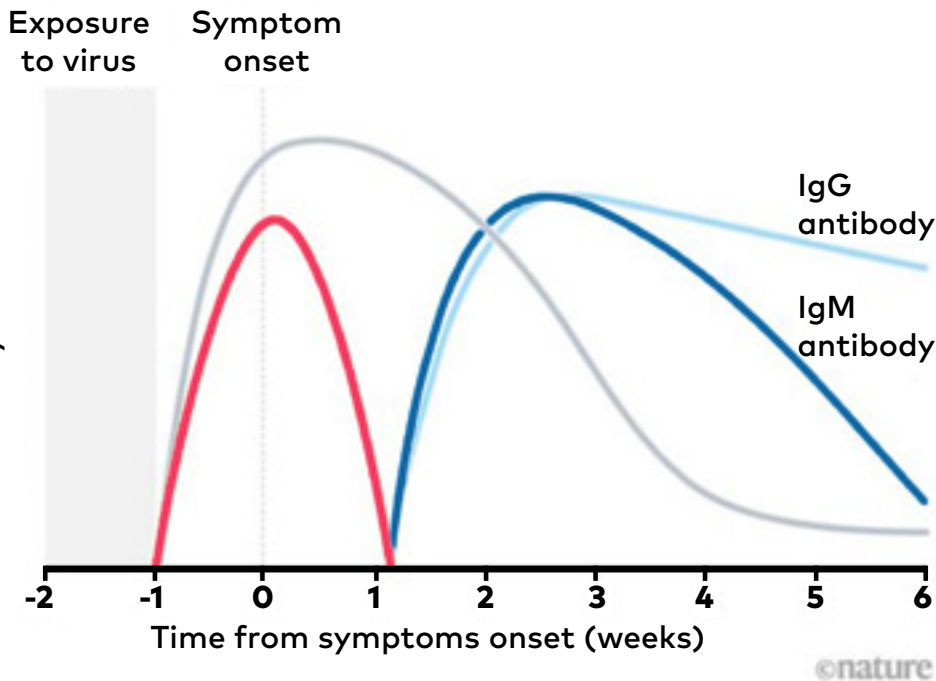


Guide to COVID-19 Testing

There are currently three types of tests available for Coronavirus testing (see graph)

- 1) **qRT-PCR** (grey line)
- 2) **Antigen** (red line)
- 3) **Antibody tests** (blue lines)



The choice of test depends on whether you need to know if the individual has been exposed, is currently infectious or has antibodies to the virus.

Selecting the right test at the right time will increase the likelihood of getting a true positive or negative result. For example, an antibody test may read negative in an individual showing symptoms if performed too early post infection. Similarly, an antigen test result can be negative if performed too long after initial exposure to the virus.

qRT-PCR Test

**PCR based tests detect small amounts of viral genetic material
24 -48 hours to Results***

PCR based tests are very sensitive and will detect the virus approximately a week after exposure, as well as long after a person stops being infectious, possibly after several months.

***Requires a qPCR instrument**

Sample type: Swabs or Saliva

- [Nose & Throat Sampling Swabs](#)
- [Saliva Collection Aid](#)
- [Saliva Swabs](#)

Additional Reagents Required:

- [RNA Extraction Kits](#)
- [Sample transport solutions](#)

Antigen Rapid Test

**Antigen tests detect the direct presence of viral proteins
10-15 Minutes to Results***

This test may not be sensitive enough to detect the virus early after infection but rather at a later stage after viral exposure when a person is more infectious

***Lateral Flow Assay / no instrument needed**

Sample type: Swabs

- [Nose & Throat Sampling Swabs](#)

Additional Reagents Required:

- [Sample transport solutions](#)

Antibody Rapid Test

**Antibody tests detect the antibodies (IgG and IgM) produced by the infected host
10-15 Minutes to Results***

The immune response to the virus can take several days to be detected therefore antibody tests are not useful at the earliest phase of infection. They may be used to study Immunity.

***Lateral Flow Assay / no instrument needed**

Sample type: Blood or Serum