



Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 897

Hamilton, ON L8N

Public Health Services, Epidemiology, Wellness & Communicable Disease Control Division

110 King Street West, 2nd Floor, Hamilton, ON L8P 4S6

Phone: (905) 974-9848 Fax: (905) 546-4078

phscovid19@hamilton.ca

COVID-19 Asymptomatic Rapid Antigen Test

What is rapid antigen testing, and why should I do it?

- Rapid antigen testing is being used at targeted schools, as part of the Ontario government's targeted voluntary screening program for asymptomatic students and staff. Masking and the other health and safety measures, targeted testing in schools is an additional layer of protection that helps to limit the spread of COVID-19.
- It is a rapid test, meaning you will get your results quickly, in around 2 hours. It can be thought of as a screening tool for people with no COVID-19 symptoms. It works by detecting a protein of the COVID-19 virus.
- Taking this test does not prevent COVID-19. It guides your next steps to keeping yourself and others safe, including staying home and distancing from others (self-isolating).
- You will need to have a different type of COVID-19 test at an assessment center to confirm the rapid test result if your result is preliminary positive.
- This additional test involves a health care professional taking a swab from inside your nose, or from inside both your nose and your throat.

Who can get this test done?

- ✓ This test is voluntary. Consent will be required from parents or guardians for students under 18 years old.
- ✓ This test can **only** be done on people who have **no** COVID-19 symptoms **and** who are not considered at high risk for having COVID-19.
- ✓ Anyone who has COVID-19 symptoms, who has been instructed to get a COVID-19 test at a local [COVID-19 assessment center](#), or who is a contact of a confirmed COVID-19 case should **not** have the rapid test done.
- ✓ This test is only available to those enrolled in in-person learning; **not** to full time online learners.
- ✓ Generally, people who have had COVID-19 and who have recovered are not recommended to get the rapid antigen test done
- ✓ You will need to have a different COVID-19 test to confirm the rapid test results if you are preliminary positive because sometimes the rapid test results are not accurate however have helped to identify cases early.

What happens after I get tested?

- After you get tested you can go home. Unless you have been told otherwise by Hamilton Public Health Services, you do not have to isolate. Continue to follow Public Health measures such as distancing, masking, and washing your hands.
- Getting your test results:
 - ✓ If you pre-registered for your test online or, you registered with your email at the testing site, you will get an email from the GVT lab and you will be able to access your results through the online portal.



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- ✓ If you did not register with your email, you will have to bring a government-issued ID (e.g., driver's license or health card) and return to the testing site about 2 hours after your rapid test.
- ✓ The lab will be able to give you a paper copy of your rapid test results. If this is not possible please ask the test site if they can suggest an alternate plan for you to get your result.
- You will **not** be able to access your results through the Ontario COVID-19 test results viewer (patient portal).
- If you received a positive rapid test result, Hamilton Public Health Services will call you; you will not receive a call from Hamilton Public Health Services if your results are negative.

What happens if I test negative?

- You should consider the negative test result as a snapshot in time.
- If you test negative, you should continue to follow all public health measures such as physical distancing, wearing a mask, and washing your hands.
If you develop symptoms later on, stay home, isolate, and get tested at a [COVID-19 assessment center](#).

What happens if I get a preliminary positive rapid test?

- If your rapid test is positive, you and your close contacts will have to isolate, even if you do not have symptoms.
- Public Health will contact you regarding your positive rapid test result and the next steps.
- You will be asked to book a COVID-19 test to confirm the rapid test results:
 - ✓ You can book a test at a [COVID-19 assessment center](#).
 - ✓ If you have trouble booking on the website, you may call (905) 974-9848 ext. 2 for assistance.

What can I do if I am isolating?

- You can visit the [City of Hamilton website](#) or [Public Health Ontario](#) for further information regarding COVID-19 and isolation.
- If you are isolating you must stay home. You/your child should not leave the house unless you are going for a COVID-19 test or you are having a medical emergency. You should not go to school, work, or other places such as stores or appointments.
 - ✓ Do not have any visitors unless they are essential, such as a care provider.
 - ✓ Avoid contact with others as much as possible. This means staying in your own room away from others as much as possible, keeping a 2 metres (six feet) distance from others in your home, wearing a mask if you are in the same room as others or cannot keep at least 2 metres (six feet) of distance from others in your home, and not sharing personal items with others in your home.
 - ✓ Clean or disinfect high-touch surfaces often.
 - ✓ Wash your hands often.
 - ✓ Cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve, elbow, or a tissue, and not into your hands.



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What if my rapid antigen test and my COVID-19 test results are different?

- The confirmatory PCR laboratory-based COVID-19 test is the final test result. Hamilton Public Health Services will discuss your results with you, answer your questions.

What if I start to feel sick?

- Call your health care provider or Telehealth at 1-866-797-0000. If you have a medical emergency, call 9-1-1 immediately.