

LA PÉRIODE DE VALIDITÉ D'UN TEST AG NÉGATIF AVANT LA PARTICIPATION À UN ÉVÉNEMENT

RAG sous-groupe Testing – 19 avril 2021

Note : Les recommandations actuelles sont susceptibles d'être modifiées en fonction de nouvelles informations et/ou de l'évolution de l'épidémie.

Recommandations :

- Un résultat négatif d'un test Ag rapide (effectué par un professionnel de la santé ou sous la supervision d'un professionnel de la santé) ou d'un test Ag automatisé reste valable pendant 24 heures.
- Par conséquent, les participants à un événement doivent être testés au plus tôt 24 heures avant le début de l'événement.
- Les participants à un événement qui s'étend sur plusieurs jours doivent être testés toutes les 24 heures..

Les personnes suivantes ont participé à cet avis :

Bénédicte Delaere (UCLouvain); Herman Goossens (UAntwerpen); Yves Lafort (Sciensano); Barbara Legiest (ZG); Tinne Lernout (Sciensano); Pieter Libin (UHasselt); Romain Mahieu (COCOM); Olivier Vandenberg (LHUB-ULB); Ann Van den Bruel (KU Leuven); Steven Van Gucht (Sciensano); Pieter Vermeersch (KU Leuven).

CONTEXT

On request of the corona consultation committee (OCC/CCC), a framework, calendar and roadmap for pilot activities and events, both indoor and outdoor, will be developed by the end of April. A number of pilot projects will be selected, in consultation with the cultural, sports and events sector, both inside and outside and varying in size. Testing will be used as additional line of defense for event access. To reduce the risk, testing of participants in the pilot events will be an essential prerequisite. Participants must test themselves (or have them tested) before the event, and persons who test positive can no longer participate. Self-testing without any guidance cannot be considered as a valid testing tool.

The RAG testing was requested to give an advice on the maximum period before which a rapid Ag test can be taken or, in other words, the validity period of a negative rapid Ag test result. For a PCR test, the validity period of 48 hours is currently applied.

DISCUSSION

- Risk of a large validity period (for example 48 hours):
 - The person might become infectious in the period between the test and the start of the event
 - This risk is believed to be higher for a rapid Ag test than for a PCR test because sensitivity in detecting early infections is less. Sensitivity of an automated Ag test is believed to be higher than that of a rapid Ag test, but still lower than that of an RT-PCR test.
- Issues with short validity period:
 - Operational feasibility: Operational challenges for performing Ag tests (rapid or automated) on-site; capacity to perform timely Ag tests in testing centers or elsewhere; ...
- Difference with periodicity of repetitive testing:
 - One-time screening before participation in a mass gathering event is a different context than repetitive screening, such as among employees or students. In repetitive screening the aim is to timely detect positive cases in a context of continuous exposure. The aim of pre-event screening is to avoid that an infectious person contaminates a large number of people in a short time period.
 - A periodicity of twice a week is, according modeling exercises, sufficient to reduce transmission through repetitive screening with a rapid Ag test. However, in a context of participation in a mass gathering event screening is needed again once the validity period of a negative test result has expired.
- Who is responsible to organize the screening?
 - In principle it is the entity organizing the event that should also organize the screening. The cost of screening should not be borne by the national health insurance.
- For what type of events is screening needed?
 - It is outside the scope of the current advice to define for what type of events screening is necessary and for what type of events not.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- We recommend that a negative rapid Ag test result (performed by a health care provider or under guidance of a health care provider) or a negative automated Ag test result be valid for a period of 24 hours.
- Participants in an event must therefore be tested at the earliest 24 hours before the start of the event.
- Participants in an event spread over several days should be tested every 24 hours.

BACKGROUND

Scientific literature

No scientific literature on the validity period of a negative Ag test result was identified.

International guidelines

Most international guidance with regards to the validity period of a negative rapid Ag test result are in the context of international travel. Several countries accept a negative rapid Ag test result as a prerequisite for entering the country, for example:

- Both the USA and the UK accept a negative rapid Ag test result taken no more than 3 days before the flight departure (1,2).
- The Netherlands demand a negative PCR test, conducted less than 72 hours before arrival and, for travelers arriving by aircraft or ferry, in addition a rapid Ag test no more than 4 hours before boarding (3).

The only country identified with guidance on the validity period of a negative rapid Ag test result before participating in an event is The Netherlands (4). The test certificate before participating in an event is valid for 48 hours after the time of test taking (5).

In Spain, pre-concert testing was for the first time implemented in Barcelona on March 27. Screening of participants with a rapid Ag test was carried out immediately before the event on location (6).

In a pilot project in Tübingen, Germany, people can get a free rapid Ag test as a prerequisite for having access to retail stores and cultural institutions such as theatres, cinemas and libraries for the remaining of the day (7).

REFERENCES

1. CDC. COVID-19 and Your Health [Internet]. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2020 [cited 2021 Feb 22]. Available from: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/testing-air-travel.html>
2. Coronavirus (COVID-19) testing before you travel to England [Internet]. GOV.UK. [cited 2021 Feb 22]. Available from: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-testing-for-people-travelling-to-england>
3. Zaken M van A. Mandatory negative COVID-19 test results and declaration - Coronavirus COVID-19 - Government.nl [Internet]. Ministerie van Algemene Zaken; 2020 [cited 2021 Feb 22]. Available from: <https://www.government.nl/topics/coronavirus-covid-19/visiting-the-netherlands-from-abroad/mandatory-negative-test-results-and-declaration>
4. Zaken M van A. Pilots testen voor toegang tot evenementen - Coronavirus COVID-19 - Rijksoverheid.nl [Internet]. Ministerie van Algemene Zaken; 2021 [cited 2021 Apr 20]. Available from: <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/coronavirus-covid-19/algemene-coronaregels/cijfers-en-onderzoeken-over-het-coronavirus/pilot-toegangsbewijzen>

5. Zaken M van A. Testbewijs en CoronaCheck app - Coronavirus COVID-19 - Rijksoverheid.nl [Internet]. Ministerie van Algemene Zaken; 2021 [cited 2021 Apr 20]. Available from: <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/coronavirus-covid-19/testen/testen-voor-toegang/coronacheck>
6. Staff R. Spectacular: 5,000 pack Barcelona rock concert after COVID tests. Reuters [Internet]. 2021 Mar 28 [cited 2021 Apr 2]; Available from: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-spain-concert-idUSKBN2BJ0MN>
7. Modellprojekt und Tagedsticket [Internet]. [cited 2021 Apr 7]. Available from: <https://www.tuebingen.de/31862.html>