BCD Travel
Research and Intelligence

What you need to know: Airport COVID-19 testing
November 9, 2020

COVID-19 testing is increasingly being seen as a way to safely open up international travel, particularly as more destinations make the presentation of a negative result a condition of entry. Such a result may reduce or even eliminate quarantine in some destinations. As testing develops, it is being made available both pre-departure and on-arrival, as airports cater for each destination's differing regulations and entry conditions.

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Asia

Hong Kong

Before boarding a flight to Hong Kong, most travelers must present their airline with a negative COVID-19 result from a test taken not more than 72 hours before departure.[1] The name on the result must be identical to that on the traveler's travel document. On arrival at Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA) all passengers are tested again at the airport's Temporary Specimen Collection Centre (TSCC). They must remain in the TSCC and wait for their RT-PCR test results, which are usually available on the same day, before proceeding to immigration and baggage reclaim.[2]

During November 2020, HKIA is conducting a two-week trial of rapid a Loop-mediated isothermal amplification (LAMP) COVID-19 test.[3] Testing is voluntary and arriving passengers must still wait for their results from the mandatory RT-PCR test. The LAMP test should return results in around 30 minutes, compared with 3-6 hours for the RT-PCR test currently in use. Both tests require a throat and nose swab to be taken.

If LAMP tests are found to be effective, they may be rolled out so that outbound travelers can save time and money by testing at the airport before boarding their flight. Pre-flight testing may also be a condition of the travel corridors Hong Kong is trying to agree with other countries. Currently, all passengers traveling to Beijing must present proof of a negative COVID-19 nucleic acid test result not older than seven days.

India

Passengers arriving at Delhi Airport can be tested for COVID-19 at a center operated by Genestrings Diagnostic Center. Since October 26, 2020, testing has been extended to passengers boarding

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[1] HKIA, Arriving Passengers to present negative COVID-19 result
[2] HKIA, Compulsory Quarantine and COVID-19 Testing
[3] Hong Kong Free Press, Oct. 28, 2020

international flights as a growing number of destination countries now require a negative result before allowing entry.

Genestrings offers RT-PCR tests, providing results within four to six hours.[4] This means departing passengers would typically need to arrive at the airport 7-8 hours before flight departure. Arriving passengers must remain in the testing center's lounge until receiving a negative result. The test is available at Rs5,000 ($65).[5]

To fly to India, international passengers must present a negative result from an RT PCR test taken within 96 hours of departure. Passengers currently arriving without a test result are subject to seven days of institutional quarantine, at their own cost, and a further seven days of home quarantine. Alternatively, they can pay to be tested at the airport.

Japan

Tokyo Narita

A COVID-19 testing center opens at Tokyo Narita Airport in November 2020, enabling ***departing*** passengers to obtain a negative test result certificate within 2 hours.[6] Set up by Nippon Medical School Foundation, the facilities in terminals 1 and 2 make Narita the first airport in Japan with an on-the-spot testing center.[7]

The RT-PCR test costs ¥39,800 ($380) for passengers with an appointment or ¥46,500 without one. Certificates are issued in English and Japanese.

The center will be open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, but it will charge extra fees for testing and issuing certificates at night and early in the morning.

There is no restriction on who can get tested, although the service is primarily aimed at departing passengers.

Singapore

Short-term visitors may only enter Singapore under one of two programs:[8]

- Air Travel Pass – arriving from approved countries
- Safe Travel Pass – government or company sponsored officials and business travelers arriving from approved countries

On ***arrival***, Air Travel Pass holders must take a PCR nasal swab test at Changi Airport. They must book and pay S$300 (including GST) for the test online before arrival in Singapore. It is not possible to take the test at any other location after arrival. Results are available within 48 hours, during which time a passenger must self-isolate in a declared place of accommodation.

A negative result allows a passenger to avoid the mandatory 14-day Stay-Home Notice (SHN). However, they must still download the government's TraceTogether app, keep it activated during their stay, and

[4] Airport Technology, Oct. 26, 2020
[5] Delhi Airport, COVID-19 testing centre
[6] Japan Times, Oct. 22, 2020
[7] Narita Airport
[8] Changi Airport

retain it for 14 days after leaving Singapore. Anyone testing positive will be sent to a medical facility for treatment and monitoring, at their own expense.

Passengers arriving under the Safe Travel Pass scheme must present a negative PCR test result and undergo a post-arrival test at Changi Airport. Thereafter, they are subject to the same procedure and conditions as Air Travel Pass holders.

Travelers *leaving* Singapore may also apply for a pre-departure PCR test. Approval is only granted for people traveling under Singapore's Green/Fast Lane travel corridor arrangements with other countries, or those traveling to destinations with a mandatory requirement for a pre-entry negative result.[9] Applications can take up to 5 days to process. Testing must be conducted at least 48 hours before the flight to ensure travelers receive their results in time. Tests must be conducted at an approved clinic, which includes Raffles Medical's clinic at Changi Airport.

South Korea

All international *arrivals* – regardless of nationality or length of stay – must test for COVID-19 and undergo a 14-day quarantine.[10] Korean nationals, and long-term foreign visitors with an Alien Registration Card and Korean residence, may self-quarantine at home. Arrivals from the U.S. and Europe must test within three days; arrivals from elsewhere must test within 14 days.

Arrivals from the U.S. and Europe will typically be tested on arrival – although it is not clear if this is at the airport - before being transferred to a government-designated quarantine facility, at a daily cost of 100,000 KRW (US$90).

Passengers *arriving* at Seoul's Incheon International Airport have their temperatures checked and must complete a Health Declaration and Quarantine Agreement, detailing contact information in South Korea and any visits to high-risk areas.[11] They must also install the Self-Quarantine Safety Protection mobile app, which will be used to ensure self-quarantine rules are being followed. Symptomatic travelers are quarantined in a waiting room before being tested for COVID-19.

In response to a new requirement for China-bound passengers transiting through South Korea to be tested at the transit airport, Incheon airport suspended transit travel to China. This suggests the airport does not have the facilities to test *departing* passengers for COVID-19.[12]

Europe

Austria

Passengers *entering* Austria must present a health certificate with a negative COVID-19 PCR test result not more than four days old. Otherwise, they must immediately enter a 14-day quarantine. Anyone without a test result may have a PCR test performed on arrival at Vienna Airport.[13] The test costs €120

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[9] SafeTravel, Pre-Departure Test Application
[10] UK.Gov, FCO, South Korea
[11] Incheon Airport, Safer travel with Incheon Airport
[12] Korean Air, Entry restrictions by country
[13] Vienna Airport, PCR test

and results are available within a few hours, but passengers may sometimes need to wait until the following day. The test may be used by both *arriving* and *departing* passengers.

Austrian Airlines has started trialing voluntary, free-of-charge COVID-19 tests at Vienna airport, providing passengers with results within 10-15 minutes. These do not replace PCR tests required in a number of destination countries. At this stage, Austrian is trying to demonstrate the feasibility of rapid testing.

Passengers taking part of the three-week trial during November 2020 will only have their boarding passes activated on receipt of a negative result.

Belgium

A COVID-19 test center was set up at Brussels Zaventem airport in mid-September 2020 to support passengers whose country of destination requires a negative result from a test carried out within the 72 hours before departure. A standard PCR test costs €67, with results typically available within 24 hours.[14] A rapid test, giving a result in 3-11 hours (depending on when the test is taken), is also available for €135.

Passengers *arriving* from a red zone country can also be tested upon arrival, with test results available within 24 hours.[15] Anyone receiving a corona test prescription code by text from the Belgian government is obliged to take this test. The text is part of the contact tracing procedure and will be in response to information provided in the passenger's Passenger Locator Form. Passengers with this code and who are covered by a Belgian health insurance company will not pay for the test. Passengers without Belgian health insurance must pay €46.81.

Travelers are recommended to register online for voluntary testing, generating a QR code for presentation at the testing center.

The test center is operated by Ecolog, and it is located outside the airport terminal.

Finland

Travelers *arriving* from a country subject to entry restrictions (or having spent time in one during the preceding two weeks) should voluntarily enter a 10-day quarantine period.[16] It is possible to take a COVID-19 test at Helsinki Airport to reduce the length of quarantine:

- Finnish nationals or residents: test for COVID-19 at the airport immediately on arrival, taking a second test (in their home town) at least 72 hours later. Two negative test results allows quarantine to end early.
- Other travelers on trips exceeding 72 hours: on arrival, present a negative result from a COVID-19 test not more than 72 hours old, or take a test at Helsinki Airport. Then quarantine for 72 hours, before taking a second test. If this result is also negative, quarantine may be ended.

People arriving from countries without entry restrictions need not quarantine. Those arriving from a restricted country, but who intend to spend less than 72 hours in Finland, need not quarantine either, but must present a negative COVID-19 test result.

Any traveler arriving in Helsinki Airport, who thinks they may have COVID-19 symptoms or may have been exposed, can also take the free test. But they must then self-isolate, at least until a negative result is received.

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[14] Brussels Airport, COVID-19 Test Centre
[15] The Brussels Times, Sept. 14, 2020
[16] Finavia, Air travel during COVID-19

Testing at Helsinki Airport is carried out by the City of Vantaa health authority and is free of charge. The service, located after baggage reclaim, is open only when there are arriving flights.

On weekdays, Helsinki Airport also deploys specially trained dogs to "test" all passengers arriving on international flights for COVID-19. Anyone failing the scent detection test is referred to the City of Vantaa health information point for a formal COVID-19 test.

Passengers arriving in Finland through airports other than Helsinki must contact the local health authorities to arrange a COVID-19 test.

Helsinki Airport COVID-19 testing is not available for *departing* passengers.[17] As it does not provide a certificate confirming a negative result, it is of no use to passengers requiring proof that they are COVID-19-free.

France

Passengers, who *arrive* from countries where COVID-19 is regarded to be very actively circulating, must present a negative PCR test result, carried out less than 72 hours prior to departure from France. Passengers without a test result are tested on arrival at Paris Charles de Gaulle airport, with results emailed within 36 hours.[18]

By the end of October 2020, France plans to offer COVID-19 antigen tests at its airports for passengers *departing* to the U.S. and Italy and for those arriving from countries classified as "red" by the EU's new coding system.[19] The nasal swab tests should also be available for passengers traveling to and from France's overseas territories. Tests will be required by both arriving and departing passengers, with results available within 10-15 minutes, offering a faster alternative to PCR tests.

The antigen tests will initially be available at Paris Charles de Gaulle and Nice airports, before being rolled out to other airports.[20]

Germany

Anyone *arriving* in Germany having spent some time in a risk area during the previous 14 days must enter a 14-day quarantine period. Travelers may also need to provide a negative test result or submit to a test. Even if not required to do so, travelers can still be tested free of charge within ten days of their return to Germany.[21]

Frankfurt

Two test centers are available for passengers *arriving* at Frankfurt Airport.

Healthcare company CENTOGENE also offers a paid-for test for passengers *departing* from Frankfurt, Düsseldorf and Hamburg airports.[22] But this is not an on-departure test; it is a pre-departure test. CENTOGENE's RT-PCR (reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction) throat swab test detects if a person is infected with COVID-19. Passengers are advised to register online to reduce their waiting time at the airport. It's not possible to book an appointment. CENTOGENE will only test people without

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[17] Finavia, Oct. 1, 2020
[18] Paris Aeroport, Coronavirus Information
[19] BTN Europe, Oct. 16, 2020
[20] The Local France, Oct. 20, 2020
[21] Federal Ministry of Health, Sept. 30, 2020
[22] Centogene, Improved Travel with Coronavirus Testing

symptoms. Waiting times can be up to 2 hours. The Standard Process, with results within 12 hours, costs €59. Tests taken after 2pm receive results the next day. The Express Process costs €139, with results available within 6 hours. Travelers are advised to time their test to ensure the result is received one hour before check-in begins, when some airlines require confirmation of a negative result.

If receiving a positive test result, travelers are encouraged to scan a QR code in the Corona-Warn-App, the German government app distributed by the Robert Koch Institute (RKI), so that all possible contacts are notified of the risk.

Munich

All travelers ***arriving*** in Munich from risk areas must either have tested negative in the previous 48 hours or must complete a COVID-19 test on arrival.[23] The airport has two test centers; one each in Terminals 1 and 2. Passengers can register online before arriving at the test center, although this is not necessary. The test is free of charge. All affected travelers must quarantine for up to 14 days or until the laboratory sends them a negative result.

Passengers arriving from non-risk areas can request a free COVID-19 throat swab test in the airport's Corona Test Center. Test results are provided in a few days, depending on test volumes.

Departing passengers can also get tested the "Test & Fly" Center in the airport's Terminal 2 and its medical center in Terminal 1. The PCR test is performed in the Test & Fly Center by MVZ Martinsried for a €128 fee. Medicaire operates an out-of-hours service in Terminal 1.

Italy

Rome Fiumicino and Milan Linate

Flights between Rome and Milan may only carry passengers who receive a negative test result at the airport prior to departure or present a medical certificate showing a negative molecular (RT PCR) or antigenic test result carried out in the 72 hours before boarding.[24] ***Departing*** passengers can take a rapid antigen swab test at Rome Fiumicino airport at one of two locations:

- A drive-through facility in the longstay car par; passengers must arrive 72 to 2 hours before departure
- Arrivals area of Terminal 5; arrival required 1.5 hours before departure

Passengers departing from Milan Linate must take their test in the Health Center on the Departures Floor, 1.5 hours before their flight.

To be able to take the free test, passengers must provide a ticket for a flight requiring COVID-19 testing, ID/passport and a home isolation and health surveillance self-certification form. Test results are available within 30 minutes, and passengers cannot leave the testing area until this is received. Passengers may only proceed to check-in/boarding with a negative test result. Passengers receiving a positive result will need to take a second, molecular test and remain in isolation until receiving he result.

Passengers making a return trip between Rome and Milan need take only one test, as long as the return flight is within 72 hours. Otherwise, a second test will be needed.

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[23] Munich Airport, Corona tests at the airport
[24] Alitalia, COVID-tested flights

Sweden

While there is no general quarantine obligation for travelers entering Sweden, it has banned entry to non-EU and non-EEA citizens arriving from outside the EU until at least December 22, 2020.[25] Swedes traveling overseas may need to provide a negative PCR test result to travel to certain destinations. Tests for travel certificates tend to be carried out at a clinic approved by Sweden's Public Health Agency.[26] There is nothing to suggest on-airport testing is currently available in Sweden.

Switzerland

People arriving in Switzerland from certain countries are required to go into quarantine. The latest list of countries is compiled by the Swiss Federal Office of Public Health.[27] There is currently no mandatory requirement for passengers to take a COVID-19 test on arrival. A negative test result does not eliminate or reduce the quarantine period.

Zurich Airport does offer testing at the Airport Medical Center to any ***arriving*** or ***departing*** passenger. It recognizes that some airlines or destinations may require a negative result, before allowing a passenger to board a flight. Passengers must pre-book the test and can expect to wait up to 72 hours for a result.

The Airport Medical Center offers the PCR test (CHF 200-240) and the antibody IgG test (CHF 140-180), with a combined test offered for CHF 260-300. It does not perform antibody tests for IgM, nor does it offer rapid tests.[28]

U.K.

From October 20, 2020, London Heathrow became the U.K.'s first major airport to offer ***pre-departure*** COVID-19 tests, initially on a four-week trial basis.[29] Run by travel services company Collinson and ground handler Swissport, the service offers LAMP COVID-19 tests for passengers traveling to destinations, such as Hong Kong and Italy, that require pre-departure tests.

The test costs £80 and must be pre-booked online. As passengers typically receive their results in 60 minutes, they'll need to arrive earlier at the airport, to ensure a result before departure.

Collinson and Swissport also set up a ***test-on-arrival*** facility at Heathrow in August 2020, but it has yet to be approved for use by the U.K. government. It's hoped on-arrival testing could replace or reduce the existing 14-day quarantine mandated for arrivals from high-risk destinations.

Ukraine

Ukraine reopened its borders to international travelers for a second time on September 28, 2020. Anyone arriving from a red zone country should install the Dii Vdoma track and trace app and must undergo 14 days of self-isolation or take a PCR test.[30] All foreign nationals must also have a Health Insurance Certificate. The list of red zone countries is updated every 24 hours. As at November 9, 2020, Ukraine's Ministry of Health had identified 34 red zone countries:[31]

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[25] Gov.UK, FCO
[26] Public Health Agency of Sweden, Tests for travel certificates
[27] Federal Office of Public Health, Coronavirus: Mandatory quarantine
[28] Airport Medical Center, Corona Tests
[29] BTN Europe, Oct. 20, 2020
[30] Kiev Sikorsky Airport, COVID-19 safety regulations
[31] Visit Ukraine, Nov. 9, 2020

- Europe – Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, France, Georgia, Hungary, Italy, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Poland, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, U.K.
- Americas – Argentina, USA
- Middle East – Jordan, Lebanon

Every passenger using Kiev's main Boryspil (Borispol) International airport has the opportunity to take a PCR test.[32] The testing center is located in the airport's Terminal D. While primarily aimed at *arriving* passengers, *departing* passengers may also take a test at the airport, but they must arrive well in advance and book an appointment. Test certificates are issued in Ukrainian and English. While testing is conducted at the airport, processing occurs at one of six different laboratories, each charging a different price for the service, and each returning results within different timeframes (between 6 and 24 hours).

At Kiev's secondary Sikorsky Airport (IEV), testing is conducted in the arrival hall of Terminal A. The test costs 1700 UAH (US$60), and results are delivered by email within 24-48 hours, during which time the traveler must remain in isolation.

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Lebanon

All passengers **arriving** in Lebanon as their final destination may only board their flight if they have a negative result from a PCR test taken not more than 96 hours before arrival.[33]

Passengers arriving from Egypt, Turkey and all African countries must perform a second PCR test upon arrival at Beirut's Rafik Hariri International Airport. They must then enter quarantine for 48 hours until receiving the test result.

Lebanese and foreign passengers arriving from Iraq must quarantine for 72 hours after arrival at an approved hotel, during which time they must take a second PCR test at the airport at their own expense.

All other passengers must take a second PCR test at their own expense within 72 hours of arrival or quarantine at home or in a hotel for 10 days.

United Arab Emirates

Abu Dhabi

On *arrival* in Abu Dhabi, medical authorities will conduct a PCR test at the airport. Travelers must then register under the quarantine system and wear an electronic wristband during a two-week quarantine. Quarantine may be at home, in a hotel or in accommodation provided by the authorities. A second PCR test must be taken 12 days after arrival.

It is mandatory for all *departing* passengers to have a PCR test before they fly. Dependent on the destination, this must be carried out 48, 72 or 96 hours before flight departure. Tests must be taken at government accredited medical facilities.

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[32] Boryspil Airport, COVID19 testing
[33] Middle East Airlines, Sept. 23, 2020

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Canada

From November 2, 2020, some international passengers *arriving* in Calgary, Alberta, will be able to reduce or avoid quarantine by taking a "rapid" COVID-19 test. Travelers must still self-isolate between arrival and receiving a negative test result, which could be returned within two days. A negative result will exempt travelers from the 14-day quarantine, but they must also commit to taking a second test within six or seven days of arrival. Testing-on arrival will initially be available on a trial basis over a 26 week period. Participants (Alberta residents and international passengers arriving on non-stop flights) will also be required to be monitored daily for symptoms and follow enhanced preventive health measures, such as wearing masks in public places and avoiding contact with high-risk groups.

Antigen test

This rapid diagnostic test (RDT) may return a result as quickly as 30 minutes. Using a sample from a person's respiratory tract it detects the presence of viral proteins (antigens). Such tests detect the antigens only when the virus is replicating, i.e. the tests will identify acute or early infection. [34]

Reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR)

This rapid molecular test detects the presence of antibodies in the blood of people believed to have been infected. Diagnosis of COVID-19 may only be possible during the recovery phase, as it relies on the production of antibodies after infection. [35]

Polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR)

The World Health Organization recommends PCR testing of respiratory tract samples for the identification and laboratory confirmation of COVID-19 cases. [36]

LAMP test

Developed by Oxford University, the loop-mediated isothermal amplification (or LAMP) test can be processed quickly and without being sent to a laboratory.

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[34] <u>World Health Organization</u>, Advice on the use of point-of-care immunodiagnostic tests for COVID-19
[35] <u>World Health Organization</u>, Advice on the use of point-of-care immunodiagnostic tests for COVID-19
[36] <u>World Health Organization</u>, Advice on the use of point-of-care immunodiagnostic tests for COVID-19

> **Note**
>
> The COVID-19 situation is rapidly evolving, and the situation is changing on almost an hourly basis. The information presented in this report represents the latest view as at November 9, 2020. We have carefully researched and checked the information contained. However, we do not guarantee or warrant the correctness, completeness or topicality of this article and do not accept any liability for any damage or loss as a result of the use of the information contained within this article.

Do you have questions or comments regarding this report? Please email mike.eggleton@bcdtravel.co.uk to share your thoughts.