

Frequently Asked Questions: Asymptomatic Lateral Flow Testing for staff

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Background

All staff members are being offered the chance to test themselves for COVID-19 twice per week using a lateral flow device (LFD). This testing is part of the government's response to the pandemic. The testing kits are designed to identify people who may have high viral loads of COVID-19 without showing symptoms, so that these people can self-isolate and avoid infecting others.

It is important to remember that this testing is only suitable for those who do not have COVID-19 symptoms. If you have symptoms please self-isolate, inform your line manager and arrange a PCR test. You can find details of how to do so on GOSHWeb [here](#).

Below are some frequently asked questions and answers for staff. We expect to update and review these regularly, so please keep an eye out for future versions. If you have any questions that are not covered in this advice, please email lateralflowtesting@gosh.nhs.uk.

Q: What type of test is being rolled out?

A: The test being used is a lateral flow antigen test (sometimes known as an LFD) called the Innova SARS-CoV-2 Antigen Rapid Qualitative Test. This is a simple test that requires a swab from the nostril of the person being tested. It can be done at home and does not need to be sent off to a lab – it will give you a result after 30 minutes.

Q: What is the difference between a PCR and LFD test?

A: The Polymerase Chain Reaction (also known as PCR) test is administered by a fully trained and qualified healthcare professional in a medical or laboratory setting, rather than by the person being tested. The results should also be interpreted by a trained and qualified healthcare professional.

PCR tests give you a fairly accurate indication of whether or not you are infected with coronavirus.

The lateral flow antigen test (also known as LFD) is a different test. It can also tell you if you are currently infected and testing can be done at home, but it is much less accurate than the PCR test. The sample is collected by the person having the test (self-administered) or by someone else (assisted) in a home or non-laboratory environment.

Q: What is the specificity and sensitivity of this particular test?

A: The government has published its latest research on these tests here: <https://www.ox.ac.uk/news/2020-11-11-oxford-university-and-phe-confirm-high-sensitivity-lateral-flow-tests-following>

Q: When will this testing start?

A: The distribution of self-test kits started on Thursday 10 December. All staff will have received information directly about how to take part in the programme.

Q: For how long will these tests be carried out?

A: The Government is providing enough tests for each staff member to carry out two tests a week for 12 weeks.

Q: Is the test mandatory or voluntary?

A: Tests are voluntary, but if staff agree to take part there is an expectation that they will test themselves over the full 12-week period.

Q: Who will be offered these tests?

A: All staff are eligible to collect a box of lateral flow tests, except if you have had confirmed COVID in the last 90 days.

Q: I have recently had the COVID vaccine. Should I still do these tests?

A: Yes, even if you have had the vaccine, we recommend that you continue to use the lateral flow tests. We don't know how the vaccine will influence COVID transmission, and it takes time to build up immunity.

Q: Where can I find more information about the self-testing programme?

A: You should have received a direct email with everything you need to know on Wednesday 9 December. We've also created a dedicated page on the [GOSH website here](#) for those with a GOSH email address which includes the relevant consent form to sign up and a simple online form to record test results. Please ensure you are viewing the correct one as there are different versions for colleagues who do not have a GOSH email address.

Q: I do not have a GOSH email address but want to take part. Where can I find more information about the self-testing programme?

A: If you haven't already received a hardcopy of the key information, you can go directly to [this page on the GOSH website](#), which includes the relevant consent form to sign up and a simple online form to record test results. Please ensure you are viewing the correct one as there are different versions for staff who already have a GOSH email address.

Q: Where is the consent form to sign up?

A: Full information is on the relevant web page (above). Below is also a direct link to the forms:

[Home Testing Agreement Form: Staff with GOSH email address](#)

[Home Testing Agreement Form: Staff without GOSH email address](#)

Q: I tried the consent form/ result reporting form, but got an error message saying "you don't have access to view or respond to this form". What should I do?

A: This is likely because you are logged into a different Microsoft Account (e.g. your NHS.net one) so you will need to log out of this, and into your GOSH account to access the form. To do this click on "Create my own form". On the next page, click on the profile icon in the top right hand corner. This will then show you the account you are logged in as. Click "Sign out". Re-scan the QR code again and log in with you GOSH email address and password (the one you use to get on the computer). You will also have to go through multi-factor authentication. Once you have done this the first time it will be much quicker next time, since you'll be logged into the right account.

If you are still having trouble, email lateralflowtesting@gosh.nhs.uk for help. Note that you do not need to be logged into a GOSH computer to access the forms and it can be done on your phone.

Q: I missed the initial distribution window. Can I still sign up?

A: If you missed the window to collect a box of lateral flow tests (e.g. if you have started at GOSH since this time) please email lateralflowtesting@gosh.nhs.uk.

Q: How frequently should the test be done?

A: Staff should test themselves twice weekly. That's every three to four days to fit with shift patterns and leave requirements. For example, Wednesday and Sunday or Tuesday and Thursday. We suggest that the test is done the evening before coming in to work within 12 hours before your shift.

Q: What do I do if I'm taking leave or I'm off sick with something other than COVID-19 symptoms?

A: You should continue testing throughout this period.

Q: How do I do the test?

A: Paper instructions on how to do the test will be given out with the box of tests. A video demonstrating how to do the test is also available [here](#).

Q: How many tests will I be given?

A: Each staff member can pick up a box, containing 25 tests (i.e. enough for 12 weeks of twice-weekly testing). Each box contains:

- 25 foil pouches containing the test cartridge and a desiccant
- 2 vials of 6mls buffer solution
- 25 extraction tubes and 25 caps

Q: What happens if I get a positive results?

A: You and your whole household must immediately start self-isolating. You should inform your line manager. Then, since these LFD tests are not as accurate as laboratory tests you will need to have a PCR test through GOSH to confirm your result or otherwise. This can be organised by one of the following routes:

- Fill in the online referral form <https://gst/CovidStaffTracker/>. This is only accessible through a GOSH domain (i.e. on a GOSH computer or Portal) and should be opened through Google Chrome / Microsoft Edge / Mozilla Firefox
- Email staffcovidscreening@gosh.nhs.uk with your name, mobile number, DOB, and LOT number
- Call the COVID screening clinic on 020 7405 9200 – Ext: 34225 (open 8am-6pm Monday-Friday or 9am-1pm weekends only)



The screening team will then arrange for you to come to GOSH for a test or will send you a swabbing kit. The Infection Prevention and Control team will also be in touch to complete a risk assessment.

If the result of the PCR test is positive, you and your household must continue isolating for 10 days. If the PCR test is negative, a member of the Infection Prevention and Control team will be in touch to advise on next steps.

Following a positive PCR test, staff should not resume lateral flow testing for 90 days.

Q: What if I get a negative LFD result?

A: If your lateral flow test is negative, then you can come into work as usual.



Please note however, that these tests are only valid for the moment they are taken and are not perfect, so if you are experiencing or start to experience any symptoms of COVID-19, you must self-isolate and arrange a PCR test.

Q: What if the test fails?

A: The LFD tests do sometimes fail. You can tell this has happened if there is no line at the 'C' mark. If this happens, please still record the result (it is important for us to know how many tests fail) and repeat with a new strip.



If this second test fails too, then come into work as normal (as long as you are asymptomatic) and collect a replacement (as there may be a problem with the batch). Email lateralflowtesting@gosh.nhs.uk to arrange this.

Q: What should I do with the used tests?

A: You can safely dispose of the test items in your normal household waste but should pour any residual buffer solution away first.

Q: Someone in my household has symptoms of COVID-19 / needs a COVID-19 test (e.g. to travel) – can they use one of my LFDs?

A: No. These tests are solely for the use of GOSH staff. If you, or a member of your household has symptoms of COVID-19, then they should get a PCR test.

Q: At what stage is Test and Trace informed of the result?

A: At the point the confirmatory PCR test result is known, and this is positive result, test results will, as normal, be referred to Test and Trace.

Q: How do I record the result of the test?

A: We have developed a simple online form through which you can record the result of the test. There is a different form for staff with a GOSH email address and those without one, so please use the correct form.

[Home Testing Result Reporting: Staff with a GOSH email address](#)

[Home Testing Result Reporting: Staff without a GOSH email address](#)

Q: What happens to my results? Where does my data go?

A: Results will be stored confidentially within GOSH workforce information systems and will not be visible to all staff. We are required to share all information, including your results, with Public Health England. A full privacy notice is available on the website.

Still have questions?

Please speak to your line manager or email lateralflowtesting@gosh.nhs.uk.

LFD Testing for staff – Results Table

NEGATIVE RESULT	INVALID RESULT	POSITIVE RESULT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit your result using the self-test kit reporting form • Attend work as normal provided you are asymptomatic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit your result using the self-test kit reporting form • Repeat the test using another test from your self-testing kit • If you have a second invalid result you should return your test kit to GOSH and request a replacement • If you are concerned about your ability to perform the LFD test please speak to your line manager and one-to-one training can be arranged 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit your result using the self-test kit reporting form • You and your household must self-isolate • You need to get a PCR test <u>through GOSH to confirm the result.</u> You can self-refer through one of the following routes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fill in an online PCR referral form: https://gst/CovidStaffTracker/ (only accessible through a GOSH computer/Portal) ○ Email: staffcovidscreening@gosh.nhs.uk ○ Call the clinic on 020 7405 9200 Ext. 34225 (8am-6pm Mon-Fri or 9am-1pm weekends only) <p>A member of the Infection Prevention & Control team will be in touch to complete a risk assessment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NOTE: If your PCR is positive you will no longer be eligible to continue the LFD testing for another 90 days and should return any remaining test kits

If at any time you have **symptoms** of COVID-19 you must inform your line manager, self-isolate at home and arrange a PCR test as described under positive result above.

Remember HANDS, FACE, SPACE and PLACE