

# What Tribal Leaders Need to Know About Abbott ID NOW Rapid COVID-19 Testing

**The Indian Health Service has acquired Abbott Diagnostics ID NOW rapid COVID-19 tests. The instrument can give results within 15 minutes.** These tests have been given Emergency Use Authorization by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), which means there is less information available about how the test performs than there would be under the normal approval process. The following recommendations are offered for Tribal Leaders regarding the Abbott ID NOW COVID-19 tests.

## Should we use the Abbott ID NOW COVID-19 test for mass testing?

**No.** This test should be used to identify high risk patients, new case clusters, and to support testing methods already in place. Currently there are limited test kits so they should be saved for people most in need of testing. Also, the test is not perfect in detecting the virus when it is present, so mass testing may result in a high rate of false negative results.

## Who should determine if someone gets tested?

**Health care providers.** Priority should be given to patients for whom the result is needed for a medical or public health response (e.g., health care provider with COVID-19 symptoms, patient in a setting with a high risk of transmission such as a detention center; patient with symptoms but no known contact with someone with COVID-19). Health care providers will likely follow CDC protocols that prioritize on three levels:

- 1) Hospitalized patients, health care workers and first responders with symptoms.**
- 2) Those with symptoms who are at highest risk of serious illness or complications** (e.g. residents of long term care facilities, older individuals, those with conditions like heart disease, lung disease, diabetes, etc.).
- 3) People with symptoms in communities with growing numbers of cases, in order to decrease the spread of COVID-19 and to keep essential workers healthy.**

## Are the test results reliable?

Some reports have shown that the ID NOW rapid tests have higher rates of false negative results than other COVID-19 tests. Abbott has said that this is likely due to samples being placed in transport media, and have told providers not to do this. Proper training on collection and use of the instrument leads to more reliable test results.

**For information or training videos provided by Abbott on the ID NOW rapid test, visit: [www.alere.com/en/home/support/product-demos/id-now-training-videos.html](http://www.alere.com/en/home/support/product-demos/id-now-training-videos.html)**

## What does a negative test mean?

**For most people, a negative test means that they don't have COVID-19.** For a small percentage of people, the test may be falsely negative. To prevent spread of COVID-19, patients with negative test results who have symptoms of COVID-19 should be treated the same as those who test positive. If an individual has a negative test but has had contact with someone with COVID-19, they still require a 14-day period of quarantine from the date of last contact because they may still become sick.



Image source: <https://www.abbott.com/corpnnewsroom/product-and-innovation/detect-covid-19-in-as-little-as-5-minutes.html>

## What does a positive test mean?

**For most people, a positive test means that they have COVID-19.** Their provider will give them care instructions. They will need to follow guidelines for self-isolation and get the okay from their provider to stop self-isolation.

For a very small percentage of people, the test may be falsely positive. This could make them think they might be protected from getting COVID-19 in the future. Therefore, it is important for people to continue to practice COVID-19 precautions, like social distancing and hand washing.

## Should we track confirmed cases of COVID-19?

Identifying, isolating, and monitoring confirmed cases of COVID-19 is important to **help limit the spread of COVID-19.** Tracing and quarantining people who have had contact with infected people can do even more to reduce the spread of COVID-19. All probable and confirmed cases should be tracked using a case management and contact tracing tool.

## How should we tell the community about the availability of rapid testing?

Develop a community education campaign to tell community members about the availability of the test while explaining its limitations (i.e. false negative tests). Encourage them to continue to follow public health advice for safety and reducing the spread of COVID-19 even if they have a negative test result. See the "COVID-19 Rapid Testing with Abbott ID NOW: What Community Members Need to Know" fact sheet at <http://caih.jhu.edu/news/covid19>



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