



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on September 29, 2020

Trump Says 150 Million COVID Rapid Test Kits to Be Sent to States

During a press conference at the White House Rose Garden on September 28, President Trump stated, “I’m pleased to report we’re announcing our plan to distribute 150 million Abbott [Laboratories] point of care tests in the coming weeks.”

Trump explained that this will be “more than double” the number of tests already performed. He then presented his plan:

Fifty million tests will go to protect the most vulnerable communities, which we’ve always promised to do, including 18 million for nursing homes; 15 million for assisted living facilities; 10 million for home, health, and hospice ... care agencies; and nearly 1 million for historically black colleges and universities, and also tribal nation colleges.

One hundred million BinaxNOW rapid point-of-care tests, manufactured by Abbott Laboratories will be given to states and territories to support efforts to reopen their economies and schools immediately and as fast as they can. For example, the support my administration is providing would allow every state to, on a very regular basis, test every teacher who needs it. This continues our critical effort to use testing to protect high-risk communities.



AP Images

“In the old days when we just started this you remember we’d go out and we’d have to find these massive laboratories with tremendously expensive equipment. Now we’re down to something that you’ll see that is really from a different planet,” Trump said.

During the press conference, Trump asked Assistant Secretary for Health Admiral Brett P. Giroir, M.D., to demonstrate how the tests are performed, joking: “Hope you don’t test positive.”



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Giroir said that as of Monday, the nation had performed over 111 million tests for the coronavirus, and that on 13 separate days, the nation had performed over one million tests per day, with the average test numbers now at approximately 920,000 per day.

He went on to explain that on August 27, the Trump administration awarded a contract for \$760 million to Abbott for the delivery of 150 million of these Abbott BinaxNOW rapid tests, which detect the presence of the COVID antigen. They use a specific nasal swab made by Puritan Medical Products, which comes with the test, for which the administration allocated \$120 million to make them available for use by Abbott. The test swab does not require an instrument to determine the result, which is available in 15 minutes.

Giroir noted the BinaxNOW is not a home test, but during the health emergency, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) permits laboratories to extend their certificate to operate in temporary sites, such as schools or churches or parking lots.

Even though the administration anticipates that the test will generally be performed by a trained individual, Giroir demonstrated a self-swab to demonstrate just how easily the test is to perform.

Trump also announced that four COVID-19 vaccines are now in the final stage of trials and that the day the vaccine is approved by the FDA, the government will begin distributing it within 24 hours.



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