

A Message From the Ministry of Education

In an effort to help slow the spread of COVID-19, reduce absenteeism, and to continue to support our school communities, the Ministry of Education offered rapid antigen test kits for **symptomatic** students and staff just prior to the March Break. We are providing updated guidance regarding the use and handling of rapid antigen tests.

- The Ontario COVID-19 Science Advisory Table has updated the recommendations for **how to complete an oral/nasal swab** used for rapid antigen testing. This is an optional swabbing approach. Directions on how to collect a sample can be found here:
<https://www.ontariohealth.ca/sites/ontariohealth/files/2022-02/COVID-19RapidAntigenTests-HowtoCollectaSample.pdf>
- You may also reference this how-to video for a nasal swab:
<https://youtu.be/EWSFJ1JoUd0>

Please note: When rapid antigen tests are used according to instructions, they do not pose a risk to the health of Ontarians. Note that the liquid in the tubes can irritate your eyes and skin and is dangerous if swallowed. If the liquid accidentally touches your skin, wash it with plenty of water. If it touches your eyes or mouth, rinse with plenty of water for 15 minutes and contact your healthcare provider or the Ontario Poison Centre (1-800-268-9017) for assistance.

Important note: Parents or guardians may choose to administer this screening on children who may need help (i.e. younger children).

Please note that the Chief Medical Officer of Health has updated guidance for anyone who has had a positive test result (molecular/PCR or RAT). Individuals who receive a positive test result **should not participate in antigen testing for 30 days** from their COVID-19 infection (based on the date of their symptom onset or test). After this period, symptomatic individuals can resume COVID-19 rapid antigen testing in accordance with:

https://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/contact_management/cases_contacts_omicron.pdf