



## 2019 Novel Coronavirus [COVID-19]

[phd3.idaho.gov/covid19](http://phd3.idaho.gov/covid19)

### FAQ: Antibody Testing & COVID-19

#### **What is an antibody test?**

A COVID-19 antibody test is a test that detects antibodies to SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. These tests identify antibodies that have been produced during the body's immune response to an infection or vaccination. They do not detect the virus itself. (Identifies the shoe print not the shoe)

#### **If I'm exposed and I test positive for antibodies doesn't that mean I'm immune and don't need to quarantine or get a COVID test?**

An antibody test should not be used to determine the need for quarantine following close contact with someone who has COVID-19.

Antibody testing should not be used to test for acute SARS-CoV-2 infection or resolution of infection.

#### **If I have a positive antibody test; isn't that proof that I am immune to COVID-19 and don't need the vaccine?**

COVID-19 vaccines generate both antibody and T cell responses – and these responses are much stronger and more consistent than immunity after natural infection. Currently authorized SARS-CoV-2 antibody tests are not validated to evaluate specific immunity or protection from SARS-CoV-2 infection or vaccination. They are only capable of identifying if you have been previously infected or vaccinated.

The presence of antibodies does not indicate lifelong immunity: Antibodies wane over time and we do not know how long immunity from COVID-19 infection lasts.

Antibody testing is not currently recommended to assess for immunity to SARS-CoV-2 following COVID-19 vaccination or to assess the need for vaccination in an unvaccinated person.

#### **If an antibody test is not used for detecting COVID-19 infection, what is it used for?**

Antibody testing can be used for clinical, occupational health, and public health purposes, such as serologic surveys, to help identify the proportion of people in a population who are previously infected or vaccinated, and to differentiate past SARS-Cov2 infection from vaccination by using tests that measure antibodies against different protein targets.

**The results from SARS-CoV-2 antibody tests should not be used to evaluate a person's level of immunity or protection from COVID-19 at any time.**

*This document was created 10/08/2021 using information and guidance available to-date and is subject to change per emerging guidance.*



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For more information:

<https://www.fda.gov/medical-devices/coronavirus-covid-19-and-medical-devices/serologyantibody-tests-faqs-testing-sars-cov-2>

<https://www.fda.gov/medical-devices/safety-communications/antibody-testing-not-currently-recommended-assess-immunity-after-covid-19-vaccination-fda-safety>

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