COVID-19 Seroprevalance Study, Riverside County

Riverside University Health System – Public Health (Riverside County Department of Public Health) is conducting a study about COVID-19 (also called "coronavirus"). If you are selected to participate in the study, you may be asked to complete a short survey and appear in person to provide a blood sample. This is an anonymous study that will provide information that could help scientists understand the virus and make plans to care for people during the outbreak.

Contact Information

If you have questions about the study, please contact us at RiversideCovidStudy@ruhealth.org or (951) 358-5000

Frequented Asked Questions (drop down questions)

- **Why was I asked to participate?**
  
  - You have been randomly selected to participate in a screening test. This test will determine and allow public health workers to understand how many Riverside County residents may have had or been exposed to COVID-19 novel coronavirus. Because many people may have mild to no symptoms, this anonymous study that will help scientists better understand the virus as they make plans to care for people during the outbreak.

- **How was I selected?**
  
  - You were selected at random to participate in this study. Your selection has nothing to do with any health problems you may have or your protected healthcare information. You will remain anonymous if you choose to participate in this study. The random sample of people enrolled in this study will allow scientists to learn more about how COVID-19 could be affecting your community and the entire County.

- **Can I refer a friend or family member to be tested?**
  
  - No. The test is only available to the person and household members who received the link and survey. This is to help researchers make sure the people they are testing are from a representative sample of neighborhoods or communities in Riverside County. If you are experiencing severe symptoms or think you or a family member may be ill, please seek medical care.

- **Can I bring others with me to be tested?**
  
  - Yes. Others may accompany you to the testing site, but the test is only available to the person who received the link and survey. Please do your best to limit contact with anyone outside your household and maintain social distance.

- **I don’t feel well—can I still come to be tested?**
  
  - Yes. Please do not ride the bus, train or other public transport to reach the testing site. If you are experiencing severe symptoms, please seek medical care.

- **I’m a California resident under a “Shelter at home” order—can I still come to the test site?**
  
  - Yes. The test is considered an essential activity and your participation will provide RUHS – Public Health with vital information about the spread of COVID-19.

- **Is this the same as the drive-up testing the County is offering?**
No. This study is separate from the drive-up testing organized by the County of Riverside. Participants for this study have been chosen at random. For more information about the drive-up testing, please visit https://rivcoph.org/coronavirus/testing

Test Results (drop down questions)

- What kind of test will I receive?
  - If you agree to participate, you will receive a blood test to see if there are antibodies for COVID-19 virus in your blood. Your blood to be drawn by a nurse or other skilled healthcare worker.

  This is a different test from the one used to diagnose patients who have symptoms and go to hospital (called “PCR test”), which tests for the virus itself. Antibodies are part of the body’s defenses against infections, and they develop after infections such as coronavirus and stay in the blood even after the infection is over. This test will provide critical information about the prevalence of COVID-19 in Riverside County, but it cannot tell you if you have an active infection.

- I tested negative. What does that mean? Can I be sure that I do not have COVID-19?
  - A negative antibody test can mean one of the following three things:
    1. You have not had infection from COVID-19.
    2. You may have COVID-19, but the infection is very recent (within the past 3-7 days), and antibodies have not developed yet.
    3. The test result was a false negative, which means there is a small chance you do have COVID-19 antibodies even though the test results say you do not. Though the test manufacturer has validated the tests and results show this test is accurate, no test is perfect and there is a small chance that a negative test was a “false negative.”

  A negative test may mean that you are still at risk of being infected with COVID-19.

  **If you have a negative test it may mean that you are still at risk of being infected with COVID-19, so we recommend continuing to follow the guidance for preventing COVID-19 infection, including social distancing (staying 6 feet apart from other people) and reducing your exposure to others, including reducing the time you spend away from home. More information on COVID-19 can be found online here: rivcoph.org/coronavirus**

- I tested positive. What does that mean?
  - A positive antibody test can mean one of the following three things:
    1. You have an active case of COVID-19, even if you have no symptoms right now. You may start to develop symptoms, or you may have a mild case of COVID-19 without symptoms. In either of these cases, you could be transmitting it to others.
    2. You had COVID-19 in the past and have recovered from it. Because antibodies are part of the normal immune response and stay in the blood after recovering from an illness, they show that someone has had an infection in the past. This
means you could be protected from another infection from COVID-19, but we do not know for sure.

3. The test result was a false positive, which means that there is a small chance you have no antibodies to COVID-19 even though the test results say that you do. We believe this test is accurate, but no test is perfect and there is a very small chance that a positive test was a “false positive.”

- If you have a positive test, since we cannot tell if you are having an early active stage infection (see #1 above), it is very important to follow public health guidance to avoid infecting other people. We recommend the following:
  - Self-isolate for 7 days following the date of your test and notify people you have been in close contact with to go into self-quarantine. Instructions for self-isolation and self-quarantine are located in your handouts and online here:
    - Home Quarantine instructions: English | Spanish
    - Home Isolation instructions: English | Spanish
  - Call (800) 945-6171 to schedule a test for active Covid-19 infection

A positive blood test cannot determine that you are immune at this time.

If after 7 days you do not have symptoms, you may remove yourself from self-isolation. Continue with public health guidance, including physical distancing (staying 6 feet apart from other people) and reducing your exposure to others, including reducing the time you spend away from home.

If you develop symptoms at any point and call your medical care provider, please tell your provider that you received this result. You can call it the “antibody test” or “serology test”. If you need help finding medical care or mental health services, call the Riverside County Information line 2-1-1, which is available 24/7.

More information on COVID-19 can be found in your handouts and online at: www.rivcoph.org/coronavirus