COVID-19 Antibody Testing

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

IF YOU TEST POSITIVE

Researchers do not know yet if having antibodies to the virus that causes COVID-19 can protect someone from getting infected again or, if they do, how long this protection might last.

What you should know:

- Positive results can also be due to past or present infection with a related virus from the same family of viruses (called coronavirus), such as one that causes the common cold.

- You might test positive even if you never had symptoms of COVID-19. This can happen if you had an infection without symptoms (asymptomatic infection).

- If you have no symptoms, you likely do not have an active infection and no additional follow-up is needed.

IF YOU TEST NEGATIVE

Talk with your healthcare provider about your test result and the type of test you took to understand what your result means.

What you should know:

- **You could still have a current infection.**
  - The test may be negative because it typically takes 1-3 weeks after infection to develop antibodies. It's possible 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 even longer to develop antibodies, and some people may not develop antibodies.

YOU MAY HAVE ANTIBODIES FROM AN INFECTION WITH THE VIRUS THAT CAUSES COVID-19

If you have symptoms and meet other criteria for testing, you would need another type of test called a viral test. This test identifies the virus that causes COVID-19. This test uses respiratory samples, such as a swab from inside your nose, to confirm COVID-19. An antibody (blood) test cannot tell if you are currently sick with COVID-19.

YOU MAY NOT HAVE HAD COVID-19 BEFORE OR YOU COULD STILL HAVE A CURRENT INFECTION

Regardless of whether you test positive or negative for COVID-19 on an antibody test, you should still take preventive measures to protect yourself and others

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