SARS-COV-2 ANTIBODY TESTING

NYC HEALTH+HOSPITALS

April 28, 2020

NYC Health + Hospitals is pleased to offer SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19) antibody testing to our Health Care Heroes. While we continue our fight against this pandemic, we are hopeful that these antibody tests may be of help to our employees. This is an initial step in providing antibody testing in our hospital system. There is still much to learn about SARS-CoV-2 and the antibody tests. However, we're starting early testing because we want to provide our heroes with as much support as they can get as soon as they can get it.

Do I have to take this test?

No. This is entirely up to you.

What is the test?

The test requires a blood sample by venipuncture and looks for proteins or antibodies against the virus that causes COVID-19. These proteins typically appear 14 days after you have recovered from the infection. The test is not used to diagnose someone with active COVID-19.

What can the test tell me?

This antibody test may be able to tell whether you have been exposed or infected with SARS-CoV-2, even if you did not have symptoms or a positive COVID-19 test. We believe that up to a quarter of people infected with SARS-CoV-2 might not know that they had the virus. We are still learning about the virus and about this test. For more information about the test and results, please refer to the attached Fact Sheet.

If I have a positive antibody test, will NYC Health +Hospitals force me to go back to work?

No. Antibody testing will not be used to make employment related decisions or to determine which employees can work. Further, your test results are confidential and will not be shared with your work supervisor or Occupational Health Services (OHS) or Human Resources unless you decide you want to disclose it.

If I have a positive test, will NYC Health +Hospitals force me to work without PPE?

No. You will not be denied PPE or other supplies based on the outcome of this test. In fact, it is important to continue using PPE as recommended, regardless of the result.

Will my supervisor find out about my test results?

No. You alone will get your test results, along with your care team so that they can use the information to best serve you as a patient. Neither your supervisor nor OHS nor Human Resources will be notified of your result without your consent.

Do I have to pay for this?

No. If you have insurance, NYC Health + Hospitals will bill your insurance plan for the cost of the test. You will not be billed for any co-pay or cost-sharing. If you do not have insurance, you will not be billed.

When can I get the test?

We will be rolling-out the test weekly to the following groups of employees:

+ **Week 1:** Employees working in 'hot zones' (e.g. EDs, ICUs, L&D))
+ **Week 2:** Employees working on Medical/Surgical units
+ **Week 3:** All other employees with patient contact

Includes employees of all types working in above areas, including, but not limited to: EVS, nursing, provider, consultants, administrative and finance

Can my results be used to advance COVID-19 research?

Researchers at NYC Health + Hospitals, working with Mount Sinai, are conducting an OPTIONAL study that will compare antibody testing results to healthcare workers' exposure to COVID-19. At the time of your antibody test, you may be invited to participate in this research. If you choose to participate, you will be asked to complete an additional questionnaire that takes about 15 minutes and you will be asked to share your antibody results with the research team. However, neither your supervisor nor OHS nor Human Resources will be shown your results. If you choose not to participate, your results will not be shared with the researchers. Participating in this or any other research study is entirely up to you. Choosing not to participate will not affect your ability to get the antibody test.

What if I have COVID-19 symptoms now?

If you have symptoms of the virus now, you can get the SARS-CoV-2 PCR test (aka the 'nasal swab test') to see if you are infected by calling the Employee COVID-19 Testing Hotline at 646 614-4001 to schedule an appointment.

Stay Well. Stay Safe.
NYC Health + Hospitals Office of Ambulatory Care

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