

Information on COVID-19 Antibody Tests

The information on this webpage is for individuals without symptoms who have had a blood test for COVID-19 antibodies.

It is not for those people who are unwell and have been tested for possible current infection. If you develop symptoms consistent with COVID-19, you must self-isolate, and may need a swab for COVID-19.

Antibody Tests

Antibodies are produced by the body in response to an infection (immune response). They can usually be found in the blood around 2 weeks after a recent infection. As COVID-19 is a new infection, we do not know how long the antibodies to this virus (novel coronavirus) will last, or whether they will protect you from further COVID-19 infections. As the scientific evidence grows, we hope to have the answers to these questions.

The information from the antibody tests will help us understand how many people have had the infection in the past, and how it has spread in the population.

Test Results

➊ POSITIVE antibody test result for COVID-19

If your antibody test for COVID-19 is positive, it means you have probably had the virus (novel coronavirus) that causes COVID-19, and have produced antibodies against it.

A positive antibody test does not tell you that you are immune, or that you can't pass the virus to others if you were to get it again. You must therefore still continue to follow social distancing advice. If you are a contact of a positive case in the future, you must self-isolate again as advised.

➋ NEGATIVE antibody test result for COVID-19

If your antibody test is negative, it means that we have not detected antibodies to the virus that causes COVID-19 in your blood.

This could mean:

- You have not been exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19 (novel coronavirus)
- You have levels of antibodies too low for us to detect. This might be because you had a recent infection and haven't produced antibodies yet, or because you had the infection a long time ago, and the antibody levels have dropped.

➌ EQUIVOCAL antibody test result for COVID-19

If your antibody test is equivocal, it means that the result is inconclusive.

A repeat blood test 2 or more weeks after your first test may give a positive or negative result