

5 Table 2. Overview of tests for SARS-CoV-2

Type of Test	What It Measures	Specimen Type	CPT Codes/ Approximate Cost*	Advantages	Disadvantages
RT-PCR (Molecular)	Nucleic acid from SARS-CoV-2 (RNA)	Naso-pharyngeal swab	CPT code 87635/ \$51.31-\$100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detects presence of SARS-CoV-2 virus</li> <li>• Used to determine if someone is currently infected</li> <li>• Specificity of <math>\geq 98\%</math> (estimate)</li> <li>• Sensitivity of 70-95% (estimate)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not determine if viral material detected is actually viable and capable of being transmitted</li> <li>• Negative predictive value dependent on prevalence of COVID-19 in the local community</li> <li>• Virus detectable for long periods of time following infection</li> </ul>
Antigen Test (Molecular)	SARS-CoV-2 antigens	Nasal swab	CPT code 87426/ (payment rates not available).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detects viral surface markers of SARS-CoV-2</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lower sensitivity compared with molecular techniques resulting in false negatives</li> <li>• Need to confirm negative samples with molecular tests</li> </ul>
Antibody Test (serology)	SARS-CoV-2 antibodies in the blood	Blood	CPT codes 86328 and 86769/ \$42.13-\$45.23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detects presence of antibodies</li> <li>• Indicates past exposure to SARS-CoV-2</li> <li>• May help determine if a person can resume work</li> <li>• May help determine if a person is a potential donor of convalescent plasma</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presence of antibodies does not confirm immunity</li> <li>• No specific antibody level cutoff has been determined</li> <li>• Cannot be used to diagnose current infection</li> </ul>

6 \*CPT, current procedural terminology; Medicare payment rates as of 5/19/2020<sup>40</sup>

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