

# COVID-19 Testing Comparison



## Serological

## Molecular

METHODS	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Direct antigen</li> <li>2 Indirect antibodies</li> </ol> <p>ELISA (enzyme linked immunosorbent assay) or LFIA (lateral flow immunoassay)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 PCR (Polymerase chain reaction)</li> <li>2 RT-PCR (Reverse transcriptase-Polymerase chain reaction)—offered by Inform Diagnostics</li> </ol>
SPECIMEN	
Blood from finger stick or venipuncture	Nasal or throat swab
DETECTION	
Antibodies from past virus infection	RNA from current virus
TIMING	
Can be used <i>after 7–10 days</i> of symptoms	Most reliable in <i>first 7 days</i> of symptoms
LIMITATIONS	
<p>Concerns about quality</p> <p>Some tests cross-react with other coronaviruses</p> <p>Some tests have low sensitivity &amp; specificity</p> <p><b>WHO warning:</b> patients may have limited immunity; not enough known about duration of immunity</p>	<p>Swab must be taken by healthcare provider</p> <p>May not find virus in very early phase</p> <p>Virus can be found longer than patient is contagious</p> <p>Turnaround is several days</p>
BENEFITS	
<p>Faster turnaround (for LFIA)</p> <p>Cheap to produce, easy to perform</p> <p>Insights on rate of infection in community</p>	<p>Diagnostic</p> <p>Reliable</p> <p>Identifies patients who are contagious</p>