

## The Really Slow Fast COVID-19 Test

October 7, 2020

A rapid test for COVID-19 that you could perform in homes, workplaces, and classrooms would be less accurate than the best slower tests. But even somewhat accurate fast tests would help many to cope with the disease more effectively.

If necessary, asymptomatic persons who test positive could be retested by another method while staying isolated. If test-takers have already exhibited COVID-like symptoms (but also bad-cold-like symptoms), a quick positive result

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means that they could more quickly start appropriate treatment.

An easy, rapid test would be a godsend in situations where it is advisable for people to be retested continually.

In late August, Abbott Labs announced



that production of a credit-card-sized, “\$5, 15-minute, easy-to-use” test is being increased “to 50 million tests a month.” The U.S. has approved its mass-scale use.

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Not so fast.

Great as far as it goes, but as FEE writer James Anthony notes, this is only one approval of one test produced by one company. And the test can be performed only at “point-of-care” sites able to flourish special regulatory approval. So not at every workplace, classroom, or home.

Yet, according to Abbott, the test delivers results “in just 15 minutes with no instrumentation.”

Sounds like mere lay persons like you and me would have to . . . follow instructions.

Like governments should follow ours . . . and get out of the way.

This is Common Sense. I’m Paul Jacob.