



### **Why should I get tested?**

Through increased testing, you are aiding the quick and early detection of infections that would otherwise have gone undetected. As a result, chains of infection can be interrupted at an early stage through home quarantine. This way, the virus can spread less. You protect yourself and others!

### **Where can I get tested?**

Citizens can take advantage of a free rapid test, the so-called citizens' test, at least once a week. For this purpose, they can use the test centres and stations commissioned by the federal states and municipalities. In North Rhine-Westphalia, there are thousands of test centres throughout the state. You can find a test facility near you at [www.testen.nrw](http://www.testen.nrw).

### **How often should I get tested?**

At least once a week. In doing so, you are making a valuable contribution to containing the coronavirus.

### **What do I do if I test positive?**

A positive test result triggers the suspicion of an infection with the SARS-CoV-2 and must be confirmed immediately by a PCR test. Please contact a doctor, the public health department or a testing centre by telephone. If you test positive, you must assume that you are highly contagious to other people. It is absolutely essential that you self-isolate immediately afterwards and avoid contact with other people. Only if a subsequent PCR test does not confirm the suspicion is there no longer a reason to quarantine.

### **What test methods are there?**

Currently, the following test methods are predominantly used for the detection of SARS-CoV-2:

1. The **PCR test** is carried out by medical personnel and evaluated in a medical laboratory. It detects the genetic material of the pathogen.
2. The **(rapid) antigen test** reacts to a specific protein fragment of the virus. It is carried out by trained personnel.
3. The **self-test**, which, like the rapid antigen test, reacts to a specific protein fragment of the virus.

**PCR tests** are the most reliable of the corona tests. During the test, medical personnel take a nasal or throat swab, for example. The PCR test is evaluated by a laboratory. The test result is available after four to six hours at the earliest. The time between the sample being taken and notification of results can take a few days, depending on the volume of samples.

**Rapid antigen tests** for SARS-CoV-2 are only carried out **by trained personnel**. As with the PCR test, a nasal or throat swab is taken. These tests deliver a much faster result, usually after max. 15 minutes, directly on site. However, they are not as reliable as a PCR test and only provide a snapshot. If the result of the rapid test is positive, a PCR test must be carried out immediately for further clarification.

**Self-tests** have been available in shops since the beginning of March. They work like rapid antigen tests, but can basically be carried out by any individual. Sample taking and evaluation is accordingly simple and fast. However, their reliability depends on correct and timely sample taking and on how the test is carried out and is generally lower than that of PCR tests. If a self-test indicates a suspected infection, confirmation by a PCR test is absolutely necessary.

**Stay healthy – stay informed:** [www.land.nrw/corona](http://www.land.nrw/corona)