
THE TIME HAS COME FOR ANTIBODY TESTING

A combined approach that includes high-quality antibody testing is the best way to establish a true baseline and guide next steps.

What businesses are doing today is not working. COVID-19 prevalence is on the rise, and just after opening, several states are now going back into more business closings and social isolation. Antibody testing is not the only solution, but when combined with virus testing it offers a reasonable approach to opening sooner. Given a 40-45% asymptomatic COVID-19-infected population, only antibody testing enables creation of a true employee baseline.

When combined with virus testing, antibody testing may also be a more cost-effective way to monitor and screen employees on an ongoing basis. Delta Airlines has recently announced this combined approach through partnering with the Mayo Clinic¹, and others will likely follow. The key in the future is likely to be a combination of antibody testing for baselining prevalence, virus testing for symptomatic employees, and thoughtful use of both for ongoing screening.

As a final comment, since antibody testing for COVID-19 is relatively new, there is a range of quality in some of the tests now available, as highlighted by several studies. That is why it is critical to pick a reliable test. When starting on an antibody approach, organizations should ensure that the supplier meets each of these criteria:

- The test is Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) approved. The FDA publishes a list of such tests on its website².
- The test is of the highest sensitivity and specificity on that list.
- The test is approved by the National Cancer Institute's Frederick National Laboratory for Cancer Research (FNLCR) at Frederick, Maryland. FNLCR offers this as an independent confirmation³ to help ensure the accuracy of the antibody tests they evaluate.

Also be aware that some vendors are going further in having an independent test performed at a clinical laboratory. Novir offers the ability to provide antibody tests, and the partnerships we have with the other critical components will allow a comprehensive approach to helping businesses and other organizations get back to work.

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1. Delta engages Mayo Clinic experts to advise on making travel even safer [Internet]. Delta News Hub. [cited 2020 Jul 11]. Available from: <https://news.delta.com/delta-engages-mayo-clinic-experts-advise-making-travel-even-safer>
 2. FDA. In Vitro Diagnostics EUAs [Internet]. FDA; 2020 [cited 2020 Jul 11]. Available from: <https://www.fda.gov/medical-devices/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19-emergency-use-authorizations-medical-devices/vitro-diagnostics-euas>
 3. NCI Part of Effort to Evaluate Coronavirus Antibody Tests - National Cancer Institute [Internet]. 2020 [cited 2020 Jul 11]. Available from: <https://www.cancer.gov/news-events/cancer-currents-blog/2020/covid-19-nci-antibody-testing-review>