TESTING FOR COVID-19

Two kinds of tests are available for COVID-19: diagnostic tests and serologic (antibody) blood tests.

- A diagnostic test tells you if you have an active infection.
- A serologic test (or antibody test) tells you if you had a past infection.

Diagnostic Test

Many people who have COVID-19 have mild symptoms and can recover at home without medical care. These people may not need to be tested. The CDC has guidance on who should be tested, but choices about testing are made by state and local health departments or healthcare providers.

Serologic (Antibody) Blood Test

A serologic (antibody) test checks your blood for antibodies (proteins that help fight infections). The tests can show if you have been infected with the coronavirus. They may not show if you have a current infection. This is because it can take one to three weeks for your body to make antibodies to a virus after symptoms occur. We do not yet know if having antibodies to the coronavirus can protect you from getting infected again, or how long protection might last.

Serologic (antibody) tests should not be used as the only way to diagnose someone as having COVID-19.

Getting Tested

Diagnostic Test

- If you have symptoms of COVID-19 and want to get tested, discuss with your healthcare provider first.
- You can also visit your state or local health department's website to find the latest local information on testing.
- **Supplies and availability of tests are increasing, but it may still be difficult to find a place to get tested**.

Serologic (Antibody) Test

- If you think you may have been infected with COVID-19, but not sure, and would like to be tested discuss with your provider.
- These tests are slowly becoming available through healthcare providers, but you need to understand their limitations.
- Check with your provider to see if they offer serologic (antibody) tests.

Understanding Test Results

Diagnostic Test

- **Positive for COVID-19:** Learn how to stay safe if you are sick or caring for someone who is.
- **Negative:** You likely were not infected when your nasopharyngeal sample was collected, but you could still get sick.

Serologic (Antibody) Test

- Positive
    - You have antibodies that likely came from a prior infection with SARS-CoV-2 or a related coronavirus.
    - It's unclear if antibodies make you immune to the virus.
    - If you have symptoms and meet other guidelines for testing, you would need another type of test. This is called a nucleic acid test, or diagnostic test. This test uses respiratory samples, such as a swab from inside your nose, to confirm an active COVID-19 infection. A serologic (antibody) test alone cannot tell if you definitely have COVID-19.
    - If you do not have symptoms, you likely do not have an active infection. Depending on when you may have been infected you could still be infectious. Discuss with your health care provider to determine if you need to self-isolate for 14 days from when you think you were exposed or if you may need to get a diagnostic test to confirm if you have an active infection.

- Negative:
  Negative serology (Antibody) test results can have more than one meaning.
    - You likely did not have an infection in the past.
    - You could have an infection now.
    - You could still get sick if you have been exposed to the virus recently. This means you could still spread the virus.
    - Some people may take a long time to make antibodies, and some may not develop antibodies at all.
    - If you have symptoms and meet other guidelines for testing, you need another type of test. This is called a nucleic acid test. It uses respiratory samples, such as a swab from inside your nose, to confirm an active COVID-19 infection. A serologic test alone cannot tell if you definitely have COVID-19 and can spread it to others. Know how to protect yourself and others.

The Purpose of Serology (Antibody) Testing in the U.S.

- To understand how widespread COVID-19 is and how this is changing over time.
- To guide control measures, such as social distancing.
- To learn about risk factors, such as age, location, or underlying health problems.
- To learn how many people had a mild or asymptomatic COVID-19.
- To understand how long antibodies can be found after a COVID-19 infection

Serology (antibody) testing does not reveal:

- Who is immune to COVID-19
- How many antibodies are needed to protect someone
- If/how long someone with antibodies will be protected from COVID-19
- If people with antibodies can return to work

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/testing/serology-overview.html
https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/coronavirus-covid-19-update-serological-test-validation-and-education-efforts

By signing this form I agree that I:

- Have been given and have read the CDC facts on testing for COVID-19
- I understand there are no guarantees about testing
- There can be false negatives and false positives
- Understand that follow-up measures (such as self-isolation), symptom management, and possibility of being contagious will not be based on this test alone. These will be based on symptoms and possible exposures.

_____ _____

Signature of Patient or Responsible Party Date and Time

_____

Relationship to Patient (if Responsible Party is not Patient)

_____ _____

Witness Date and Time