

US lab unveils portable 5-minute COVID-19 test

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This transmission electron microscope image shows SARS-CoV-2 -- also known as 2019-nCoV, the virus that causes COVID-19 -- isolated from a patient in the US. Virus particles are shown emerging from the surface of cells cultured in the

lab. The spikes on the outer edge of the virus particles give coronaviruses their name, crown-like. Credit: NIAID-RML

A US-based lab has unveiled a portable test that can tell if someone has COVID-19 in as little as five minutes, it said in a statement Friday.

Abbott Laboratories said the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) had given it emergency authorization to begin making the test available to healthcare providers as early as next week.

The test, which is the size of a small toaster and uses molecular technology, also shows negative results within 13 minutes, the company said in a press statement.

"The COVID-19 pandemic will be fought on multiple fronts, and a portable molecular test that offers results in minutes adds to the broad range of diagnostic solutions needed to combat this virus," said Abbott president and chief operating officer Robert Ford.

The test's [small size](#) means it can be deployed outside the "traditional four walls of a hospital in outbreak hotspots," Ford said, and Abbott is working with the FDA to send it to virus epicenters.

The test has not been cleared or approved by the FDA, and has only been authorized for emergency use by approved labs and [healthcare providers](#), the company said.

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