



First Nations Health Authority
Health through wellness

Rapid (at-Home) Tests

INFORMATION FOR INDIVIDUALS

At-home rapid tests (often called rapid antigen tests) can be used to determine if you have COVID-19 when you have cold or flu-like symptoms.

You can perform the test yourself at home and the results are ready in less than 20 minutes, depending on the brand of test you use.

At-home rapid antigen tests can be used to support early diagnosis of COVID-19 and to detect growing clusters in communities. Remember, the best protection against COVID-19 remains vaccination and following public health guidelines (e.g., physical distancing, mask wearing, hygiene measures, small gatherings, etc.).

Rapid tests are not used for asymptomatic screening because they do not reliably detect infections in people who do not have cold or flu-like symptoms.

Remember: Seek medical care if you feel you need it, whether you test positive or negative

How the Tests Work

Rapid tests are done by using a swab to collect a sample from each nostril. The swab will only go a few centimeters inside your nose. It should not hurt.

Rapid tests check for protein fragments specific to the COVID-19 virus. Rapid tests are very good at detecting the COVID-19 virus when testing is done between 24 hours to five days after the start of symptoms. This is when virus levels in the body are at the highest.

Types of Rapid Tests

The FNHA is distributing two brands of rapid COVID-19 tests initially: Lucira and BTNX. Each kit comes with written instructions. Video guidelines are also available:

- [How to Use the Lucira At-Home Test](#)
- [How to Use the BTNX At-Home Test](#)

Regional Health Authorities and other organizations that serve First Nations people may be distributing different brands of test kits.

Rapid Test Results

Negative Result

If your result is negative, it means the COVID-19 virus was not detected at the time the test was taken. This could be because there was not enough virus in your body for the swab to pick it up or that you do not have the virus. It is still possible that you have COVID-19. If you test negative but continue to have cold or flu-like symptoms, the FNHA recommends you test again in 24 to 48 hours.

Even if the test is negative, it is important to self-isolate until your symptoms improve and you feel well enough to return to regular activities. Symptoms might be from other respiratory illnesses that can also make others sick.

If you are a close contact of someone who has COVID-19, you still need to self-isolate for 10 days from the day you had contact with that person unless you are fully vaccinated or had COVID-19 within the last 90 days.

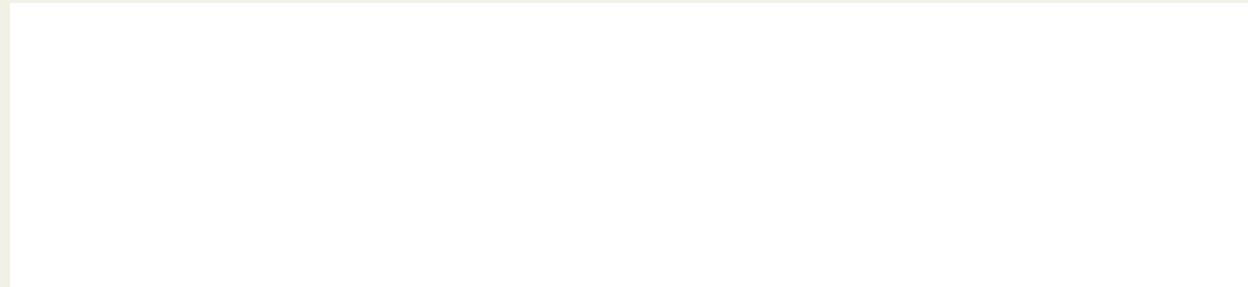
Positive Result

If your result is positive, it means COVID-19 was detected. You very likely have COVID-19 and could pass it on to others.

Next steps:

- self-isolate - for at least five days from the first day you had symptoms if you are fully vaccinated, or at least 10 days if you are not. The FNHA Health Benefits Isolation Support team can help with accommodation, travel and meals. For eligibility information, call 1-888-305-1505 or see [COVID-19 Guide to Medical Transportation Benefits](#)
- manage symptoms
- notify close contacts
- [report positive test results](#) (via a secure online form from the BC Centre for Disease Control - BCCDC). Note that there may be guidelines for reporting that are specific to your health region.

Regional or community-specific requirements



Learn more about the above steps at:

- [COVID-19 Testing](#) (FNHA.ca)
- [What to do if you test positive for COVID-19](#) (BCCDC fact sheet)
- [What to do if you are a close contact of someone with COVID-19](#) (BCCDC fact sheet)

Invalid Result

If your test is not valid:

1. discard all the pieces from the first test
2. wash your hands and repeat the process using the second set of test pieces
3. follow the test instructions again

If you have two invalid test results, get a COVID-19 test at a testing location. [Find a Health Authority testing location](#). If you are served by a First Nations health centre, check to see if testing is available there.