in the past 72 hours or
- **Evidence of a [medical exemption](#)** and you have been tested for COVID-19 within the previous 72 hours.

The NSW Chief Health Officer has confirmed that, where the requirement for a test applies, this test can include a [rapid antigen test](#) on a construction site in the way approved by the Chief Health Officer. The approved process is set out [here](#).

Remember, if you do have [symptoms of COVID-19](#), you must not attend work. You will need to get a standard (PCR) test from a COVID-19 testing clinic and isolate until you have received a negative result. A PCR test is also required if you are a close or casual contact of someone with COVID-19.

NSW Health
21 August 2021

