

COVID-19

Employer Testing Options

Question asked	Answer given
If a person is iga deficient should they take any extra precautions?	There have been cases where someone will recover from an infection, but not produce the long term igg antibodies. It is believed that that person "may" be at risk for a re-infection. However, the role of igg antibodies in reflecting immunity is still being studied. As for iga deficiency, so far there is no evidence that this condition is associated with an increased risk of acquiring covid-19.
Define "specificity".	Specificity is the accuracy that the test will pick up the positives. Whereas sensitivity is the test's ability to detect the negatives.
Hello everyone i came in a little late. My question is: should the 10 days be counted while completely off of any pain medication to treat headache and fever?	The 10 days starts from when the symptoms started (for those who have symptoms) or from when a positive test was taken (for those with no symptoms). The 24 hr rule relates to the fever and not taking any pain/fever medications. Both criteria must be met, in addition to having either no more symptoms or symptoms that have greatly improved.
How sensitive are the rapid antigen tests ?	The quidel sofia rapid antigen tests are documented to be 88% sensitive, and 100% specific
What is the cost for pcr and antigen test at the hasc	At hasc the cost is \$200 for the pcr and \$75 for the rapid antigen
Are walks in welcome?	Yes, at hasc/global health

<p>Based on that question what test is recommended? Pcr or antigen?</p>	<p>Both are acceptable tests, please see the slides on pros and cons to determine the best test for a specific scenario. However, the "gold standard" is the pcr test. The down side is that it may take several days to get the pcr result back.</p>
<p>Have heard that a person's blood type may determine how severe symptoms are or if you may be asymptomatic. Blood type o?</p>	<p>Yes, ongoing studies are underway. Nothing definitive has been proven.</p>
<p>So are you saying that you are clearing employees with an exposure to return to work based on the antigen test versus waiting the full 14 days?</p>	<p>An antigen test and pcr can give you a better gauge of someones infection status. As we stated in the webinar, there are false negatives to both and you should still monitor yourself for signs and symptoms even if a test came back negative as the incubation period for symptoms and postive test reults can take up to 14 days from exposure.</p>
<p>Have you found the county testing sites to be mostly reliable. I have personally heard of people filling out the forms, leaving the sites without testing and then receivng notifiation they were positive.</p>	<p>I woudlnt' say "most reliable" as any site can have problems</p>
<p>Can an employer require testing based on person travel if we do not have a travel ban in place?</p>	<p>Yes, although this usually refers to a viral test (antigen or pcr).</p>
<p>Explain 10 day rtw and 14 day btw and how does a positive test result change/effect those days rtw</p>	<p>Please see the slide on cdc guidance. 14 days is if you think you were exposed to someone and you need to wait 14 days to see if you get sick (this is known as "quarantine." the 10 days is for when you are sick and need to wait 10 days from when you either tested positive or from when sympomts appeared if you can't go get tested. If you get tested and are psotive, the 10 days atrts from when you got the test. This is known as "self isolation."</p>

<p>Tx division of emergency mgmt offers a self administered test- are you familiar with this process and any comments?</p>	<p>There are self administered swabs that some testing sites are issuing. We believe it is best to get swabbed by a trained professional, as most people will not fully swab their nasopharynx by themselves as it is uncomfortable.</p>
<p>When is a covid positive person most contagious ?</p>	<p>Several studies show that being presymptomatic (having symptoms 1-2 days before they actually appear) can mean being contagious. However, the period of highest contagiousness is likely when symptoms are present, especially within the first 5 days of symptom onset.</p>
<p>Is antigen test (positive or negative) reportable to public health authorities like pcr?</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Why some clinical data on pcr test show up to 30% false negative?</p>	<p>Pcr is around 95%-99% sensitive. Not sure what studies would show that high false negative. But again a test result is only as good as when you test the person. Also, remember that several things factor in to a false negative, and they are not necessarily related to how accurate the pcr test is. Among these: a) testing too soon, b) not obtaining a proper specimen, c) not processing the specimen correctly before it is analyzed in the lab.</p>
<p>If 2 workers worked (within last 48hours) within 6feet for greater than 15minutes - if both not wearing any mask or eye protection and one of them get diagnosed with covid the other person will be a contact but what about if both were wearing surgical masks and safety glasses/goggles - would the other person be still considered a contact?</p>	<p>Yes, although the exposure risk would be lower than if one or neither was wearing a surgical mask/eye protection.</p>
<p>If someone is tested positive with antigen test, do we need to confirm with pcr test or is antigen test considered good enough to confirm that the patient is infected with covid-19?</p>	<p>No, the specificity (positive accuracy) of the antigen test is close to 100% so if someone tests positive you should assume it is accurate. While false positives are possible with any tests, it is low with the antigen test.</p>

What is rough cost of pcr compared to antigen testing?	Varies by testing site, but pcr is usually more expensive because of the lab component of the price. In most labs, pcrs cost between \$100-\$150.
Why is it more difficult/longer to escape quarantine (14 days), vs isolate only 10 days if you are actually sick? Seems like 10 days for both is fair.	The 10 days starts when you are already sick, and we know that on average it will take 5 days from when you are exposed to when you start showing symptoms....totally around 14-15 days.
For public health reporting purposes, isn't a positive test one which confirms active infection? Isn't a positive pcr the only test result that reliably says that?	The antigen test is now an fda authorized alternative and acceptable test to confirm a positive
Is a positive antigen test typically indicative of active infection when a person is actively symptomatic?	Yes
If there is a scenario as described earlier where someone may have tested positive using either antigen or pcr test and it is recommended to re-test later (not because of type of test and question regarding accuracy) but because the person for some other reason needs to re-test after time has passed, is it better to re-test using the same type of test as before (for better interpretation of what may be going on over time)?	Best to be consistent in the test. As we talked about, a pcr test will continue to show positive for weeks after the infection has subsided. But this does not necessarily mean they remain contagious.
A few of our employees did not have the typical symptoms of covid-19, only nausea. Still, they tested and were positive. With the evolution of learning, will the symptom evolve as well?	Most likely yes. It was thought in the beginning that fever was the most prominent symptom. The cdc periodically updates its list of covid-related symptoms, as we all learn more about the disease.
Is it conclusive that asymptomatic people can infect others?	Yes
How long after exposure before a person becomes contagious?	It varies. For those who ultimately develop symptoms, these usually start between day 5 and day 8. Cdc suggests that contagiousness usually starts about 48-72 hours before the symptoms appear.

<p>Medical opinion - what do you think is the reason why someone who has no known health issues getting the virus, but a care giver with multiple health issues not getting the virus?</p>	<p>Just varies on that individual and unfortunately just luck of the draw as to who this virus wants to infect. But there are other factors as well, especially the intensity of the exposure. A perfectly healthy person may get heavily exposed (e.g., close contact, lots of coughing and sneezing around that healthy person, etc.), but a person with multiple health problems may have a less intense exposure. This is why it's so important to get the details on the exposure.</p>
<p>On the guidelines for employees going back to work after being positive (and being sick/quarantined at home) - what is the best guidance you suggest? Pga tour is doing two negative tests more than 24 hours apart, other organizations seem to be doing other protocols.</p>	<p>Cdc has recently updated their guidance to say not everyone needs to be retested to go back to work/society. If they meet the timeline guidance, they should be considered well enough to return. In other words, if 10 or more days have transpired since the onset of symptoms (for those who develop symptoms) or 10 or more days from the date of the positive test (for those who never develop symptoms), and they remain without a fever or symptoms, in the majority of cases this should be enough to clear them to return to work.</p>
<p>How long after virus in is the body will the antibodies develop? And show with blood test?</p>	<p>At the earliest one week, but high chance of showing after several weeks., if they will show at all.</p>
<p>If you get a 'positive' result on a quick test is it advisable to get a lab related test? Fyi- we had two employees test positive on quick test, but in followup lab test were negative.</p>	<p>Its advisable if you highly suspect an infection or had a known positive exposure. There is about a 10-12% chance of a false negative on an antigen test, so if you are suspicious for infection and you get a negative, then you would consider confirming with a pcr.</p>
<p>Does the company need 2 negative results before allowing a positive tested employee to return to work?</p>	<p>Cdc has updated their guidance to say repeat testing is not required. You can go the symptom/timeline route in lieu of repeat testing. However, its up to you.</p>

Will an employee who was positive and waited the recommended days home should they have a doctor's release to return to work after their symptoms are done.	That is up to you or the employer as to what you require. However, it is good to have a provider examine a patient after they have been out because of an illness.
What would cause an inconclusive? Isn't the result just binary?	If there is not enough sample on the swab the test can show inconclusive. It wouldn't give you a pos/neg
Does a requirement of test results by an employer or client violate any hipaa privacy rules?	No
Please address employees potentially returning from out of the country- mexico, any recommended approach, timeline	I would check with the us travel restriction (go to the u.s. state department website) for that state or that country. There is individual quarantine and testing requirements based on where they are going to and coming from.
Any thoughts on the rutgers saliva test	A promising test. However it has not been mass produced. There are other saliva home gets now available, but they still have to be sent to a lab for testing.
Testing in houston is pretty easy and we get pretty quick results. What about outside of houston? From what we have found is that testing is hit or miss. Any guidance.	Yes depends on the location. You should be able to web search for testing locations at least through that county or city health departments.
Can you also comment on saliva test for pcr availability in houston and texas ? And pros and cons	The saliva test is still limited in availability so far. Can be an alternative to nasopharyngeal pcr testing.
If we send them home immediately but wait to test them, are we able to cover them under ffcra guidelines for pay?	Yes if they are seeking a diagnosis it will fall under the ffcra. https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/pandemic/ffcra-employee-paid-leave#:~:text=two%20weeks%20(up%20to%2080, and%20seeking%20a%20medical%20diagnosis%3b
We just went through a company shut down and no one was to come back until all showed negative test. Some employees that were out	Antigen testing takes only a few hours to get results back. A pcr that gets sent to a lab is taking 7+ days at the commercial labs.

for over a week to get results back. What is the turn around if employee is tested through hasc?