

NOW TESTING FOR COVID-19 ANTIBODIES

To find out more please visit
militaryblood.dod.mil



The Armed Services Blood Program is testing all qualified donations for COVID-19 antibodies as an additional public health service for our donors. This testing may provide insight into whether you have been exposed to the coronavirus. An antibody test assesses whether your immune system has responded to the infection, not if the virus is currently present.

What is a COVID-19 antibody test?

Antibody tests are used to screen for antibodies in the blood. When a person contract a virus, the immune system creates antibodies to fight the virus. These antibodies are found in the person's plasma, the liquid part of blood.

An antibody test shows whether a person's immune system has responded to an infection — here, SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes the disease COVID-19. In most cases*, the presence of antibodies in someone's plasma indicates that person has been exposed to a specific virus.

Note: A positive antibody test for SARS-CoV-2 does not indicate whether the virus is currently present; only a diagnostic test can prove that. A diagnostic test can be performed by a health care provider.

**There is a chance that a positive test result indicates a person has antibodies from an infection of a similar coronavirus and not necessarily SARS-CoV-2.*

Do I have to donate blood to have the COVID-19 antibody test performed by ASBP?

Yes. All *qualified* blood donations taken at Armed Services Blood Program blood donor centers will be tested for COVID-19 antibodies until further notice. This is to both provide an additional public health service to our donors and pinpoint to see if any donations could be considered for COVID-19 convalescent plasma.

Qualified** donations include donors who:

- 1) have documentation of a COVID-19 positive diagnostic or serological test result;
- 2) believe they had COVID-19, but have no documentation or confirmed test; or
- 3) know or believe they've been in contact with someone who had COVID-19.

Make an appointment to donate blood today: <https://militarydonor.com>.

Will you contact me if my tests are positive?

Yes. Our donor centers will reach out to donors if they receive a positive result from their antibody test. At this time, we will not be directly contacting those who do NOT have a positive result.

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How long will I have to wait for my test results and how will I receive them?

There is no standard time frame for notification of a positive test result. Check with individual blood donor centers for more information.

If I test positive for COVID-19 antibodies, can I still donate blood?

Yes! You can donate blood and we encourage you to do so. We specifically would like those who do test positive for antibodies to consider donating for the COVID-19 convalescent plasma program.

Does a positive COVID-19 antibody test mean I qualify to give convalescent plasma?

Having fully recovered from COVID-19, being symptom-free for 14 days or more and having a positive COVID-19 test are requirements to give convalescent plasma, or CCP. Please see our COVID-19 page [<https://militaryblood.dod.mil/Donors/COVID-19andBloodDonation.aspx>] for more information.

We are currently seeking CCP donors and encourage those who are healthy, eligible, and able to consider donating to help provide this possible treatment to those who are currently fighting the disease.

Does a positive antibody test mean I'm immune from contracting COVID-19 again?

It is unclear at this time if that is the case. As of now, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is unsure if a positive antibody test ensures immunity.

What if I do not test positive for COVID-19 antibodies?

It means that no antibodies to SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes the disease COVID-19, were found in your blood; it may also mean that you've never had COVID-19, but this is not definitive.

Note: The absence of a positive antibody test still does not mean that a person doesn't have the disease. Not all those infected with COVID-19 produce antibodies in their blood, and the CDC claims that it typically takes 1-3 weeks after infection for the body to make antibodies. If you have symptoms and are worried you may have the disease, see a health care provider about your concerns.

***Detailed information on qualified donations, per ASBP Blood Policy Letter:*

a) A recovered COVID-19 patient is defined as a donor with documented positive SARS CoV-2 testing at the time of illness OR documented positive serological test for SARS CoV-2 antibodies

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after recovery prior to donation if prior diagnostic testing was not performed at the time when COVID-19 was suspected.

b) A donor with no history or unknown history of COVID-19 is defined as a donor that: (1) does not have documentation of positive SARS CoV-2 testing at the time of illness, (2) did not have symptoms of disease.

c) A donor with no history of COVID-19 can be collected. Examples of these types of donors include: donors whom did or did not experience symptoms of COVID and did not get tested at the time infection was suspected. Another example is a donor whom had close contact with a known COVID patient, did or did not experience symptoms and did not get tested.