

COVID-19 antibody testing from the home (12/02/2021 v1.1)

Frequently asked questions

What is an antibody test?

An **antibody test** is a blood test that is analysed to see whether an individual has specific antibodies to a virus. We use the antibody test to detect whether you have had an immune response to the virus that causes COVID-19 and hence have been a COVID-19 case in the past (even if you were unaware of it). Establishing who has been a case in the past is one of the most important steps in starting to use the enormously rich Children of the 90s data to better understand COVID-19.

Do I have to take part?

As with all Children of the 90s studies, this study is completely voluntary. Your decision to (or not to) take part in this study does not affect your participation in any other Children of the 90s study.

How do I take part in the study?

If you have completed a Children of the 90s COVID-19 questionnaire, then you will be sent an invitation email, which details how you can get involved. If you have accidentally deleted the email or think you should have received the email, please contact us at info@childrenofthe90s.ac.uk or 0117 3310010.

I have completed the consent form, but the kit has not arrived. What shall I do?

We expect it to take a couple of weeks for the pack to arrive at your house once the consent form is completed. If you have not heard anything after 4 weeks, please get in touch.

How quickly will I receive the email with the results?

We hope to send out the results to you within 4 – 6 weeks. If you have not heard anything after 6 weeks, please get in touch.

Please note that the video that you are advised to watch, which is designed for NHS patients, states that the results will be available in the next 3 to 7 days. This is not the case for this study and the results will take 4 to 6 weeks to be returned to you.

The result showed that I had clearly detectable levels of antibodies. Does this mean I am now immune to COVID-19?

This result means that you may have had or been exposed to COVID-19 in the past, your body has mounted an immune response to the virus or following vaccination with a COVID-19 vaccine. Importantly, doctors and researchers currently do not know whether antibodies have any meaningful effect or offer protection against re-infection. Whatever your result you should continue to follow all guidance on self-isolation and social distancing as appropriate and be vaccinated when this is offered to you. For the current Government guidance about COVID-19, please visit <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

The antibody test is being carried out is **for research purposes only and cannot be used to determine individual COVID-19 status or to provide information about immunity**. Results come from a research laboratory only, not a clinical-grade NHS laboratory.

The result showed that I do not have clearly detectable antibody levels, but I previously had symptoms consistent with a COVID-19 infection. What does this mean?

This result means it is most likely that you have not been exposed to COVID-19 or that at the time of testing, your body had not mounted a clear immune response against the virus. However, it is possible to have had the virus and received a true negative antibody result. This can happen because some people do not develop strong antibody responses, or the level of antibodies at the time of testing had fallen to undetectable levels (which we know can happen with time since infection). Because of these different scenarios, it is very important that you should continue to follow Government guidance according to your current symptoms or notified exposures. For the current Government guidance about COVID-19, please visit <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

The results show that I have an invalid test result. What does this mean?

The result means that the blood collected did not produce a valid sample and so we have not been able to carry out a valid antibody test. We are unfortunately unable to send out further blood collection kits. An invalid result is still important for research purposes. You should continue to follow Government guidance according to your current symptoms or notified exposures. For the current Government guidance about COVID-19, please visit <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

Do I have to tell anybody about my test results?

These results are private to you, although you are free to share them with others if you wish.

Please bear in mind that these are **research tests only**, and we are not able to confirm a clinical diagnosis of a current or previous case of COVID-19 from them. The results are from a research laboratory, and not an NHS clinical-grade laboratory.

What should I do if I am worried about COVID-19 and its impact?

We hope that you and your loved ones are keeping well and healthy during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Please follow the latest government advice: www.gov.uk/coronavirus

If you think you may have symptoms of COVID-19, please follow the advice and guidance from the NHS: www.111.nhs.uk. You can also call NHS by phoning 111 or phone your GP.

You should have the COVID-19 vaccine when you are offered. The vaccine cannot give you COVID-19 infection, and 2 doses will reduce your chance of becoming seriously ill. We do not yet know whether it will stop you from catching and passing on the virus. So, it is important to follow the guidance in your local area to protect those around you.

Many people are experiencing difficulties due to the wider impact on the outbreak and restrictions imposed by the government, for example on finances, health and housing. Many organisations can provide support during this difficult time. We have listed important sources of support below.

MIND (National Association for Mental Health)

Offers confidential help on a range of mental health issues.

Telephone: 0300 123 3393 Mon-Fri 9am-6pm

Email: info@mind.org.uk

Website: www.mind.org.uk

Cruse Bereavement Care

Offers help, including a free counselling service, for bereaved people whatever their age, nationality or beliefs.

Telephone: 0808 808 1677

Email: helpline@cruse.org.uk

Website: www.cruse.org.uk

Citizens Advice Bureau

Helps people resolve their legal, money and other problems.

Website: www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Who should I contact if I have any problems, queries or concerns?

Please contact the Children of the 90s study team at info@childrenofthe90s.ac.uk or 0117 3310010.

What happens to the information I give?

The information you give us will be held securely and treated in strict confidence in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation. Any information that may identify you, such as your name, your contact details and the contact details of anyone else you give us, will be kept separate from responses to any other questions you have answered. We hold any information which could identify you securely and never make this available to researchers.

Under the Health Protection (Notification) (Amendment) regulations 2020, there is a legal requirement for COVID-19 results to be reported to Public Health England (PHE). These data will be provided to PHE by ALSPAC in an **anonymised** form.

For more details, please see our Privacy Notice

<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/alspac/participants/privacy>