**Terrebonne General Medical Center Antibody Testing FAQ**

# ANTIBODY TESTING

**What does the antibody test tell me?**

The antibody test is a blood test that determines if a person’s immune system has created antibodies in response to COVID-19. Presence of the antibody indicates the individual has been previously infected with COVID-19.

It is important to note that this test does not prove that a person is immune to future infection with COVID-19. Because this virus is new, there is not enough information at this time to determine what defines COVID-19 immunity and how long immunity may last.

**We understand a test like this could create a false sense of security. It is critical that everyone, regardless of test status or result, continues to follow the latest social distancing, PPE protection and infection control measures.**

**How is this test different from other COVID-19 tests?**

The COVID-19 test is a nose or nose and throat swab. Its results will determine whether an individual currently has COVID-19, providing a positive or negative result, indicating presence or absence of viral genetic material. The antibody test is a blood test (requiring a blood sample to be drawn) that shows if the individual’s immune system has created antibodies to COVID-19, indicating that the individual has had prior infection to COVID-19.

**What is the turnaround time of the antibody test?**

The antibody test results are usually provided within 24-48 hours of collection.

**I’ve heard that these tests are unreliable?**

This test is currently commercially available under the Emergency Use Authorization, meaning that the FDA is allowing it during this public health emergency. The COVID-19 virus is new and there is no perfect test. This test has not been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

# VOLUNTARY EMPLOYEE TESTING

**Is this mandatory for all employees?**

This test is not mandatory and is a **voluntary test** being offered to you as a benefit for working at TGMC. This test is not a condition of employment or job assignment; this is a patient visit and will be treated with the same HIPAA protections as all other patient data.

**Is the employee going to be charged for the antibody test?**

* If the employee has health insurance with TGMC - we will bill BCBS for this service; however the employee will not be billed any out-of-pocket costs.
* If insurance is not with TGMC, we will bill based upon the information on your insurance card.
* If the employee does not have any health insurance, there will be a fee of $25 billed to the employee.

**Can employees go through Employee Health to get the antibody test?**

No, because this test is not required for or related to employment. The antibody test is not available through Employee Health. Each employee will be offered dedicated dates, times and locations. No appointment will be needed.

**Does an employee have to have an appointment to get their blood drawn?**

No. TGMC will offer dedicated dates, times and locations for each employee. Nonclinical staff will be offered testing in the Medical Atrium Auditorium and Clinical staff testing will offered in their respective department unless other arrangements are made.

**Will the employee need to register to have their blood drawn?**

Yes, because the order and results will be in EPIC, the employee must register at the time that they have their blood drawn. A pre-registration form will be sent to employees who are interested in having the test to be completed prior to the test date. **The employee must bring their driver’s license and insurance card with them.**

**What happens if an employee misses the timeframe allotted for testing?**

Any employee wishing to get the test will have an order that will expire on May 31, 2020. If you miss your designated date and time there will be a make-up time offered. After May 31, the employee must see their provider to obtain an order for testing.

**Do I have to come to the hospital to have the blood test taken? I have been sheltering at home.**

Yes. The testing will occur at a dedicated location on a designated date and time based upon your department. For clinical staff this will happen in your department and for nonclinical staff testing will be administered in the Medical Atrium Auditorium. Again, choosing to participate in this testing is completely voluntary.

**How will the results be delivered to the employee?**

All results will be auto-released once the test is complete into the employee’s patient MyChart account.

**What if I do not have a MyChart account?**

[Follow this link](https://ohnmychart.org/TGMC/) to set up a My Chart account if you do not have one. If your browser blocks you from clicking the link, type in the following URL into your browser (https://ohnmychart.org/TGMC/).

**If the employee has questions about their results, who should they contact?**

All results will be auto-released once the test is complete into the employee’s patient MyChart account. If there are specific questions about the test, the individual can email covidquestions@tgmc.com. We will also provide education through internal communications in the Employee Resources section at TGMC.com.

# TEST RESULTS

**What should I do with the result of this test?**

This test shows whether a person has developed a response (antibodies) to COVID-19 or other coronavirus strains.

Those with a positive test should be aware that they have been infected. These individuals are still required to wear appropriate PPE as advised throughout this COVID-19 pandemic. Those with a negative test should be aware that they have not been exposed or developed antibodies to COVID-19. They should maintain the guidance on appropriate PPE as advised throughout this COVID-19 pandemic.

**If my antibody test is positive, is there any medication or treatment I should seek?**

No, at this time, there is no definitive therapy being recommended or used for patients with positive antibody test. However, if you are symptomatic, you should seek treatment from your medical provider.

**Regardless of test status or result, you should continue to follow the latest social distancing, PPE protection and infection control measures.**

**If I have been exposed, does that mean my antibodies can be helpful in finding a cure?**

Your results will be part of research of COVID-19 to help us gain a greater understanding of future immunity. At this time, we are not offering any specific research tests in which you can donate your antibodies.

**Who will be notified of my test result?**

All test results will be provided to the patient through MyChart and to the ordering physician. If the test is positive, the Office of Public Health will also be notified due to mandatory reporting requirements as part of the COVID-19 pandemic.

# OPERATIONAL FAQ

**Does the antibody test require a physician’s order?**

Yes, this test requires a physician’s order. For the bulk employee testing, we will put in an order for every employee in our system under one designated physician that will be good until May 31. After May 31, any order not fulfilled will be cancelled.

**Will the employee need to register to have their blood drawn?**

Yes, when you arrive to have your blood drawn, you will need to register. The order for your lab draw and the results will be in EPIC.