

# Frequent, fast, accessible testing should be public health tool during COVID-19 pandemic

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Testing for COVID-19 has been central in the fight against SARS-CoV-2/ COVID-19. While most efforts, including regulations, have focused on testing as a clinical medical diagnostic tool, the most powerful forms of testing to help control the pandemic have rarely been used or recognized, according to Michael Mina, MD, Ph.D.

In a perspective piece published in *Science*, Mina and his co-author, Kristian G. Andersen, Ph.D., describe the power of public health [screening](#), which focuses on mitigating transmission of the virus at the [population level](#), and how it may be a crucial and overlooked tool.

"The way that this screening works is to have enough people test themselves frequently—say, twice per week—ideally using rapid tests," said Mina. "By empowering people with the knowledge of their transmission status, we can effectively slow transmission down at the overall community level."

The authors also discuss the role of "entrance screening," in which individuals are screened upon

entry into a location like an office, work, restaurant, etc.

"When coupled with public health screening, entrance screening can add another layer of protection and together it could allow the economy to open up more readily," said Mina.

**More information:** COVID-19 testing: One size does not fit all, *Science* (2020). [DOI: 10.1126/science.abe9187](#) , [science.sciencemag.org/content ... 2/18/science.abe9187](#)

Provided by Brigham and Women's Hospital

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