

Anti-SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) antibody test?

What is the Anti-SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) antibody test?

The antibody test can tell someone whether they have had the virus that causes COVID-19 in the past by analysing a blood sample.

How will I receive my result?

You will receive your result via text message on the number you provided on your referral form, 3-5 days after your appointment.

What do the results mean?

A **positive antibody test result** means that you have been infected with the COVID-19 virus at some point in the recent past and have developed antibodies to the virus.

A **negative antibody test result** means that we have been unable to detect any antibodies to the virus in your blood sample. This means that there is no evidence that you have been infected with COVID-19.

If I receive a positive antibody test result, should I self-isolate?

Self-isolation is **only** required following a positive COVID-19 swab result (PCR test) or if you develop a **new** onset of cough, and/or temperature, and/or loss of taste or smell. Anyone who is required to have a COVID-19 swab during their antibody test will receive a separate result for this test. *A current COVID-19 swab result shows you have an active virus. **If you have a positive COVID-19 swab result, you are required to isolate, irrelevant of your previous or current antibody test result.** Guidance on isolation following a positive COVID-19 result will be provided at your swab testing appointment.*

If I test positive for antibodies does it mean I can ignore lockdown precautions or PPE recommendations at work?

NO. There is no evidence yet to suggest that those who have been proven to have had the virus are immune. This is the position of the World Health Organisation. You should continue to comply with social distancing measures and government guidelines. All infection prevention and control measures must continue to be in place irrespective of the presence of antibodies.

How will my information be used?

The results of the antibody tests will be anonymised and shared across the testing programme to provide information on the prevalence of COVID-19 in different regions of the country. This should enable better understanding of the spread of the disease. COVID-19 is a reportable disease and therefore information about positive COVID-19 results may be subject to RIDDOR reporting obligations.

Are there any risks to having the test?

There are some risks related to having a routine blood test, such as feeling dizzy and faint during and after the test but nothing specific to this antibody test. Risks can also include minor bruising at the venepuncture site. Serious complications such as an infection at the site where blood was taken and phlebitis (swelling of the vein) are possible but generally extremely unlikely.

Because COVID-19 is such a new virus our understanding of the body's immune system response to the infection is evolving rapidly. We do not know, for example, how long an antibody response lasts, nor whether having antibodies means you can't transmit the virus to others or are immune to future infections with COVID-19. Our understanding of the virus will grow as new scientific evidence and studies emerge. In some circumstances we may phone you on a withheld number to invite you for a COVID-19 swab at the Brockworth Drive through Centre.