



ASSOCIATES IN
FAMILY MEDICINE

ANTIBODY (SEROLOGY) TESTS FOR COVID-19

AFM does not currently recommend antibody (serology) testing to estimate a patient's immunity to COVID-19 or to diagnose COVID-19.

Following recommendations from the [Centers for Disease Control](#) (CDC) , World Health Organization (WHO) , [Infectious Diseases Society of America](#) (IDSA) and [state](#) and [local](#) Public Health Departments, AFM does not recommend COVID-19 antibody (serology) tests at this time for diagnostic decisions or assessment of immunity.

While these tests can help better understand the level of COVID-19 infection in the community, these tests are not useful in determining whether an individual person is immune or has an active infection.

Antibody (serology) tests look for specific blood proteins, called antibodies, which our bodies produce to fight infections. These tests require a blood draw. Because it can take between 1 and 3 weeks (sometimes longer) for antibodies develop after infection, you should wait at least 14 days from when your symptoms (or suspected COVID-19 symptoms) began before getting this test.

At this moment in time, antibody tests are used for research purposes. It is also unclear that you will be able to donate convalescent plasma with just a positive antibody test.

What does a positive test mean?

At this time, it is unknown whether a positive test indicates full immunity, partial immunity or no immunity to COVID-19. Because COVID-19 is so new, scientists do not know if a patient who has antibodies in their blood are immune to getting the infection again, or how long any immunity will last.

What does a negative test mean?

A negative test indicates that you probably did not have a previous infection from COVID-19. It is possible that you may still get sick if you have been exposed recently as it can take 1-

3 weeks after infection for antibodies to show up in the blood. If you start to have symptoms of COVID-19 such as fever, cough or shortness of breath, please call AFM to have a virtual visit with your Provider to determine if another type of testing should be done.

It is important for our patients and community to continue to follow the CDC, State and Local Health Departments recommendations such as frequent handwashing, wearing a mask or cloth face covering and social distancing, regardless of the results of your antibody test.