Acute respiratory tract infections are a leading cause of morbidity and mortality worldwide. Symptoms can be mild, for example those of the ‘common cold’, but severe complications such as pneumonia may develop. Respiratory viruses are thought to be responsible for the vast majority of respiratory tract infections. Rapid identification of these viruses is important for clinical patient management, public health surveillance, and infection prevention. In recent years, the diagnostic possibilities for the detection of respiratory viruses have advanced rapidly. There is a clear trend towards faster diagnostics. Increasing numbers of rapid tests designed for use at the point-of-care have been developed. The aim of this thesis is 1) to evaluate the use and diagnostic accuracy of rapid tests for respiratory viruses in the hospital setting and in primary health care; 2) to increase our insight in the epidemiology and clinical relevance of respiratory viruses.
CATCHING THE COMMON COLD
Rapid detection and epidemiology of respiratory viruses

Andrea Hubertina Lena Bruning
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CATCHING THE COMMON COLD
Rapid detection and epidemiology of respiratory viruses

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aan de Universiteit van Amsterdam
op gezag van de Rector Magnificus
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Faculteit der Geneeskunde
“I love the doctors—they are dears;
But must they spend such years and years
   Investigating such a lot
Of illnesses which no one’s got,
When everybody, young and old,
Is frantic with the common cold?
   And I will eat my only hat
If they know anything of that!”

A.P. Herbert, 1936
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