

Education At-Home Rapid Testing Program

Information for parents, students and school staff

How the program works

With the Education At-Home Rapid Testing Program, parents can choose to test their children in their homes. Staff can also test themselves at home. All schools are eligible to receive the tests.

Rapid screening tests are another tool, along with health measures already in place at schools, to keep students and staff safe.

Participation is voluntary

Participation in the Education At-Home Rapid Testing Program is optional.

Students and staff who choose to participate will receive rapid tests produced by a company called BTNX. Rapid tests are to be used twice a week. Testing is recommended to be done three to four days apart; for example, on Monday and Thursday or Tuesday and Friday. There is no requirement for students or staff to report their rapid test results.

The rapid tests provided by Alberta Health as part of this program cannot be used to support a restrictions exemption program.

Unvaccinated staff members and students 12 and older who wish to enter an organization participating in a restriction exemption program must pay to obtain a negative COVID-19 test through a private vendor.

Who can take part

Students and all school staff are eligible to receive test kits. Siblings and family members of eligible students are not eligible. Schools will determine how to send the tests home. It is safe for children to put them in their backpacks.

Vaccinations do not impact the results of a rapid test. Recently vaccinated students and staff may still use a rapid test to screen for COVID-19.

How to use the test kits

A how-to video for parents and staff is available on alberta.ca/return-to-school. The company, BTNX, also has a [how-to video](#) you can watch.

A rapid screening test nasal swab is only inserted 1.5 to 2 cm inside the nostril and is typically more comfortable, less invasive and less irritating than the swab usually used for a PCR COVID-19 test at an AHS testing centre.

Each test kit (5 tests per package) comes with:

- a sterile swab that looks like a Q-tip
- a tube and stand
- a nozzle and filter
- a plastic container with a small amount of liquid inside.

A test will take about 20 minutes to complete.

Steps for doing the test

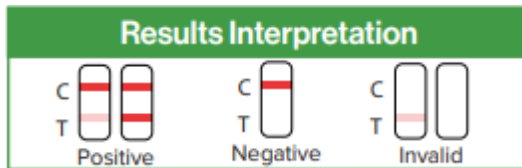
- Before you do the test, wash your hands with soap and water. The person being tested should blow their nose into a tissue and discard it.
- Unpack all of the test materials from the kit. Pour the testing liquid into the test tube.
- Take the sterile swab out of the package carefully. Make sure it does not touch anything.
- Insert the swab 1.5 to 2 cm inside the nostril. Move the swab in a circle for at least five seconds. Then, press the nostril down against the swab and spin the tip for five more seconds.
- Using the same swab, do the same thing in the other nostril.
- Next, put the swab in the test tube with the testing liquid. Make sure the swab tip is fully covered by the liquid.
- Set a timer for two minutes to let the swab contents mix with the test fluid.
- When the two minutes are up, pinch the tube so that you squeeze as much liquid as possible out of the swab.

- Throw the swab in the garbage.
- Place the filter nozzle on the test tube.
- Turn the tube over and squeeze three drops of the solution into the spot marked 'S' on the test device.
- Set a new timer for 15 minutes. Once 15 minutes are up, check your test results.

Once you are finished, you can throw the test away.

Results

Example of BTNX Rapid Test Results



What to do

Please visit alberta.ca/rapidtesting for current information about what to do if you or your child test positive or negative on a COVID-19 rapid test. You may also phone 811.

[This information sheet](#) also contains up-to-date information on what to do.

If something goes wrong with the test

- If something went wrong with the test, you won't see any lines—or you may see a line next to the 'T'.
- If that happens, you can throw the test away and start over. You may get a new test from the school if there are any additional tests available.

If a student or staff tested positive for COVID-19 in the past

- If someone tested positive for COVID-19, screening of these individuals is not recommended until at least six weeks after a COVID-19 diagnosis.

How accurate are rapid tests?

Rapid screening tests are not as accurate as lab-based tests done through an AHS assessment centre. The likelihood of someone with no symptoms having a false positive result from a rapid test is low. The likelihood of someone with no symptoms having a false negative result is higher. A negative result on a rapid screening test does not mean that person is not infected or could not become infectious.

When a rapid COVID-19 test is used for people without symptoms, it is a screening test, not a diagnostic test. Screening individuals with rapid tests can identify some, but not all, contagious individuals and, as a result, rapid screening does not replace public health measures such as physical distancing, masking, hand hygiene, staying home and accessing testing when sick and the mandatory isolation of COVID-19 cases.

If you have more questions

If you have questions about this school rapid screening test program, please email

EDC.SchoolRapidTesting@gov.ab.ca.

For the latest COVID-19 information visit

www.alberta.ca/Covid19.

If you have questions regarding test results or health outcomes, please contact Health Link at 811.