

HEALTH ADVISORY: ANTIBODY TESTING FOR COVID-19 April 27, 2020

Background

As antibody testing for COVID-19 enters the marketplace, it is important for health care providers and the public to be aware of the limitations of such testing.

COVID-19 Serology Testing

Results from serology testing should not be used as the sole basis to diagnose or exclude SARS-CoV-2 infections or to inform infection status. Negative results from serology testing do not rule out SARS-CoV-2 infections, particularly for those individuals who have been exposed to the virus and are still within the estimated incubation period. Until the performance characteristics of serologic tests have been evaluated, it is possible that positive results from such testing may be due to past or present infections with a coronavirus other than SARS-CoV-2. Guidance by the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC), "COVID-19 Testing and Reporting by Laboratories: Q&A," is linked [here](#).

If a laboratory initially uses serological testing for diagnostic purposes, follow-up testing using a molecular diagnostic test should be performed. CDC is currently performing serological surveys to understand how COVID-19 has spread in the U.S. population. For this purpose, the CDC recommends total immunoglobulin, which includes both IgG and IgM.

CDC is not using its serology tests for diagnostic purposes, and thus is not accepting serology test requests intended for COVID-19 patient diagnosis.

Reporting of Cases:

COVID-19 is a notifiable condition under Texas statute. All suspected and confirmed cases are to be [called immediately](#) to the local health department. In addition, please submit lab results, demographics, and clinical progress notes via fax to:

San Antonio Metropolitan Health District
Epidemiology Program
Phone: (210) 207-8876 (24 hours)
Fax: (210) 207-8807