

COVID-19 Antibody Test FAQs v2

Start Date- June 15, 2020

What is the COVID-19 antibody test?

The COVID-19 antibody test will show if your immune system has responded to the virus by producing antibodies. Most people who have antibodies will have had some symptoms of the disease, such as fever, cough, or trouble breathing, but some persons may have antibodies even though they never had symptoms. COVID-19 antibody testing will be performed in addition to the standard infectious disease testing all blood donations receive.

What test is Gulf Coast Regional Blood Center using to look for the COVID-19 antibody?

Gulf Coast Regional Blood Center is using the Roche Diagnostics Elecsys Anti-SARS-CoV-2 Test. This test is authorized by the FDA under an Emergency Use Authorization, which means it can be used only during the time of the Coronavirus pandemic crisis. This test is authorized by the FDA only for detecting the presence of antibodies against SARS-Co V-2 and is not intended for diagnosis of COVID-19.

Is the COVID-19 antibody test the same as a diagnostic test?

No. The COVID-19 antibody test does **not** test for the presence of the virus that causes COVID-19. The antibody test looks to see if the blood contains antibodies to the virus. The test does **not** check for the presence of an **active** COVID-19 infection.

Do I need to have an appointment to donate and receive the COVID-19 antibody test?

We recommend you have an appointment to secure your donation opportunity. [Click Here](#) to find a location near you and book your appointment.

Does the antibody test cost me anything?

No. The test is free to blood donors. This test is available to donors that complete a whole blood, platelet or double red blood cell or plasma donation.

Should I be worried if I have antibodies?

The COVID-19 antibody is **not** harmful to you and it is **not** harmful if transfused to a patient. In fact, it has special lifesaving potential. Studies have shown that by transfusing the plasma from a person who has recovered from the coronavirus, into a patient still fighting the virus, it can help boost the patient's immune system and potentially help them recover. The treatment is known as, COVID-19 convalescent plasma.

If I test positive for the COVID-19 antibody will my plasma be used to help a coronavirus patient?

Plasma derived from donations that test positive for the COVID-19 antibody could be designated as convalescent plasma. [Click Here](#) to learn more about convalescent plasma.

Do I have to be a blood donor to get the COVID-19 antibody test?

Yes, in order to get the COVID-19 antibody test, a complete donation must be given. This test is available to donors that complete a whole blood, platelet or double red blood cell or plasma donation. You do not need to have donated before with Gulf Coast Regional Blood Center to receive the COVID-19 antibody test.

Do I need to have a successful donation to receive my results?

Yes. You must have a successful donation in order to receive COVID-19 antibody results. Gulf Coast Regional Blood Center's standard operating procedure is that only successful donations move on to testing at our laboratory. Therefore, if you are unable to complete your donation, the COVID-19 antibody test, as well as all standard infectious disease testing will not be performed or provided.

If I test positive for the antibodies does it mean I am immune to COVID-19?

No. A positive result indicates that you may have had previous exposure to COVID-19 and your body has developed antibodies to the virus. This is not a diagnostic test. Both the FDA and CDC have said they do not know if the antibodies that result from a COVID-19 infection will provide someone with immunity from a future coronavirus infection.

Will I receive my results after I donate?

Yes! Your results will be available in Digital Donor approximately **3 business days after your donation**. You will need to make sure you provide your email to the phlebotomist during registration so you can activate your account post-donation. If you already have an account you can login with your username and password. Contact Donor Advocates at cs@giveblood.org or (713)791-6608 for assistance.

How long will Gulf Coast Regional Blood Center be providing the COVID-19 antibody testing?

Gulf Coast Regional Blood Center will provide COVID-19 antibody testing on all donations for the foreseeable future. However, our response to COVID-19 changes as we gather new information.

What if I donated before June 14th, can my previous donation(s) be tested for the COVID-19 antibody?

No. However, Gulf Coast Regional Blood Center will be testing for the COVID-19 antibody for the foreseeable future, so you are encouraged to book your next appointment and your donation will be tested at that time.