

Covid Live Updates: F.D.A. Authorizes First Coronavirus Breath Test

The test is about the size of a piece of carry-on luggage and can produce results in less than three minutes. South Korea plans to phase out most restrictions.

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The Food and Drug Administration granted [emergency use authorization](#) to the first Covid-19 test that can detect the coronavirus in a breath sample, within a few minutes and with a high degree of accuracy, the agency said Thursday.

“Today’s authorization is yet another example of the rapid innovation occurring with diagnostic tests for Covid-19,” Jeff Shuren, the director of the F.D.A.’s Center for Devices and Radiological Health, said in a statement.

The InspectIR Covid-19 Breathalyzer, which is about the size of a piece of carry-on luggage, can produce results in less than three minutes and can be used in doctor’s offices, hospitals and mobile testing sites by trained operators. A single machine can analyze about 160 samples per day.

Yvonne Maldonado, an infectious disease specialist at Stanford University School of Medicine who is working on another Breathalyzer test, said that having more options to test will only help the transition to the endemic phase of the pandemic.

“If you think back from the original P.C.R., those were pretty horrible,” Ms. Maldonado said. “They were very uncomfortable and seemed to last forever — the easier we can make it, the better off we are.”