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Anne Goon, MS, RD, LD, Health Commissioner

Expanding Access to Rapid COVID-19 Testing through Home Antigen Tests

FAQs

Why is the state providing these tests?

Expanded testing is a key strategy in controlling the spread of COVID-19 and rapidly identifying clusters or outbreaks in specific settings. The state of Ohio is aware of the need for a simpler way to carry out this testing – a way that doesn't require medical personnel and/or large testing events. So, the state has purchased 2 million Abbott BinaxNOW Rapid COVID-19 Antigen Home Tests, which are administered, processed, and resulted entirely at home.

Marietta/Belpre Health Department has obtained 2,000 Abbott BinaxNOW Home Tests to make rapid testing much more accessible to local Washington County residents.

Is the BinaxNOW Rapid COVID-19 Antigen Home Test approved by the FDA?

The [BinaxNOW COVID-19 Antigen Home Test](#) has received [FDA Emergency Use Authorization](#) for at-home testing during a telehealth session. Abbott has selected [eMed](#), a digital health solution, as its telehealth partner. This service for COVID-19 testing prescribes and allows the test to be done rapidly at home with virtual instruction and consultation. A trained telehealth professional guides those being tested through the at-home self-test via video call using the BinaxNOW COVID-19 Antigen Home Test and Abbott's complementary NAVICA mobile app to enable the testing process and display BinaxNOW COVID-19 test results.

Who can be tested using the BinaxNOW Rapid COVID-19 Antigen Home Test?

ANYONE who meets these 3 criteria can be tested with the BinaxNOW Rapid COVID-19 Antigen Home Test:

- **Has COVID-19 symptoms.** This test is approved only for people with symptoms, within one week of onset. The results are less accurate for people without symptoms. This means that an asymptomatic person could test negative when s/he is positive for COVID-19 and capable of infecting others.
- **Is age 4 or older.** This test can be used for those four years of age and older. An adult must perform the test for children.
- **Has access to an Apple or Android smartphone AND a Windows or Mac/Apple laptop with a webcam (or a desktop computer with an adjustable/moveable webcam), microphone, and speaker.** This test is done at home under the direct visual supervision of a telehealth provider. It also requires the download of the NAVICA smartphone app to show results.

Where can the test be done?

The Abbott BinaxNOW Rapid COVID-19 Antigen Home Tests is done completely at home under the direct visual supervision of a telehealth provider.



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How reliable are these tests?

While PCR tests remain the gold standard for identifying the SARS-CoV-2 virus (the virus that causes COVID-19), rapid antigen tests have the ability – with their scale, quick results, and lower cost – to be powerful tools in slowing the spread of COVID-19, by focusing on the period when a person is most infectious and at greatest risk of spreading the disease to others.

Antigen tests are generally less sensitive than PCR-based methods. There is some risk of false negatives with antigen tests, but generally not false positives, when the test is administered according to the instructions. The BinaxNOW Rapid COVID-19 Antigen Home Test is approved only for people with symptoms, within one week of onset.

This means that an asymptomatic person with COVID-19 could possibly test negative, but it's not likely that a person would test positive when s/he didn't really have the disease.

How long does the test take?

The BinaxNOW COVID-19 Antigen Home Test takes about 15 minutes to complete.

How are test results reported?

[eMed](#) is responsible for reporting test results. For the person being tested, results are returned through the NAVICA app, and the NAVICA pass can be used to show a test result to an employer, school, or other party. For public health reporting, [eMed](#) sends results through the electronic lab reporting system to the Ohio Disease Reporting System.

Can a person skip the telehealth portion of the test and just have the distribution site perform the test?

No. The [FDA Emergency Use Authorization](#) specifically states, "The BinaxNOW COVID-19 Ag Card Home Test is to be performed only with the supervision of a telehealth proctor." Bypassing the telehealth portion of the test would mean that there is no prescription for the test to be administered, as the prescription specifically includes this aspect of the test.