

# COVID-19 Antibody Testing

## WHAT IS COVID-19 ANTIBODY TESTING?

- The COVID-19 Antibody Test is a blood test that may help us understand if we have had the virus causing COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2 infection) and our immune status to that virus.
- We develop different types of antibodies after being infected with a virus, called IgM and IgG antibodies. These antibodies are detected 3 and 8 days after infection, respectively. The COVID-19 antibody test checks for both types of antibodies to four different components of the COVID-19 virus.

## DOES THIS TEST CHECK IF I CURRENTLY HAVE COVID-19?

- Although this test can tell if you recently had an infection, the gold standard for checking if you are actively infected with SARS-CoV-2 is the nasal swab PCR. If you think you are actively infected with SARS-CoV-2, you will be referred by our doctors to a testing site that is equipped.

## HOW ACCURATE ARE THE TEST RESULTS?

- This test is 98% sensitive, which means that if 100 people who had been infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 were tested, this test would be positive in 98 of them. This test is 99% specific, which means that if we tested 100 people who had not been infected with the virus, 99 of them would have a negative test.

## ARE THE RESULTS DEFINITIVE FOR DETERMINING IF I HAVE HAD A SARS-COV-2 INFECTION?

- Results from antibody testing should not be used as the sole basis to diagnose or exclude present or past infection with SARS-CoV-2, the virus causing COVID-19.
- Positive results may be due to past or present infection with other coronavirus strains, such as coronavirus HKU1, NL63, OC43, or 229E, which do not cause COVID-19. Also, negative results do not entirely rule out present or past infection.
- Consult with your physician to understand what your results mean for you and if there are any additional steps you should take to identify your immune status.

## IS THE TEST FDA-APPROVED?

- This test is FDA-EUA-approved. With the public emergency of COVID-19, the FDA has allowed laboratories to make testing commercially available without their full review and approval. Tests currently available for both PCR and antibodies are under Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) or pending EUA. These companies are permitted to conduct testing commercially if they have done validation studies as well as notified the FDA.

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## WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THIS SPECIFIC LAB FOR TESTING?

- The lab that PALM Health currently uses for SARS-CoV-2 antibody testing is our preferred lab because:
- It is a US-based company that specializes in antibody testing.
- Validity testing was done on a US-based human sample, in comparison to other labs which may use non-human or non-US controls. This validity testing may be more relevant to detecting COVID-19 in our US population.
- Most labs are only testing a single antibody type (IgG) against a single component of the virus, resulting in 1 touchpoint. This lab tests for 2 antibodies (IgG and IgM) against 4 components of the virus, resulting in 8 touchpoints, allowing for a comprehensive immune profile.
- Importantly, this lab tests for both IgM (recent infection) and IgG (past infection) to help us understand immunity along multiple timelines of potential exposure and infection. We are finding that some people are testing IgM positive but not IgG positive because they have not yet developed their IgG antibodies. Therefore this test allows us to detect people in the interim phase of developing past infection antibodies.

## IF I HAVE ANTIBODIES TO COVID-19, DOES THAT MEAN I WILL BE IMMUNE AND NOT GET INFECTED AGAIN?

- We are learning every day from the data being published. Currently, we do not know if having antibodies confers immunity and protection from re-infection. Checking for antibodies to the virus may help you understand if you were exposed or infected without having evident symptoms or classic presentation of COVID-19 disease.

## IF I HAVE ANTIBODIES TO THE VIRUS CAUSING COVID-19, CAN I TRAVEL AGAIN NORMALLY AND GO IN PUBLIC WITHOUT A MASK?

- There are no current guidelines for individuals who have positive antibodies. More information and guidelines should be available in the upcoming weeks and months. Please refer to the CDC website for current recommendations on traveling and masks.

## SHOULD I GET TESTED?

- There are no clear guidelines or medical indication for antibody testing. You should consider testing if you had a mild illness that may have been COVID-19 or were exposed to someone with confirmed COVID-19.

## HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

- Testing is \$229. This price includes a phone consultation with a health provider if you would like to review your results.
- You will pay for testing at the time of booking. This testing is not submittable to insurance. You will need to check with your insurance provider if your HSA or FSA can be used as a method of payment.

## DO I HAVE TO BE A MEMBER TO GET TESTED?

- You do not have to be a member of PALM Health to get tested. Non-members will need to get registered in our system and sign a liability waiver.

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## WHAT SHOULD I DO TO PREPARE FOR TESTING?

- Schedule an appointment with our medical schedulers by calling 314-801-8898 option 1 then 2.
- Hydrate well and eat a small snack before your blood draw.
- Prior to arriving you will be screened by phone for any possible active infection for the virus causing COVID-19, including symptoms of cough, shortness of breath, or fever, or recent exposure to someone with COVID-19. If you are at risk for an active infection, we will postpone your testing.

## WHERE DO I ARRIVE?

- Please wear a face mask and enter through the front doors. Our receptionists will direct you where to go for testing.

## WHEN SHOULD I EXPECT MY RESULTS?

- Results will take 3-5 business days. We will email your results to you.
- If you would like a consultation after receiving the results, you can set up a phone consultation with one of our health providers by emailing [clinic@palmhealth.com](mailto:clinic@palmhealth.com).

*Updated July 13, 2020. Information regarding COVID-19 antibody testing is changing daily. Please make sure you have the most updated version of this document.*