Dear Sirs,

**RE: Lateral flow testing at work**

I am a [job role] at your company, and am in receipt of correspondence from you stating I must receive regular lateral flow testing in order to avoid disciplinary action.

I take my health very seriously - as I am sure all of us do at the current time - and always give very careful care and consideration to any medical decisions I make, including deciding whether to consent to medical testing. Having researched the lateral flow test at length, I do not wish to receive this test, and this is for the following reasons:

The Guardian newspaper issued a report last month warning of the dangers and inadequacies of the lateral flow test. According to the Guardian, lateral flow devices are "inaccurate and may cause more harm than good" (1). The newspaper quotes Professor J. Deeks of Birmingham University and the Royal Statistical Society, and colleagues, who have stated in the British Medical Journal:

"The UK government is widening the rollout of the Innova lateral flow test without supporting evidence, and we understand that this may soon extend to further home use. This may cause serious harm. We call on the government urgently to change course.” (2)

Many other experts harbour deep reservations about these tests, with Clinical Professor of Public Health, Allyson Pollock of Newcastle University, stating in the New Scientist that mass screening using lateral flow tests should not have been widely introduced before being tested for accuracy in the community. Pollock states: “[Lateral flow tests] have not been evaluated outside of a laboratory setting.” (3)

Further compounding my concerns about the lateral flow testing is the method by which the test is administered. The insertion of a swab far up the nasal cavity is an extremely invasive experience, the thought of which not only causes me significant anxiety and distress, but which is documented to be potentially dangerous. Media reports have detailed cases of the nasal swab penetrating the blood-brain barrier and causing brain fluid to leak (4), and there are also reports of the swabs being contaminated due to inadequate quality controls (5)

I do not wish to expose myself to such risks, especially for a test that is documented to be unreliable.

My right to decline any medical testing offered to me without facing penalty or disadvantage is protected in law by UNESCO's Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights, which states in Article 6: "Any preventive, diagnostic and therapeutic medical intervention is only to be carried out with the prior, free and informed consent of the person concerned, based on adequate information. The consent should, where appropriate, be express and may be withdrawn by the person concerned at any time and for any reason without disadvantage or prejudice." (6)

Therefore, I am writing to you under the expectation that having stated I do not consent to receiving the lateral flow test, no further pressure will be exerted upon me to do so, and I will not face any disciplinary action for my decision.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

[Name]

**References:**

1) <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/jan/12/experts-call-for-rethink-lateral-flow-mass-testing-covid-uk>

2) <https://blogs.bmj.com/bmj/2021/01/12/covid-19-government-must-urgently-rethink-lateral-flow-test-roll-out/>

3) <https://www.newscientist.com/article/2263746-test-caught-just-3-per-cent-of-students-with-covid-19-at-uk-university/#ixzz6n6hD5CP0>

4) <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/health/coronavirus-swab-test-womans-nose-brain-leaked-a4562066.html>

5) <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/coronavirus-lab-testing-kits-contamination-false-positives-delay-a9472601.html>

6) <http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=31058&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html>