

DIAGNOSTIC AND SCREENING TESTS COVID-19



There are different tests for detecting infection with SARS-CoV-2, which is the coronavirus that causes COVID-19. Some are used to diagnose the disease while others are only recommended for screening asymptomatic people at greater risk of exposure. In Spain, diagnostic tests are only available if prescribed by a doctor.

01 TYPES OF TESTS

There are currently several types of tests for detecting SARS-CoV-2 and they differ considerably. Some (such as PCR or antigen tests) detect the coronavirus directly; others (such as serological tests) detect it indirectly. Some (such as laboratory tests) require specific equipment and specialised personnel to perform them; others (such as rapid tests) need hardly any specific equipment and yield results within just a few minutes. Lastly, some (such as PCR or antigen tests) are used to diagnose the disease in people with suspected SARS-CoV-2 infection while others (such as serological tests or PCR) are only used to screen asymptomatic, vulnerable people or those who are more exposed to infection.

In Spain, PCR is the standard test for diagnosing COVID-19.

02 WHO IS THE TEST INTENDED FOR?

1) In Spain, any person suspected of being infected with SARS-CoV-2 must undergo a PCR test within the first 24 hours. A **suspected case** is anyone who has experienced a sudden onset of acute respiratory infection of any severity, accompanied by fever, cough or a sensation of shortness of breath, among other symptoms.

2) If the result of the **suspected case's** PCR is positive, a PCR test should also be done on **close contacts**, with a view to detecting new positive cases early.

A **close contact** is defined as:

- Anyone who has provided care for a case.
- Anyone who has been in the same location as a case, within a distance of under 2 metres and for more than 15 minutes.
- Anyone on an aeroplane, train, or other long-distance means of transportation who sits within two seats of a case.

gt grupo de trabajo sobre tratamientos del VIH
ENTIDAD DECLARADA DE UTILIDAD PÚBLICA
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SUBVENCIÓN

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SECRETARÍA DE ESTADO DE SANIDAD
MINISTERIO DE SANIDAD DIRECCIÓN GENERAL DE SALUD PÚBLICA SECRETARÍA DEL PLAN NACIONAL SOBRE EL SIDA

FOR SOLIDARIDAD OTROS FINES DE INTERÉS SOCIAL

Generalitat de Catalunya Agència de Salut Pública de Catalunya
Generalitat de Catalunya Departament de Justícia

Ajuntament de Barcelona ÀREA DE QUALITAT DE VIDA, IGUALTAT I ESPORTS
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ETIS EQUIP DE TREBALL SOBRE IMMIGRACIÓ I SALUT
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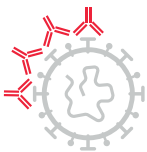






RNA TEST: PCR

Detection	Sample	Facility	Time	Sensitivity	Purpose
 <p>It detects the presence of genetic material (RNA) of the coronavirus. In other words, it detects whether the person has an active SARS-CoV-2 infection</p>	 <p>Nasopharyngeal or oropharyngeal taken with a cotton swab</p>	 <p>Laboratory test</p>	 <p>3-4 hours</p>	 <p>Very high (>90%)</p>	<p>Diagnosis of COVID-19</p>

ANTIGEN TESTS

Detection	Sample	Facility	Time	Sensitivity	Purpose
 <p>It detects the presence of antigens (proteins on the surface of coronavirus). In other words, it detects whether the person has an active SARS-CoV-2 infection</p>	 <p>Nasopharyngeal or oropharyngeal taken with a cotton swab</p>	 <p>Laboratory test</p>	 <p>Laboratory test: 24 hours</p>	 <p>Laboratory test: high (<80%)</p>	<p>Laboratory test: Diagnosis of COVID-19</p>
		 <p>Rapid test performed in the patient's presence</p>	<p>Rapid test: 10- 15 minutes</p>	<p>Rapid test: low (<60%)</p>	<p>Rapid test: Diagnosis of COVID-19</p>

SEROLOGICAL TESTS

Detection	Sample	Facility	Time	Sensitivity	Purpose
 <p>It detects the presence of antibodies produced against the coronavirus roughly in the 7 days from the start of infection. They provide indirect proof that the infection is active or that the person has been infected.</p>	 <p>Laboratory test: Venous blood sampling</p>	 <p>Laboratory test</p>	 <p>Laboratory test: 24 hours</p>	 <p>Laboratory test: very high (>90%)</p>	<p>Laboratory test: Diagnosis of COVID-19</p>
	 <p>Rapid test: capillary blood sampling</p>	 <p>Rapid test performed in the patient's presence</p>	<p>Rapid test: 10- 15 minutes</p>	<p>Rapid test: high (>80%)</p>	<p>Rapid test: Diagnosis of COVID-19</p>



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03

SCREENING STUDIES

Screening studies are studies performed on **asymptomatic people**:

In Spain, **PCR screening or serological tests are not recommended for people who are asymptomatic or at low-risk**. This is because of difficulties in interpreting the results in these people and the implications for managing them.

If the health authorities deem it necessary, **screening studies involving serological tests may be performed on populations who are vulnerable and asymptomatic or who are at greater risk of exposure**, such as health or community health personnel or residents in nursing homes or other community health centres.

Nor, at the present time, is PCR testing on asymptomatic people recommended, except in specific strategies established within the health system for the early detection of cases among close contacts, among vulnerable populations in the context of outbreaks or prior to some care situations (such as surgical interventions).

Source: Ministry of Health. Carlos III Health Institute. Strategy for the Early Detection, Monitoring and Control of COVID-19. Updated on 9 July 2020. Available at: https://www.mscbs.gob.es/en/profesionales/saludPublica/ccayes/alertasActual/nCov-China/documentos/COVID19_Estrategia_vigilancia_y_control_e_indicadores.pdf

FREE COVID-19 HELPLINE NUMBERS

Andalusia	900 400 061 / 955 545 060
Aragón	976 696 382
Asturias	984 100 400 / 900 878 232 / 112 + 1
Cantabria	900 612 112
Castile-La Mancha	900 122 112
Castile and León	900 222 000
Catalonia	061
Ceuta	900 720 692
Madrid Com.	900 102 112
Valencian Com.	900 300 555
Extremadura	900 222 012
Galicia	900 400 116
Balearic Islands	902 079 079 / 971 437 079
Canary Islands	900 112 061
La Rioja	941 298 333
Melilla	112
Murcia	900 121 212
Navarra	948 290 290
Basque Country	900 203 050



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