

Virginia Coronavirus Serology Project – Website FAQs (version 6-1-2020)

Why is VDH conducting the Virginia Coronavirus Serology Project?

The project is being conducted at the direction of the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) in order to estimate the total number of people that have been infected with the COVID-19 virus in Virginia at any time in the past. VDH will use the project's findings to estimate how many Virginians remain at risk for COVID-19 infection. This information will help public health officials and Virginia's hospitals plan for future healthcare needs. VDH also can look at risk factors for COVID-19 infection, such as a person's age, location, or underlying health conditions, in Virginia.

How is testing serology different from testing for the virus with a nasal swab test?

A COVID-19 antibody (or serology) test checks to see if a person had a COVID-19 infection in the past. Those past infections include those that may have been missed because the person had no or mild symptoms or the person was ill but did not have a nasal swab test for the virus. The viral test (nasal swab) only identifies current COVID-19 infections.

How is VDH conducting the Virginia Coronavirus Serology Project?

VDH has partnered with a health system in each of Virginia's five health planning regions: University of Virginia (Northwest), Inova (Northern), Virginia Commonwealth University (Central), Sentara (Eastern), and Carilion Clinic (Southwest). The project will enroll 5,000 participants statewide (1,000 in each health planning region). Participants who consent to participation will complete a short questionnaire and have a blood sample collected. The blood sample will be tested for COVID-19 antibodies using a FDA-authorized test performed at one clinical laboratory. The University of Virginia is providing overall project management and the laboratory testing. The project's findings will be based on an analysis of antibody test results and questionnaire responses.

Are you recruiting participants for the Virginia Coronavirus Serology Project?

Yes, but eligible participants must already be present at identified outpatient clinics or clinic phlebotomy laboratories for an existing patient visit. **There is no other recruitment or enrollment opportunity for this project.**

Are there other eligibility criteria?

Yes, participants must reside in Virginia and be 18 years of age or older. In addition, enrollment will be limited to pre-specified quotas by age and race/ethnicity to be representative of the population residing in each region. Once a specific quota is full, no one categorized in that category will be enrolled. Enrollment is also limited to just one person per household.

What is the timeline for the project?

Participant enrollment will occur during June and July 2020. The project's preliminary findings will be released no later than July 31, 2020.

Is this a research project?

No, this is a public health surveillance activity that is conducted, supported, and requested by the Virginia Department of Health. As such, according to 45 CFR § 46.102, this project is considered a public health surveillance activity and not research.

I participated in the Virginia Coronavirus Serology Project. When will I get my test result?

You will receive your result 2-4 weeks after your blood sample was collected, if you indicated that you wanted your test result mailed to you when you enrolled. Blood samples are shipped to the laboratory weekly and tested in batches, so the exact timeline varies. If you do not receive your test result by four (4) weeks after your sample was collected, please call 1-877-ASKVDH3 (1-877-275-8343) and ask for the Coronavirus Serology Project.