What is an Antigen Test?
- **Antigen Tests** detect the presence of a specific viral protein in a collected sample. This protein is known as an antigen and is on the surface of the COVID-19 virus.
- **Antigen Tests** perform best when the person is tested in the early stages of infection with COVID-19.
- **Antigen Tests** are approved for use in symptomatic persons up to 7 days into their illness.

What is the difference between an antigen test and a PCR test?
- A **PCR** (polymerase chain reaction) is a molecular test for COVID-19 that is performed in a laboratory and detects a virus's genetic material.
- **Antigen Tests** for COVID-19 are generally less able to detect the virus than a **PCR** test.

What does it mean if my Antigen Test is positive?
- A positive test indicates antigen from the COVID-19 virus was detected and you are presumed to be infected.
- Positive results on an **Antigen Test** are fairly reliable meaning that the test is generally positive only when the COVID-19 virus is present in your specimen (swab).
- Sometimes a swab or test kit can get contaminated during the process of running an Antigen Test and cause the test to be positive when in fact you are not infected, this is called a **false positive.**
- Your healthcare provider or a public health official can assist in understand the meaning of a positive Antigen Test**.**

What do I do if my Antigen Test is positive?
- You should strictly isolate yourself at home for at least 10 days after you became ill or test positive.
- You should be feeling well (and without fever) for at least 24 hours before resuming normal activities. Guidance can be found at the TDH website here: https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/health/documents/cedep/novel-coronavirus/CaseGuidance.pdf
- There is no specific treatment for COVID-19. Get plenty of rest, stay hydrated and, if needed, take medication to reduce your fever; Contact your physician for any medical concerns or questions.
- If you develop symptoms or your symptoms get worse, you should contact your health care provider and notify them of your positive antigen test result.

Communicate with Public Health
- If your antigen test is positive, you may receive a call from public health, and they will ask about your symptoms and exposure to confirm you as a probable case and ask about your contacts.
- Your **close contacts,** those within 6 feet for at least 15 minutes, will need to **quarantine** after their last contact with you in order to prevent them from spreading the infection to others. CDC and TDH recommend a 14-day quarantine. Additional information about shorter quarantine options is available here: https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/health/documents/cedep/novel-coronavirus/Isolation-QuarantineRelease.pdf
- Please share this information with your **close contacts:** https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/health/documents/cedep/novel-coronavirus/CloseContactGuidance.pdf

Returning to Regular Activities after a positive test
- Once you've completed your isolation period at home (minimum of 10 days, with at least 24 hours of feeling well), you can return to your regular activities.
- Per CDC guidelines, you do not need to be retested in order to resume your regular activities.
- You may continue to have a positive test up to three months after you became ill with COVID-19.

Learn More
- Tennessee Department of Health: https://www.tn.gov/health/cedep/ncov.html
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html