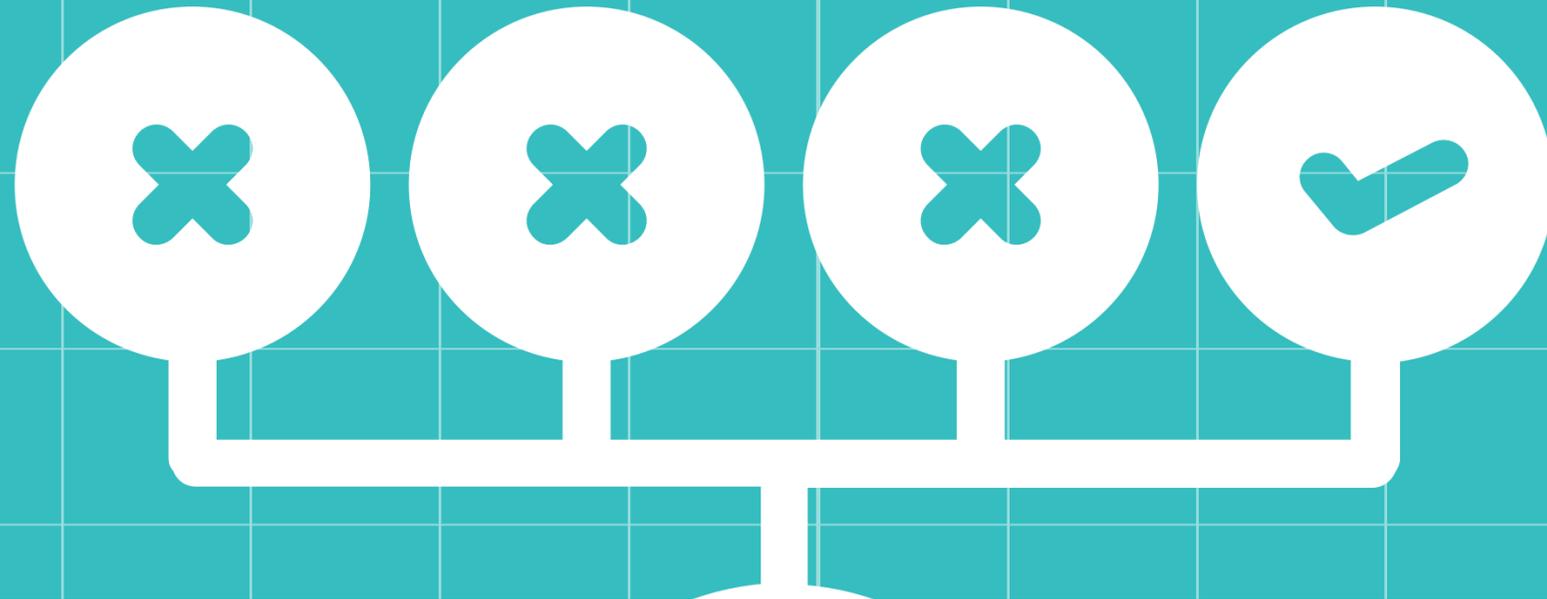


# **How Is a COVID-19 Antigen Test Different From a PCR or Molecular Test?**





## How Do You Determine The Right Test For You?

The right test depends on the purpose. Tests that detect an active infection require bodily fluid samples, as they can only be performed using blood, sputum, or urine specimens. A blood sample is one of the most common types of samples, as it's easy to obtain. The blood can be analyzed for things like white cell count and viral load, which indicate if a patient has an active infection.



## **Molecular Test (RNA/ PCR Test):**

---

These are the most sensitive tests for detecting a current infection of the virus. This test is used to determine whether you have been exposed to the virus or not.

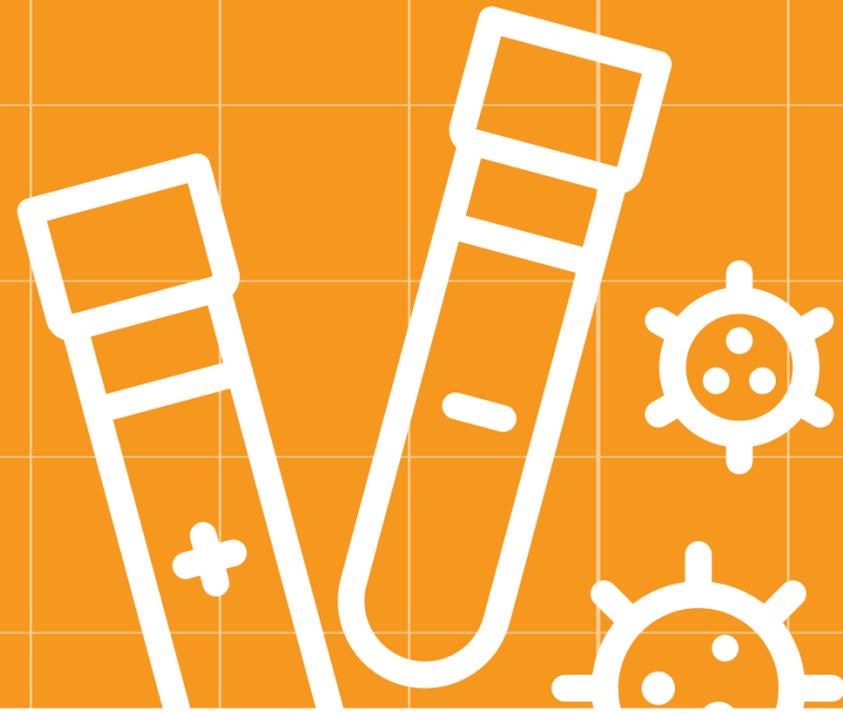
For now, PCR tests have the best results and are the gold standard.



## Antigen Test (Rapid Test):

---

With rapid diagnostic tests (RDTs), doctors can run a simple laboratory test to screen large numbers of people for diseases. In one study, the test was able to predict which patients were at risk of infection by measuring levels of antigens on their blood cells. This is an important advance because it will help doctors more quickly diagnose a patient's condition.



## **Antibody Test (Serology/ Blood Test):**

---

This blood test looks for antibodies to the coronavirus. Despite what you may have heard, it cannot detect active coronavirus infection. What it does tell you is whether you have been exposed to the disease in the past, even if your symptoms were so mild that you didn't even know about it.



## When Will You Get Your Test Results?

- The time boundary varies for all the tests. It depends on the severity and the clinic.
- Standard Molecular Tests*: 24 hours to several days (depending on the type of test ordered).
  - Rapid Tests*: Immediately or within half an hour.



**For More Information,  
Visit Our Website:**

<https://covidclinic.org/>

