

Testing people for Covid-19



Look at the main types of test available for Covid-19 in the table below. These were available in the UK in the summer of 2020. Cut out the cards at the bottom of the sheet and try to match the people listed against the type of test that you think they should have. (You might decide that some of them do not need a test.)

Name of test (and how it is done)	What it checks for	What it does	Benefits	Limitations	Who should have it?
1. Temperature screening (thermometer).	A high body temperature.	It seeks to show if someone might be unwell.	Quick, cheap.	It does not test if someone has Covid-19. Further tests are needed.	
2. Nasal swab test (long cotton bud stick inserted up nose).	Virus particles.	It seeks to show if someone has Covid-19 now.	It can indicate if a person needs to self-isolate.	The results may take a few days and, if negative, can be inaccurate or can go quickly out of date.	
3. Blood test (by a medical professional).	Antibodies (from a person's reaction to virus).	It seeks to show if someone has had Covid-19 in the past.	Helps to show the spread of the disease.	If the result is positive, it is not certain that the person is immune (or unlikely to get infected again).	

A health worker	A person boarding a flight
A person showing symptoms of Covid-19	A person going back to their family from hospital
A care giver who visits elderly people in their homes	A person who is self-isolating because they are vulnerable to the infection
A school child coming into class	A food deliverer