Information on Lateral Flow Testing

What is lateral flow testing?

Lateral flow testing is a rapid swab-based test which can be conducted at home by an individual and results are given within 30 minutes. Lateral flow tests detect the presence of Covid-19 in an individual as it is thought that between one in three people who have coronavirus never show any symptoms but that does not mean they are not infectious. Testing helps identify those individuals who have the virus but are displaying no symptoms and would otherwise not be tested. It is a means of controlling the infection levels.

What does the test involve?
Lateral Flow Tests are a fast and efficient way for detecting the presence of the Covid-19 virus and can produce results within 30 minutes of the test being taken. They require swabs to be taken from the throat and nose.

How do I get a lateral flow testing kit?
Lateral Flow Tests are available to pick up from your local Covid-19 test centre (see Gov.uk to find your local centre) and also some pharmacies. You can also order kits online at gov.uk to be delivered to your home. All kits are free of charge and you will never be charged for them.

How does the lateral flow test work?
The Lateral Flow Test requires swabs to be taken from the throat and nose. These swabs are then tested using a fluid which will break the swab findings down and react if the virus is detected. Individuals swab themselves and undertake the test using the instructions provided in the testing kit. Each test has a unique barcode which you need to enter or scan the QR code when you register the result (Negative or Positive) with the Gov.uk website. You will receive an email and text message confirming your test result.

What happens if the test result is positive?
If the test result is positive, you need to immediately book in for a PCR Test at your local Covid Test Centre for them to confirm that you are positive. Whilst you wait for test and results, you must self-isolate and follow government guidelines which means not leaving the house apart from going to get your PCR test.

What is the difference between a lateral flow test and a PCR test?
A lateral flow test detects the presence of the Covid-19 virus in your mucus, found in your nose and throat. A positive test does not guarantee that you definitely have Covid-19 but is 95%+ accurate. A PCR (polymerase chain reaction) test is undertaken at a test centre and detects genetic material such as Covid-19.

How often should I take the lateral flow tests?
Many people who work in schools or organisations take the lateral flow tests on a Sunday and Wednesday to cover them for the whole week. The test will only register the presence of Covid-19 at the time of the test, therefore, if you come into contact with the virus a day after taking the test, by testing mid-week, you eliminate the risk of spreading the virus if you have been in contact with it.

Do I need to take a test before training or competing at a regatta?

As an Association, the H&D advocate all clubs and their members undertake lateral flow testing on a bi-weekly basis. Ideally, if clubs and members engage in regular testing, it would be useful for those competing at regattas in the summer to take a test on the Friday prior to travelling to the regatta to ensure that they are clear of Covid-19. Again, this is purely good practice and will NOT be enforced as part of the H&D regatta entry.

Is taking the test mandatory?

No, the test is not mandatory but through regular testing of the wider population and the vaccination roll-out, we can together stop the spread of the virus and reduce restrictions in daily life. The H&D supports any initiative which helps rowing and our rowing community to stay safe and resume normal activities.