

# Rubella Immunity Test

Rubella is a highly contagious virus that causes an infection that is usually mild and characterized by fever and rash that last about 2 to 3 days. A rubella immunity test involves the detecting of antibodies in the blood that develop in response to the infection or through vaccination.

The rubella virus generally causes a mild infection marked by a fine red rash that appears on the face and neck and then travels to the trunk and limbs before disappearing a few days later. The virus is spread by contact with an infected person through coughing and sneezing. The infection can cause symptoms such as fever, enlarged lymph nodes, runny nose, red eyes, and joint pain.

## Why do I need to be tested?

Testing for rubella may be used to confirm immunity to the virus due to previous infection or vaccination.

## What is antibody testing?

When you are exposed to rubella, either through exposure or vaccination, your immune system responds by producing antibodies to the virus. Two classes of rubella antibodies may be found in the blood: IgM and IgG.

IgM antibodies are the first to be produced by the body in response to a rubella infection. Levels of IgM antibodies increase for several days to a maximum level and then begin to taper off over the next few weeks. IgG antibodies take longer to appear, but stay in the bloodstream for life to provide long-term protection. This test looks for the presence of IgG antibodies to determine if you have been previously infected or have been immunized; it does not detect the presence of IgM antibodies that appear in an active infection.

## What should I do if my results are positive or negative?

It is always recommended you meet with a healthcare provider to determine what your laboratory test results mean to you. Your healthcare provider will review all of your test results and, combined with your health history, will be able to provide an accurate picture of your health status.

**If your results were positive:** If rubella IgG antibodies are present, then it is likely that you have been exposed to rubella either through infection or immunization. You should share your results with your healthcare provider to discuss treatment options and/or further testing.

**If your results were negative:** If the antibodies for rubella are not found, you have likely not been exposed to the virus or received a vaccination. You should talk to your healthcare provider to let him know you have not been vaccinated and discuss your options.

## What other resources are available to learn more about my health and laboratory tests?

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [cdc.gov](http://cdc.gov)
- Lab Tests Online: [labtestsonline.org](http://labtestsonline.org)
- WebMD: [webmd.com](http://webmd.com)

*DLO Direct offers direct access to laboratory testing for informational purposes. A DLO Direct lab test result is not a medical diagnosis and is not intended as medical advice. Only a healthcare provider can interpret lab results and diagnose a medical condition or disease.*

*Because tests have not been ordered by a healthcare provider, third party entities, including Medicare and Medicaid, will not reimburse for these tests.*



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