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A point-of-care prototype microchip test performed better in detecting flu than other rapid tests and as well as common lab tests, according to a recent study in PLoS One. Boston University scientists tested a single-use microfluidic chip they developed that integrates solid-phase extraction and molecular amplification via reverse-transcription polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) to amplify the RNA of influenza type A viruses. After testing 146 specimens, they reported 96% sensitivity (95% confidence interval [CI], 89%-99%) and 100% specificity (95% CI, 95%-100%) compared with conventional RT-PCR. The positive predictive value was 100% (95% CI, 94%-100%) and the negative predictive value was 96% (95% CI, 88%-98%).

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