

Rapid Testing FAQs

1. Who should get rapid tests?

Rapid tests or lateral flow tests (LFTs) are for people who do not have symptoms (asymptomatic) and are for key workers who have to leave their home to work or volunteer. For example, health and social care staff, cleaners, security staff, taxi drivers, take away hospitality and food bank volunteers. If you have symptoms, however mild, please book a PCR test through the [national booking system](#) or by calling 119.

2. What is rapid testing?

Rapid testing helps to identify asymptomatic people who are infectious and can spread the virus. Rapid testing uses fairly cheap technology (so we can use lots of it) which delivers test results quickly.

3. Are they any good?

LFTs do not need laboratory processing which is why they provide test results quickly. They can detect if someone has the virus, but not if they are developing the virus. That's why if you test negative, **it does not exempt you from following lockdown restrictions** because **you could still be developing the virus**. You must continue to restrict social contacts and stay home as much as you can.

4. How often do I need to test?

If you need to leave your home to work or volunteer throughout the week you should test once every 3 days. This is because Covid-19 is spread through air droplets and high touch surfaces. You should receive your results on the same day.

5. What do the rapid test results mean?

Positive	Self-isolate immediately. Contact your council for emergency help (food and to apply for the £500 grant) with self-isolation. Prepare to identify contacts with NHS Test and Trace to stop the spread of the virus.
Negative	The test has not been able to detect the virus on the day it was taken, but you could still be developing the virus. Take a rapid test in 3 days time because it could still come back positive. You must keep doing Hands, Face, Space and follow lockdown restrictions.
Void	Rebook a rapid test

6. Where can I get more information?

Call your Local Authority or check the [website](#) for details of rapid test centres and support to self-isolate.

7. Do I need to take a PCR test if I test positive with a rapid test?

From the 27th January 2021 anyone taking a rapid test in a test centre does not need to take a PCR test. A positive rapid test will trigger the legal duty to self-isolate and NHS Test and Trace to identify contacts, it also triggers financial support to self-isolate.

Some groups of essential workers are still required to have a confirmatory PCR after a positive rapid test, these are Adult Social Care staff testing in their workplaces, NHS staff and Primary School Teachers who are part of a national pilot using rapid tests at home.