

FilmArray Respiratory Panel (FARP) FAQ

1. What is FilmArray Respiratory Panel (FARP) test?

FilmArray Respiratory Panel (FARP) is a simultaneous qualitative test to detect multiple respiratory viruses, and 3 bacteria.

2. How is FARP test done?

A nasopharyngeal swab specimen needs to be collected for testing.

3. Is FARP test necessary for all respiratory conditions?

Most of the respiratory conditions are caused by viruses where supportive/symptomatic therapy would be the main treatment (e.g. hydration, rest, fever medications), and antibiotics are not required. Sometimes, oxygen/nebulization may be required.

As such positive viral pathogens detected on FARP will not usually change the management of care.

4. How do doctors diagnose viral/bacterial related respiratory infections?

Clinical examination, history taking and basic blood count can usually determine whether the fever is of bacterial/viral in origin. In both conditions, supportive therapy (e.g. hydration, rest, fever medications) is still the major treatment.

5. Why is FARP not covered generally?

In general, most patients will recover with supportive/symptomatic treatment, only those patients that do not respond to the supportive treatment will be considered for this additional test.

6. When will FARP be covered?

Coverage of FARP will be considered when patient's condition met the following criteria:

- The patient is in severe condition showing signs of respiratory distress and warded in ICU
- The patient is with prolonged illness & not responding to the treatment given
- The patient is suspected or confirmed to have immunocompromised condition (e.g. haematopoietic cancer, sepsis, illnesses which ongoing regular treatment of steroids, radiotherapy and chemotherapy.) for ruling out atypical infection
- The test has resulted in changed of the course of management