

Another day another visit to Bookarts Bookshop, just north of Old Street tube, in Hoxton. Upon completing my second successful raid in less than a week, I was strolling along the broad pedestrian plaza across from the station, when approached by people who looked like they were giving away free samples. I rebuffed the first such approach, but then something caught my eye, and I actually sought out the next person. They were handing out “Lateral Flow” COVID antigen tests. These are the DIY take at home and get results in 15 minutes tests to which the UK has pivoted in an effort to beat back the recent surge here.



The image shows the packaging for the Flowflex SARS-CoV-2 Antigen Rapid Test. The box is primarily blue with a white and gold border at the bottom. In the top right corner, there is a 3D illustration of a coronavirus particle with red and blue surface proteins. The brand name 'Flowflex' is prominently displayed in white, with a red horizontal bar through the 'F'. To the right of the brand name, 'TM' and 'REF L031-118Y5' are printed. Below the brand name, the product name 'SARS-CoV-2 Antigen Rapid Test (Self-Testing)' is written in large white letters. A list of contents is provided on the left side, and a circular 'OPEN' button with a right-pointing arrow is on the right. The bottom section of the box is white and contains regulatory information, including 'COVID-19 Self-Test', a brief description of the test, and various safety and compliance icons.

FlowflexTM REF L031-118Y5

SARS-CoV-2 Antigen Rapid Test (Self-Testing)

Contents:

- 7 Test Cassettes
- 7 Extraction Buffer Tubes
- 7 Disposable Swabs
- 7 Waste Bags
- 1 Extraction Buffer Tube Holder
- 1 Instructions for Use

7 Tests

OPEN

COVID-19 Self-Test
A rapid test for the detection of SARS-CoV-2 nucleocapsid antigens in anterior nasal swab specimens.
For *in vitro* diagnostic use only. For self-testing.
The product has not been made with natural rubber latex.

*Supplied by NHS Test and Trace
Not for resale
Please read instructions carefully
Report your results to the NHS*

IVD ⓘ Ⓢ ⓘ ⓘ ⓘ ⓘ ⓘ ⓘ ⓘ ⓘ ⓘ ⓘ

Handing them out for free, on the street. I took one, or should I say seven, since there’s a week’s worth in this box. “Don’t you want a second? I’ve got more here in my sack.” No, I replied, not necessary; I’m already scheduled for a PCR test next Friday. Free medical testing during a pandemic, who’d have thunk...