



12/29/2020

RE: Invitation for a Free COVID-19 Antibody Test

Dear Resident, Family Member, or Guardian of Jewish Home of Eastern Pennsylvania,

COVID-19 is a public health emergency that threatens our communities and will continue to be a big problem for many months ahead. To help us better understand, prepare for and control future outbreaks, the Pennsylvania Department of Health is working with the management of Jewish Home of Eastern Pennsylvania to offer free antibody testing to residents. If you choose to participate, we will provide you with the results of the test and answer your questions about what it means for you.

Antibodies are proteins that a person makes to help recognize and fight off viral infections. We would like to conduct a simple blood test to look for antibodies to better tell us who has had a previous infection with COVID-19 and who has not. We know that some people infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 may not develop symptoms. Many people may have been infected and were never tested. Antibodies typically provide protection for people if they are exposed to the same virus in the future. We do not know if antibodies against this virus convey protection against future exposures, and how long that protection may last against COVID-19. Your participation in this study will provide important information to help us better understand antibody protection; it will also help us better serve all people in Pennsylvania in the coming months.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. If you do agree to participate, we will ask you some basic questions about you and your health and a skilled phlebotomist from the Pennsylvania Department of Health will draw one tube of blood. We may also like to draw a second tube of blood at least 3 months after the first collection. This will show us if there were any changes in antibody detection from the first sample. We will ask your permission to review your medical records so that we can better understand factors that might contribute to previous infection like if you have received the vaccine. We will ask you again on the day we come to draw any samples of blood for your permission, which at that point you can decide not to participate.

If you would like to have this antibody test for COVID-19 **please fill out and sign the enclosed Statement of Informed Consent and return it to:**

Denise Skrzysowski
Jewish Home of Eastern PA
1101 Vine Street, Scranton PA 18510
dskrzysowski@jhep.org

If you have any questions or want more information, you may call:

- [Pennsylvania Department of Health: Dr. Steven Alles 717 571 3875](tel:7175713875)

Thank you for your consideration,

Steven Alles

Steven Alles, MD MS MFA
COVID Medical Epidemiologist
Bureau of Epidemiology, Pennsylvania Department of Health