



Value of Multiplex Testing in Response to COVID-19, Flu Season

Multiplex testing helps providers detect multiple respiratory viral pathogens (e.g. SARS-CoV-2, Influenza A, Influenza B and Respiratory Syncytial Virus [RSV]) at the same time, using one specimen sample and the same instrument. Leading public health experts have noted the significance and importance of broad access to multiplex testing as a critical part of the country's response to the upcoming flu season and the ongoing health challenges from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The distinction between SARS-CoV-2, influenza A, influenza B and RSV can be significant as they do not share the same treatment or public health implications. COVID-19, influenza and RSV are spread through respiratory droplets and can cause similar symptoms, including fever, cough and loss of smell. According to the [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#), patients may also experience concurrent respiratory infections, making our ability to identify these viruses in a single patient sample even more important.

Multiplex testing also helps laboratories conserve important testing supplies, such as pipettes, swabs and reagents, all of which remain in high demand. Moreover, multiplex testing decreases the need for single-use tests and allows labs to provide more comprehensive results in a given time period.

To give providers, patients and public health officials the tools they need to manage this challenging flu season and the continued spread of COVID-19, it is critically important that Congress and HHS reinforce the federal protections that allow patients to access these tests without cost-sharing.



A More Complete Picture of Patient Health

Multiplex testing helps providers quickly differentiate between SARS-CoV-2, influenza A, influenza B, RSV and other respiratory viruses to properly care for patients.



Conserving Supplies

The use of a single test to diagnose infections from multiple viruses helps laboratories conserve critical testing supplies, which remain in high demand.



Supporting Public Health

Multiplex testing supports ongoing surveillance of influenza while testing for the novel coronavirus.