



FAQ for Serological (Antibody) for SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19)

What are the indications for testing?

- Testing patients who may have had COVID-19 or exposure to SARS-CoV-2 >10 days ago.
- **Serological testing is NOT indicated for diagnosis of acute infection.**
- This laboratory test will help public health and research colleagues learn more about how many people in the community may have had COVID-19 in the past and how many people remain uninfected.

What COVID-19 serology test do you offer?

Immunoglobulin G (IgG) is an antibody, a protein that the body produces in the late stages of infection and may remain for up to months and possibly years after a person has recovered. We offer the Abbott SARS-CoV2 IgG Immunoassay performed by the UW Virology lab.

How are the results reported, and what is the clinical significance?

- The results are reported either as “positive” or “negative.”
- A **negative result** indicates that a person most likely has not been infected with SARS-CoV-2. A negative result can also occur in some patients who have been infected but do not produce a significant IgG antibody response, for currently unknown reasons, or that an infection has occurred but too recently to show a positive IgG response. *A negative result does not rule out current or past infection with SARS-CoV-2.*
- A **positive result** indicates previous or current infection. It is important to note that a positive serology test *cannot distinguish between active or past COVID-19*. If there is concern for active infection, molecular testing (PCR) with a nasopharyngeal swab is recommended.
- **At this time, it is not known whether the presence of antibodies confers protection from reinfection with SARS-CoV-2, how long the antibody response lasts, or the association between antibody response and clinical outcomes of individuals with COVID-19.**

How do I obtain this test?

Unlike the nasal swab to check for the actual virus, this test requires a blood draw. Your physician must order the test. You may go to UW-Northwest outpatient area (formerly NW Hospital) for a blood draw or schedule an appointment at our Seattle location-Northwest Asthma & Allergy Center.

All blood draws in our Seattle office must be scheduled and are not walk-in. The UW courier will only pick-up once per week (Fridays at 2:00 pm). Thus, patients must be drawn BEFORE 12:00 pm on Friday; otherwise they will need to wait until the following week for their draw. We will be conducting blood draws Monday through Friday and freezing specimen until it is ready for pick up on Friday.

What is the turnaround time?

Once UW lab receives the blood specimens, the current turnaround time is within 24 hours, but this may change depending on volume and other circumstances. Please understand that our Seattle office only sends the specimen to the UW on Fridays, so if the test is drawn on Monday, the result may not be known for one week.