EXPLAINING RAPID TESTS FOR COVID-19

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER COVID-19 POC TESTING PROGRAM

Rapid molecular

tests detect the virus that causes COVID-19 via it's genetic material (RNA).

Also called a "PCR" or a "nucleic acid test".

Benefits

The test can detect early infection, even before the patient has symptoms.

This is the **only** test that can be used to diagnose active COVID-19 infection.

When samples are collected correctly, the test is 100% accurate.

How long does it take?

Results can be delivered to patients in 45 minutes, so they can be isolated until they receive their results.

Limitations

The test cannot determine if a patient has had a previous infection.

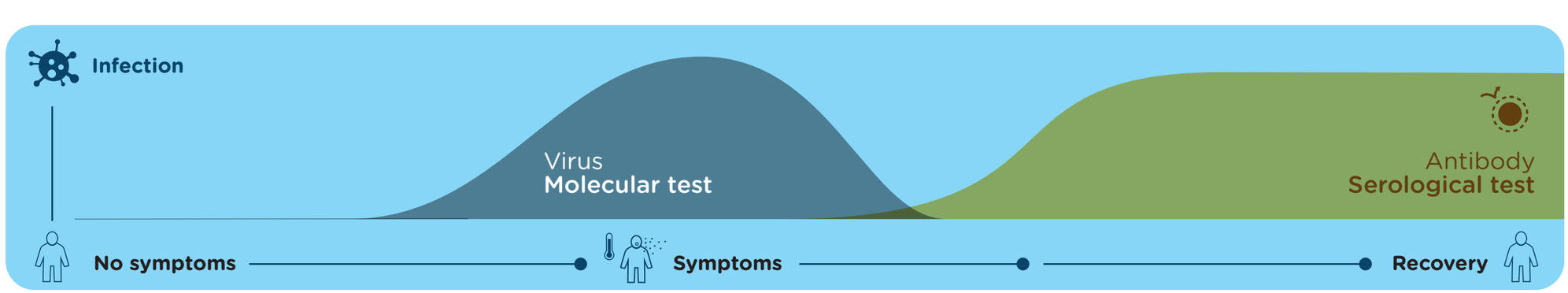
How is it performed?

POINT-OF-CARE MOLECULAR TEST

A nasopharyngeal sample is collected using a swab, placed in a solution. The solution is added into a single-use test called the "**Xpert® Xpress SARS-CoV-2**". The test is placed onto a platform at the clinic, called the GeneXpert.

In Australia, the GeneXpert is currently the only platform approved to run a molecular test at the point of care.

There are currently **2** **types of** rapid tests for COVID-19 in use.



Rapid serological

tests detect the antibodies (IgG and IgM) generated by the immune system to combat the virus.

Also called a "rapid antibody test" or a "lateral flow test".

Benefits

This test can be used to tell if a person has had COVID-19 in the past. How well these tests perform in the clinic is not fully understood.

How long does it take?

A fingerstick blood sample shows results in about 15 minutes.

Limitations

Testing may often only be possible during recovery. It cannot identify active Infection when a patient may be most infectious.

Some people (elderly or immunocompromised) may never develop antibodies, so this test is not always reliable for these groups.

How is it performed?

A blood sample is mixed with a solution added to the test sample window or pad (the test looks similar to a pregnancy home test). The solution moves along the test strip and the result appears visible within the test window

For more information: https://www.tga.gov.au/how-testing-works-covid-19 https://theconversation.com/covid-19-tests-how-they-work-and-whats-in-development-134479