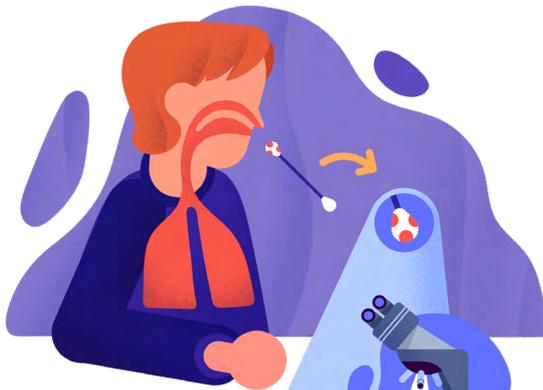


# Testing for COVID-19

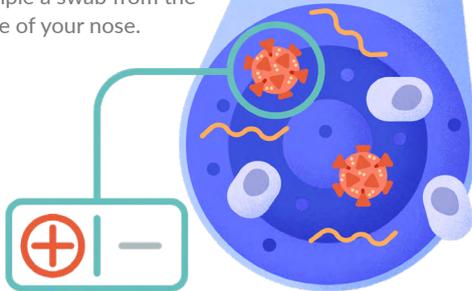
You're probably hearing a lot about different kinds of tests for COVID-19. It can be confusing... but, don't worry, we'll break it down for you!

There are two kinds of tests for COVID-19: a **1. viral test** that checks for current infection and **2. an antibody test** that checks for past infection.

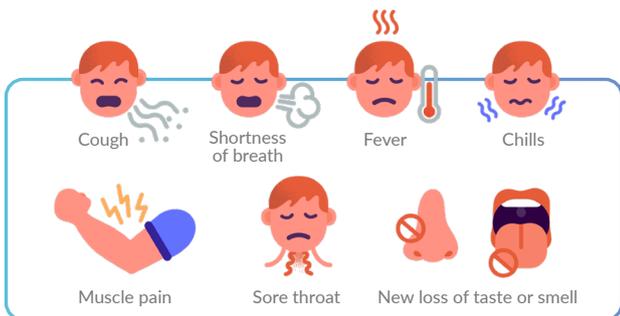
## 1. Viral Test for Current Infection



The viral test checks samples from your respiratory system, for example a swab from the inside of your nose.



A positive result means that you currently have a SARS-CoV-2 infection, the virus that causes COVID-19. It can take several days to get your test results back from the lab.

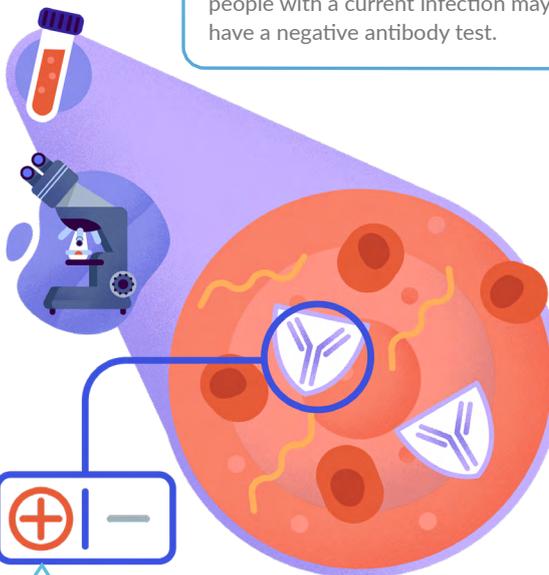


Not everyone with the infection needs to be tested. The CDC has issued guidance that not everyone needs to be tested. For example, many people experience a mild form of the illness and a test is not needed. If you are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, please contact your health care provider for your next steps based on your specific case.

## 2. Antibody Test for Past Infection



This tests for antibodies in your blood. Antibodies are proteins that your body makes in response to an infection. It can take some time for antibodies to appear in the blood – 1 to 3 weeks post infection – so people with a current infection may have a negative antibody test.



A positive test means that you are likely to have had a SARS-CoV-2, or similar virus, infection. It is currently unclear whether the presence of antibodies protects you from getting COVID-19 again, or if it does protect, how long that protection might last.

You may have a positive antibody test even if you have never had symptoms of COVID-19.

Whether you test negative or positive for a current or past infection, you should still continue to take preventive measures to help stop the spread of COVID-19, such as washing your hands and wearing a mask when in the presence of others.