

# ANTIBODY TESTING FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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# NCH

Healthcare  
System

## What are antibodies?

Antibodies are proteins that help fight off infections. Antibody tests should not be used to diagnose someone as being currently sick with COVID-19. To see if you have a current infection, you need a viral test, which checks respiratory samples, such as a swab from inside your nose (Molecular PCR swab test).

It's unclear if COVID-19 antibodies can provide protection (immunity) against getting infected again. This means that we do not know, at this time, if antibodies make you immune to the virus.

## What is the technology that can detect antibodies?

The FDA approved Vitros 7600 arrived at NCH North Naples Hospital in May. At the time we acquired it, there were few hospitals in the nation with this technology. It is able to provide results in one hour and has been proven 99% accurate for antibody testing and can provide up to 2,000 test results a day.

## Why should I get an antibody test?

These tests can provide visibility into a patients' infection history and will be able to tell you if you have had the virus. Appropriate antibody testing along with PCR testing (nasal swab), and a physician's clinical assessment can enable healthcare workers, first responders and our community to return to work safely.

## How is the antibody test done?

Phlebotomists will draw a single tube of blood, specimen will be processed and spun, and serum will be sent to the NCH North Naples Hospital laboratory. Using the FDA-approved Vitros 7600, the serum will be tested for COVID-19 Total antibodies. The Ortho Diagnostics Covid-19 (SARS-Cov2) Total Antibody Test has a high degree of accuracy (up to 99% sensitivity and specificity). The instrument and testing method were calibrated and validated thoroughly by the laboratory prior to start of testing and approved by the laboratory Medical Director.

## How do I schedule my antibody test?

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Talk to your primary care physician about getting the antibody test done using the Vitros 7600 technology available only at NCH.

## How soon will I get my results?

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The Vitros 7600 provides COVID-19 antibody test results in one hour. Results will be provided to your physician in approximately 3-5 business days.

## Will my test results be kept confidential?

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Yes, just like other test and procedures in your medical record, results of the antibody test are treated as protected health information. However, NCH is required to report test results to the Florida Department of Health for statistical data collection.

## What if I am currently experiencing symptoms?

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Antibody tests should not be used to diagnose someone as being currently sick with COVID-19. To see if you have a current infection, you need a viral test, which checks respiratory samples, such as a swab from inside your nose (PCR swab test). If you have symptoms, contact your primary care provider.

## What does it mean if my antibody test is negative?

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If your COVID-19 antibody test is negative, you probably did not have a previous infection. However, you could have a current infection. It's possible you could still get sick if you have been exposed to the virus recently, since antibodies typically don't show up in your blood for 1 to 3 weeks after infection.

## What does it mean if my antibody test is positive?

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A positive test result shows you have antibodies that likely resulted from a COVID-19 infection. Additional testing for the virus (PCR swab test) is needed to confirm an active COVID-19 infection. If your antibody test is positive, an Occupational Health specialist will contact you to schedule a PCR swab test.

## If my antibody test is positive does that mean I am sick or contagious to others?

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It's possible you might test positive for antibodies and you might not have or have ever had symptoms of COVID-19. This is known as having an asymptomatic infection, or an infection without symptoms. It is possible that you could be contagious and spread the virus to others.