



## HEALTH & LIFESTYLE

# Home Use COVID-19 Test to Be Available in US Soon

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The first home test for COVID-19 that does not require a doctor's order will soon be ready for Americans.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved the **rapid** coronavirus test on Tuesday. It is part of an effort to expand testing in the United States, which has the most reported infections and deaths in the world.

The test is similar to another home test approved for emergency use recently. But that test requires a doctor's order.

In a statement, FDA chief Stephen Hahn said "a patient can buy it, **swab** their nose, run the test and find out their results in as little as 20 minutes."

The tests can be bought at drug stores or online, but supplies will be limited at first. Australian manufacturer Ellume said it expects to produce 3 million tests next month before expanding production over the first half of 2021. The test will cost around \$30.

The test includes a nose swab, a chemical substance and a testing strip. A smart phone app shows and explains the test results. Users can also contact a health worker through the app.

For months, health experts have centered on the need for fast and widely available home testing. The goal is to have people test themselves and avoid contact with others if they have an infection.

But the large majority of tests still require a **nasal** swab performed by a health worker and results to be processed in a laboratory.

Ellume's test looks for viral proteins from COVID-19. It is different from those that look for the genetic material of the virus.

FDA officials noted that Ellume's test can sometimes deliver false positive and false negative results. People who get a negative result but have signs of coronavirus infection should talk with a health worker, the agency said.

Currently, the U.S. is testing nearly 2 million people each day, more than any other nation. But most health experts agree the country needs to be testing many times more.

Dr. Michael Mina of Harvard University called the new test "a great addition," to existing choices. He noted, however, that its price could limit the number of people who use it. He added, "I just hope it doesn't drive more of a **wedge** between haves and have nots."

I'm Jonathan Evans.

*Matthew Perrone reported this story for the Associated Press. Hai Do adapted it for VOA Learning English. Mario Ritter, Jr. was the editor.*

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## Words in This Story

**rapid** -*adj.* happening quickly or in a short amount of time

**swab** -*v.* to wipe, clean or gather

**nasal** -*adj.* related to the nose

**wedge** -*n.* a piece of some material that is triangular in shape and can be used to divide something, to separate, or fill a space

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