### Overview of COVID-19 Test Types

**Nucleic Acid Amplification Tests (NAATs)**

- **Also known as:** Diagnostic test, viral test, molecular test, rapid test, RT-LAMP or LAMP test, RT-PCR test
- **What does this test detect?** NAATs detect viral genetic material (called RNA) from SARS-CoV-2.
- **How long does it take to get results?** Most take 1-3 days. Some are rapid tests that take 15 minutes.
- **What sample type does this test require?** Nasal swabs (shallow or deep), throat swabs, or saliva
- **What can this test do?** Diagnose active SARS-CoV-2 infection
- **What can’t this test do?** NAATs cannot show if you had a prior SARS-CoV-2 infection.
- **Will I need another test to confirm my results?** Not usually. These types of tests are highly accurate and typically do not need to be repeated.

**Antigen Test**

- **Also known as:** Diagnostic test, viral test, rapid test
- **What does this test detect?** Antigen tests detect small parts of proteins (called antigens) from SARS-CoV-2.
- **How long does it take to get results?** Most are rapid tests that take less than 1 hour.
- **What sample type does this test require?** Most use nasal swabs (shallow or deep).
- **What can this test do?** Diagnose active SARS-CoV-2 infection
- **What can’t this test do?** Antigen tests may not detect an early SARS-CoV-2 infection. A molecular test may be needed to confirm a negative antigen test result for someone with symptoms. These tests also cannot show if you had a prior SARS-CoV-2 infection.
- **Will I need another test to confirm my results?** Sometimes. Positive results are usually accurate, but false positives may occur. False negatives are more common with these tests, and as a result, negative results may need to be confirmed with a molecular test.

**Antibody Test**

- **Also known as:** Serological test or serology test
- **What does this test detect?** Antibody tests detect antibodies made by the immune system to fight infections.
- **How long does it take to get results?** Most take 1-3 days. Some are rapid tests that give results the same day.
- **What sample type does this test require?** Blood from fingerstick or vein
- **What can this test do?** Show if you had a prior SARS-CoV-2 infection and mounted an immune response
- **What can’t this test do?** Antibody tests cannot diagnose an active SARS-CoV-2 infection.
- **Will I need another test to confirm my results?** Sometimes a second antibody test is needed for accurate results.

### References