

COVID-19 Antibody Testing Q&A:

April 29, 2020

- 1) **The ONLY purpose of COVID-19 antibody test is to determine whether someone has had the COVID-19 infection at some point in the PAST.**
- 2) The antibody test does not necessarily mean a current infection (the COVID-19 nasal swab test can determine if there is a current infection)
- 3) **A positive COVID-19 antibody test does NOT mean that you are now immune to future infections.**
 - There unfortunately, is no data to show that the antibodies provide immunity.
 - While it is true that for other viral infections, that antibodies in many cases does confer immunity, it has not been proven for COVID-19.
 - Even if it does confer immunity, we do not even know how long the immunity might last or how strong the immunity might be. It is common for the body to naturally lose its immunity over time.
- 4) A positive COVID-19 antibody test does NOT mean that you can start loosening social distancing restrictions and should NOT be looked at as an immunity passport. It is in fact extremely dangerous to think that way.
- 5) There is a fairly high number of false positives with COVID-19 antibody testing.
 - The false positives can range from 4-14% depending on the type of test used. There are different tests available in the market and they are not all equal in accuracy.
 - Given the fact that only 3.3% of COVID-19 swabs comes back positive in Placer county, even a 4% false positive rate can make the antibody test much less useful.
- 6) There are patients who might also have a false negatives.
- 7) It takes 10-14 days after an infection by COVID-19 for a person to start developing the antibodies.
 - So, if you have been infected for less than 10 days, the antibodies will likely come back negative despite having the infection.
- 8) The COVID-19 antibody tests have emergency FDA clearance but are NOT FDA approved. This means that they do not have strong trials/tests to prove the validity of the test.