

# DFW COVID-19 Prevalence Study

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## DFW COVID-19 PREVALENCE STUDY FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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### **Why is this study being conducted?**

To provide a better understanding about the number of people in the Dallas-Fort Worth community who have COVID-19 now or have had it in the past. This is important information that may help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

### **Who is conducting the study?**

UT Southwestern Medical Center (UTSW) and Texas Health Resources are conducting the study.

### **Why was my employer selected?**

Businesses that have front line employees who provide essential services to the community were chosen for this study.

### **How are employees being selected to participate in the study?**

All SMU employees, 18 years of age and older, will be invited to participate.

### **What do I have to do?**

All employees will receive a unique link to take a brief survey. If you are selected after taking the survey, you will receive an invitation via email or text message with instructions for scheduling your test. The test will take place onsite at SMU. You will be contacted two to three days before your appointment as a reminder and to check for symptoms. Once at the testing site, you will be asked to sign a consent form allowing UTSW and Texas Health Resources to include your test results in the study. The visit at the testing site will take approximately 20 to 30 minutes.

### **Do I have to participate?**

No. The study is voluntary. It is your decision as whether to become involved, but your participation could help the community limit the spread of COVID-19 and save lives.

### **If I already had a COVID-19 test, can I participate?**

Yes. If you previously tested negative, you could have been exposed since that time. If you tested positive, the blood test can indicate how many antibodies you have against the virus. It is important for all invited employees to participate to help estimate how widespread COVID-19 infections are in the Dallas-Fort Worth area.

**UT Southwestern**  
Medical Center

 **Texas Health**  
Resources\*

<https://utswmed.org/covidwork/>

**Should I participate if I do not have symptoms?**

Yes. You still could have had or been exposed to COVID-19 without any symptoms. To get the best results, widespread participation is encouraged.

**Do I have to pay for testing?**

No. All testing is free.

**What kind of tests will I receive, and how are they administered?**

You will receive two tests during your visit:

- A COVID-19 nasal swab to test for active infection (also called a PCR test). A trained medical technician will show you how to take a simple swab sample from your nose.
- A COVID-19 antibody blood test to check if you've ever been infected. A trained medical technician will collect a small amount of blood from your arm.

**Can the antibody test be taken via a finger prick instead of drawing blood from the arm?**

An accurate test using a finger prick is not available. The blood test utilized for antibody levels, which requires drawing blood from the arm, is 99% accurate.

**Is COVID-19 testing safe?**

Yes. The testing staff is trained and will wear masks and gloves for protection. Testing sites also require social distancing and masks for safety.

**Can I get tested without filling out the survey?**

No. You must complete the survey to qualify for the free COVID-19 testing and before scheduling your test. Survey responses will not be shared with SMU.

**When will I get my results?**

If you are found to have an active COVID-19 infection, you will be notified within two days of the test. Otherwise, results of both tests will be mailed to you within two weeks.

**What if my results show I have an active infection of COVID-19?**

If your results show you have an active COVID-19 infection, a member of the study team will call you within one to two days to discuss ways to keep you and your family safe, as well as help direct you to medical care and resources as needed. Positive COVID-19 test results will also be reported to the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS). The study team is required to report positive cases to DSHS to ensure contact tracing of household members and other close contacts. SMU employees who test positive will not be penalized or publicly identified.

**Will you tell my employer if my test results show that I have COVID-19?**

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Yes. If your test shows you have an active COVID-19 infection, your results will be reported to SMU's human resources department. This is to ensure your health and safety, as well as others in your workplace.

**If I have an active COVID-19 infection, will I have to take time off from work? Will I still get paid?**

Your health and the health of your family, friends and co-workers are priority. Staff members who are ill are asked [to take sick time until they are able to return to work](#). SMU HR will work with you to coordinate leave if you have exhausted your sick leave. Faculty should work with their Department Chair to determine the best way to provide academic continuity, through the use of Teaching Assistants, adjuncts or other faculty, to teach the class during an extended absence due to COVID-19.

**Will my employer see my antibody test results which show if I have had COVID-19 in the past?**

No, SMU will not receive antibody test results for individual employees. Results of a group of all antibody tests by industry will be given to employers participating in the study after it is completed. Individuals will not be identified.

**Can I still participate if I do not sign the consent form because I do not want my employer notified if my results show I have an active COVID-19 infection?**

No. Your consent is required before testing. The study team is required to report cases of active COVID-19 infection to the Texas Department of State Health Services. Additionally, SMU needs this information to keep the campus community safe. As SMU is informed of positive COVID-19 cases, the University uses a [contact tracing protocol](#) to identify and notify people on campus known to have come into close contact with the person infected. SMU faculty and staff that have tested positive for COVID-19 must fill out [the SMU Health Reporting Form](#).

**Will my personal information be kept confidential?**

All other personal data and demographics are confidential. Participant names will not be released with the results of the study.

**How can I find out more about the study?** Please visit <https://utswmed.org/covidwork/> or contact SMUHR@smu.edu.



<https://utswmed.org/covidwork/>