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Hsv igg test

Herpes blood tests are highly accurate. They have a sensitivity level of 96% to 100% in detecting whether you've been infected with the herpes simplex virus (HSV). Herpes blood testing is a two-step process in which an initial positive result is followed by a second confirmatory test. A positive result from both tests can be considered a definitive diagnosis of herpes. Illustration by Paige McLaughlin for Verywell Health While herpes blood tests offer a high level of accuracy, they are not infallible. Moreover, if you have symptoms, they may not be as useful or informative as an HSV viral culture or PCR test (both of which can detect HSV in a swab of fluid from a herpes sore). This article explores the accuracy of herpes blood tests and outlines the current recommendations for herpes testing in the United States. The accuracy of all medical tests, including herpes tests, is measured based on two values: sensitivity and specificity. Sensitivity is how often a test correctly identifies someone with a disease. A test that is 90% sensitive will correctly identify 90 people out of 100 who have the disease. Ten people will have a false-negative result. Specificity, on the other hand, refers to a test's ability to correctly identify someone who doesn't have the disease. If a test is 90% specific, that means that 90 people out of 100 will be correctly diagnosed as not having a disease and that 10 people will have a false-positive result. The higher the sensitivity and specificity, the lower the chances of a false (incorrect) result. Two blood tests are used to screen for herpes: HerpeSelect Elisa KitHerpes Western Blot Assay To ensure that an initial positive result is correct, a second test using a different method of detection is used to confirm the results. What your results mean Normal (negative): There are no HSV antibodies present. Abnormal (positive): HSV antibodies are present. The first test is the enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA). An ELISA looks for immune proteins, called antibodies, that are produced by the immune system in response to the HSV. HSV antibodies are present even when there are no symptoms. If the ELISA result is positive, your healthcare provider may administer a Western blot assay. This second test looks for proteins on the surface of the virus, called antigens, which serve as the viruses' "ID tag." HSV antibodies produced in response to these antigens help the immune system target its attack. According to the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, the accuracy of the two blood tests used to diagnose herpes breaks down as follows: Test Sensitivity Specificity HerpeSelect ELISA Kit 96% to 100% 87% to 100% Herpes Western Blot Assay Over 99% Over 99% The Western blot is considered the most accurate way to test for herpes. With that said, the accuracy of the tests can be affected by the timing of the tests. For an ELISA to return an accurate result, the immune system needs to produce enough antibodies to reach detectable levels. Testing too early during the so-called window period can end up causing a false-negative result (in which the test says you don't have HSV even if you do). The window period for genital herpes can range from three to 12 weeks. While most cases can be detected by week three, some people may take far longer to produce detectable antibodies. When an ELISA is confirmed with a Western blot, it is unlikely for a herpes diagnosis to be wrong. But, other tests may be more useful and/or reliable in certain situations. These tests rely on the direct detection of HSV using fluids obtained from a swab of a herpes sore. A polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test can detect HSV by making copies of the virus' genetic material in a process known as nucleic amplification. Even if there is only a small amount of virus, the genetic material can be amplified enough to return an accurate positive diagnosis. PCR is considered the gold standard of testing in cases where herpes has invaded the brain or spinal cord (typically in people with advanced HIV infection). An HSV viral culture is a process in which the virus is "grown" in the lab using a swab of fluid. Compared to all other methods of HSV detection, viral culture is considered the gold standard of testing. Even so, an HSV viral culture is more time-consuming, taking between three to eight days to return results. Moreover, user error can affect the results. For instance, the test is likely to be less accurate if the healthcare provider swabs the scab rather than the sore itself. Delays in transport or improper refrigeration can also weaken the accuracy of the test. Routine blood tests do not look for herpes. Herpes is also not typically part of a regular screening test that looks for other types of sexually transmitted infections. As accurate as herpes tests are, they are not used for routine screening. This is because, in the absence of symptoms, a positive result doesn't mean you will ever have symptoms or require treatment. On the other hand, knowing your HSV status may reinforce safer sex practices if you are in a relationship. Currently, the U.S. Preventive Service Task Force advises against herpes screening in people without herpes symptoms, including those who are pregnant. This doesn't mean that you shouldn't get tested under certain circumstances. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, HSV testing can be used in asymptomatic (symptom-free) people who: Yes, a herpes test result can be false-positive, especially if you are not showing any symptoms. For this reason and others, the CDC does not recommend routine testing of herpes for people who do not have symptoms. Herpes can be diagnosed with blood tests. This includes the ELISA test that detects herpes antibodies and a Western blot test used to confirm the results. Herpes testing is generally recommended for people with herpes symptoms only. Although the ELISA and Western blot tests are highly accurate when used together, other direct testing methods may be used, particularly if you have symptoms. This includes a PCR test that can detect the genetic material of the virus and a viral culture that can "grow" the virus in the lab. Both rely on a swab of fluid from a herpes sore. Last Updated December 20th, 2021 The herpes simplex virus, termed as HSV causes an infection called herpes. The virus is categorized into two types, the herpes simplex virus type 1 (HSV-1) and herpes simplex virus type 2 (HSV-2). While HSV-1 is caused by physical contact and causes cold sores in the mouth area, the HSV-2 type is transmitted sexually and leads to genital herpes. The virus is highly contagious and causes painful blisters and ulcers at the site of infection. There is no cure for herpes and it can only be controlled by medications and certain home remedies. The HSV IgM test is a blood test that is used to detect the presence of the virus in the system. While the test does not identify the actual virus, it points out certain proteins that are produced by the body in response to the virus. The immunoglobulins play an important role in the body’s immune system and they are generated by the plasma cells in response to external invasion from bacteria, viruses, and other microorganisms. Different types of immunoglobulins are produced by the body to fight different types of infections.In some cases, the system may also produce an excess of such proteins due to certain specific conditions. The test is highly accurate and a positive result makes sure that you have the virus. At the same time, it can give false-negative results in certain conditions like recurrences. The IgM class antibody is produced by the body a few days after an initial HSV infection and can be detected in the blood for several weeks. In the second stage, the body also produces the HSV IgG antibody and in many cases, both the tests are done to get an accurate result. The herpes virus results in recurrences after the first infection. But over time, the remission periods get longer and the occurrences get less severe. The virus is usually present on the skin and can be transmitted through the moist linings of the skin around the mouth, anus, and genitals. However, the infection does not spread by touching an object, washbasin, or a towel that has been touched by an infected person. Sharing a lip balm or kissing can be a cause for the transmission of the virus. A mother with genital herpes can pass it to the child if she has sores during childbirth. The infection can affect anyone irrespective of age or sex and just depends on the level of exposure. Other factors that increase the chances of infection are mentioned below.– Multiple sex partners– Sexual intercourse at a younger age– Presence of other sexually transmitted infections – Having a weak immune system The following conditions are some of the most common reasons for the test.– To figure out the exact reason behind the formation of painful blisters or sores around the lips or in the genital area.– To check if the sexual partner of a person with genital herpes is also infected by the same. – To check for neonatal herpes in new-borns, whose mothers are infected with genital herpes. The doctor will check the physical symptoms of the infection and order for the test. Some of the common symptoms are mentioned below. – The occurrence of blistering sores in the mouth or on the genitals – Any pain during urination. – An itching or burning sensation around the affected area. These symptoms can be accompanied by other general symptoms like fever, swollen lymph nodes, headaches, tiredness and lack of appetite. In some cases, HSV can also affect the eyes and can cause symptoms like eye pain, discharge, and a gritty feeling in the eye. A few people have an increased risk of infection from the virus as mentioned below.– People with recurrent genital sores or atypical symptoms who have negative results on HSV culture. – People who have a sex partner who has been diagnosed with genital herpes. – People who have been tested positive for other sexually transmitted diseases. – Individuals diagnosed with an HIV infection. The HSV1 and HSV2 IgM blood tests within 7-10 days after the initial stage of infection after which the levels decline. The blood test is simple and conducted within a few minutes. In this process, a needle is inserted into a vein to draw the required volume of blood and the process is termed as venipuncture. The process involves the following steps. – An elastic band is tied in the upper arm to make the veins swell with blood, thus making the collection process easier. The collection site is generally around the elbow region and the technician disinfects the area where the needle will be inserted with an antiseptic swab. – A needle is inserted into the vein and 8 to 10 milliliter of blood is drawn through a syringe in an attached tube. The sample is then transferred into a sealed test tube. A slight prick or stinging sensation is felt when the needle is inserted in the vein. – The band is untied and the needle is withdrawn slowly. The site is kept under pressure to prevent any blood loss and in finally bandaged. The blood sample is sent to the laboratory for necessary testing. Since the size of the veins can differ from one person to the other, multiple punctures may be needed for some patients before the right vein is found. – The blood draw may cause soreness, swelling and bruising at the injection site which usually goes away within a few days. In some rare cases, light-headedness, dizziness, and infection in the collection point are also possible. Any infections are to be treated as per the doctor’s advice.The cost of the test ranges between Rs 1200 to Rs 2000 depending on the place and facilities provided in the testing center.The test results are generally delivered within 24 to 72 hours depending on the laboratory.The test does not have a standard range of values. It is marked by a positive or negative result that marks the presence or absence of the virus. In some cases, the result can be equivocal, which means that the test was unable to conclude whether or not there was an IgM antibody present.A negative HSV antibody result means that it is unlikely that the patient has been infected by HSV. In some situations, it can also be due to the fact that the body has not had time to begin producing the HSV related antibodies. The doctor can order a retest depending on the symptoms and patient history. A positive test result indicates an active or recent infection and the doctor will plan treatment for the condition. Further tests can also be ordered for a confirmation of the result. As mentioned earlier, there is no permanent cure for herpes and the outbreak is controlled through medications. The doctor may also advise certain precautions to avoid the spread of the disease.The blood test does not need any food restrictions or any other special preparations. The following points can be noted to understand the finer aspects of the test and the viral infection. – The IgM tests cannot be used to determine how long the infection has been prevalent in the body or how the patient got infected. – The IgM blood test cannot accurately distinguish between HSV-1 and HSV-2 antibodies and in many cases can provide a false-positive result for HSV-2 virus. In addition, the test can also connect with other viruses like the varicella-zoster virus or cytomegalovirus and provide misleading results. – Many patients experience regular herpes outbreaks while in some the virus can remain dormant. It has been noted that the virus can be triggered by certain factors like stress. – Issues related to menstrual periods, fever or infections and excessive sun exposure or sunburn.– The virus generally does not create any additional complications in a healthy person. The infections can get severe in the case of new-borns who are infected during birth and in individuals with weakened immune systems. – It has been noted that herpes can make patients more vulnerable to HIV infections and up to 90% of HIV-infected individuals are found to be co-infected with HSV-2 virus.– This is a very common infection around the world and as per statistics, the infections are most common in Africa and least prevalent in the USA. Pregnant women can undergo the test without any restrictions. The test is possible for new-born babies as advised by the doctor.Want to live a healthy lifestyle?Subscribe to free FactDr newsletters.REVAMP YOUR We hate spam too. We will never share your email address with anyone. If you change your mind later, you can unsubscribe with just one click By clicking Subscribe, I agree to the FactDr Terms & Conditions & Privacy Policy and understand that I may opt out of FactDr subscriptions at any time. Trending Topics Lipid Profile Lipid profile is a blood test that provides complete information on how much cholesterol is… Hysteroscopy Hysteroscopy is a minimally invasive tool to help specialists view the uterus to diagnose and… Phimosis Read to know everything about phimosis, types, symptoms, treatment, risks and prognosis for patients with… Sputum test Sputum test is a commonly used diagnostic tool that is used to examine the presence… Anemia Profile Anemia Profile test (Basic) is a blood screening test that measures the levels of important… Angiography Angiography is a diagnostic tool used to determine the narrowing or blockage in the arteries… Cystoscopy Cystoscopy is intended to look at the abnormalities in the ureters, bladder, and urethra, to… Folate test The Folate test measures and monitors the levels of folic acid in the blood. This… CA19.9 Test CA 19.9 is a cancer antigen that exists on the surface of cancer-causing cells. The… Phenytoin test Phenytoin is a drug that is administered mainly to epilepsy patients. The phenytoin blood test… Ureteroscopy Ureteroscopy is the diagnostic procedure which is used for the detection of the kidney stones… Hymenoplasty Read on to find out all about hymenoplasty, the procedure, post-surgery care, the risks, and… Tonometry Tonometry uses a device called tonometer to measure the pressure inside the eye. This pressure… Thyroid Scan Thyroid scan is a diagnostic procedure that aims to view the thyroid gland and detect… Circumcision Check to know everything about open , laser, stapler circumcision, and about preparation, procedure, risks,… Colposcopy Colposcopy is a simple, quick and non- invasive diagnostic tool to look closely inside the… Vaginoplasty Know more about vaginoplasty, the procedure, post-operative care, best options for treatment, cost, and possible… Lipase Test A lipase test is a blood test performed to quantitatively measure the level of the… Anoscopy Anoscopy is an invasive diagnostic procedure where a small device known as anoscope will be… VDRL Test The VDRL test is a blood test that is used to diagnose sexually transmitted or… Cystoscopy Cystoscopy is a procedure to check the health of the urethra and the bladder. The… Myelography Myelography is an important diagnostic tool that is used to investigate and identify abnormalities in… Endoscopy Endoscopy is a procedure where an illuminated probe with a camera attached to it is… Chest X-Ray A chest x-ray is a diagnostic test that uses x-rays to visualize the structures inside… The herpes simplex virus (HSV) antibodies test is a type of herpes simplex test that determines whether or not you’ve ever been exposed to this virus. Specifically, it’s a blood test that looks for certain antibodies in your body. Antibodies are proteins that are made by your immune system to fight off particular pathogens — usually bacteria and viruses. This test looks to see if you have antibodies against either HSV-1 or HSV-2 — the two kinds of herpes viruses. Your body begins to make two relevant types of HSV-1 antibody or HSV-2 antibody around 18 to 21 days after you’re first infected. These two types of antibodies are called IgG and IgM antibodies. IgG antibodies are the most common kind and IgM antibodies are the first kind that your body makes when you first come into contact with a virus or bacteria. Both can be found in your blood and other bodily fluids. The best versions of this test can tell the difference between previous exposure to either HSV-1 or HSV-2. The herpes simplex virus is a type of virus that causes infections in humans. Approximately 3.7 billion people under the age of fifty — or 67% — have been infected with HSV-1 in their lifetimes. There are about 491 million cases of HSV-2 worldwide — or 13% of the global population between the ages of 15 and 49. HSV is spread through direct contact with the virus. This can happen during sex or while giving birth. The virus leads to an increased risk of infection with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). It can also cause you to develop more severe conditions if you have a compromised immune system. HSV can have particularly problematic results if you’re infected with the virus when you’re born. The chance of passing it on while pregnant is low but — if it happens — it can lead to disabilities and death. There’s also a social stigma associated with this virus that can be damaging to your mental health if you ever become infected. In most cases of infection with the herpes simplex virus, you won’t have any symptoms at all or they’ll be very mild. Typically, your first outbreak is the most severe. Symptoms will periodically come back, but studies show that these bouts are shorter and less symptomatic than the first.Breakouts typically happen in the genital region when you have HSV-2 and near your lips when you have HSV-1. But you can also get HSV-1 infections in your genital region. Symptoms include: Blisters that appear either individually or in clusters; they can be quite painful and may ooze. Soreness, pain, and burning at the infection siteHeadachesFeverBody aches and painsHerpes antibodies tests are not recommended when your doctor wants to diagnose an active infection. The best tests, in this case, are to collect a sample from you and attempt to culture the virus or test for the presence of its genome using a technique called polymerase chain reaction (PCR). Should an active infection be detected with a PCR test, your doctor may prescribe antiviral medications to help prevent outbreaks or shorten their severity. When outbreaks occur when you are on these medications, they’re typically shorter and create fewer lesions than when you aren’t taking them. Common antiviral medications include acyclovir, famciclovir, and valacyclovir. Your doctor may recommend an antibody test in addition to these other tests for an active infection. But it is more likely that they will recommend this test for another reason, including if: You have recurring symptoms but active test results are negative.You believe you were recently exposed but don’t yet have symptoms.You’re pregnant or trying to become pregnant.You have HIV or have a high risk of encountering HIV. A herpes antibodies test works by looking in your blood for HSV-1 antibodies or HSV-2 antibodies — typically the IgG type but sometimes the IgM type. These tests only indicate exposure to either HSV-1 or HSV-2 at some point in your past. This does not necessarily mean that HSV is causing any current symptoms that you may have — since the exposure could have been years ago. If you are worried about a new infection, it might be useful to take the test again around 21 days later to make sure that your body has had enough time to produce the antibodies. The tests can give false-positive results. You may want to repeat the test or try other forms of testing to confirm the results. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Infectious Diseases Society of America, and the American Society for Microbiology all recommend the use of the IgG antibodies test over the IgM HSV test. IgG tests are preferred because: For herpes, IgG and IgM antibodies show up around the same time — normally, IgM antibodies appear first. IgM antibodies may only last a few months and may not be made after the first outbreak — but IgG antibodies last indefinitely and are made during all outbreaks. IgG antibodies can distinguish between HSV-1 and HSV-2 and IgM antibodies can’t. The herpes IgG test is a blood test used to diagnose herpes simplex virus (HSV). This includes HSV-1, the type most commonly linked to cold sores, and HSV-2, the type mainly associated with genital herpes. The test doesn't detect the virus itself but instead detects antibodies—called immunoglobulin G (IgG)—produced by the immune system in response to the virus. A positive test result indicates that you were infected with HSV-1 or HSV-2 sometime in the past. A negative result usually means you are not infected, although premature testing before enough antibodies are produced can lead to a false-negative result. Verywell / Cindy Chung A herpes IgG test is ordered if you are suspected of having genital herpes, an incurable and highly contagious infection mainly caused by HSV-2 but also increasingly caused by HSV-1 when passed through oral sex. The herpes IgG is not used as a general screening test. It is recommended for those who have symptoms of genital herpes to confirm that they have it. This includes symptoms such as: Painful, crusting blisters or sores on the genitals, anus, or buttocks Fever and flu-like symptoms Swollen lymph nodes Pain or tingling in the affected area Testing without symptoms is not recommended because a positive result doesn't mean that you will ever experience symptoms—the vast majority of people do not—or indicates a need for treatment. On the other hand, of the roughly 10% of people who do experience symptoms, the likelihood of recurrence is high. In such cases, antiviral drugs can be prescribed to treat or curb an infection and reduce the risk of transmission to others. Testing may be recommended for the following reasons: You have symptoms of genital herpes.You had sex with someone who you know or suspect had genital herpes. You can also request genital herpes screening when undergoing a comprehensive panel of tests for sexually transmitted infections (STIs). This includes prenatal STI screening when you are pregnant. However, this test is not recommended for general STI testing or as a routine test during pregnancy. Currently, one in six people in the United States between the ages of 14 and 49 have genital herpes caused by HSV-1 or HSV-2. A herpes IgG test may also be able to differentiate between genital herpes caused by HSV-1 and HSV-2. This can have some bearing on treatment as HSV-1 genital herpes tends to cause recurrent outbreaks for a short period while HSV-2 genital herpes can cause outbreaks for a lifetime.Current IgG tests are up to 97% accurate in detecting HSV-1 and 98% accurate in detecting HSV-2. The IgG test is not the only antibody test that can be used to detect genital herpes. There is also a herpes IgM test that detects a shorter-lasting antibody known as immunoglobulin M (IgM). IgM antibodies usually develop to detectable levels within one to two weeks of an HSV infection (well before IgG antibodies). Thereafter, IgM rapidly declines after a few weeks or months to undetectable levels. This differs from IgG antibodies that can be detected for a lifetime. As such, a herpes IgM test can tell you whether you were recently infected with HSV, while a herpes IgG test can tell you if you were infected weeks, months, or years in the past. The herpes IgM test has limitations in that it cannot differentiate between HSV-1 and HSV-2. Moreover, a negative result doesn't mean that you don't have herpes and a positive result doesn't change the treatment recommendations compared to a positive IgG result. Because of these limitations, herpes IgM testing is not recommended by the CDC, and many labs are no longer offering the test. The herpes IgG test detects IgG antibodies in the blood specific to HSV. It does so when the immune system has produced enough IgG antibodies to be detectable by current lab tests. Whenever a person is infected with a virus like HSV, the immune system will target a response specific to that virus. This involves the release of different types of antibodies, some of which coordinate the immediate immune attack, while others remain on watch afterward, ready to relaunch an attack if the virus returns. For HSV, IgG antibodies normally reach detectable levels in the blood within 12 to 16 weeks after infection. Testing earlier than this—during the so-called "window period"—may return a false-negative result simply because there aren't enough antibodies to reach detection. While some newer tests can achieve detection within two to three weeks, healthcare providers may still recommend that you either wait to get tested or get retested at a later date if you believe you were recently exposed. Some people have been known to only test positive for HSV a full six months after infection. On the other hand, if you have clinical signs of herpes and your IgG result is negative, you may be asked to repeat the test in four to six weeks to confirm that the results are correct. The results of your HSV blood test will generally be reported as either: Positive: HSV IgG detectedNegative: HSV IgG not detectedEquivocal: Results unclear A positive herpes IgG result means that you either have or have had an HSV infection at some point in your life. A negative herpes IgG test means that you have never been infected with HSV. If your test is equivocal, your healthcare provider may consider the results of other blood tests included in the investigation, including the herpes IgM test. They might also recommend repeating the IgG test after a few weeks. If used, a herpes IgM test may offer additional insights: If you test positive for IgG and IgM, or just IgM, you likely have a new infection.If you test positive for IgG but not IgM, you likely have an existing infection that has been around for at least two months. As valuable as the herpes IgG test is, it is not infallible. Currently, the false-positive rate for the herpes IgG test is around 13% for HSV-1 and 10% for HSV-2. This means that between one in eight and one in 10 tests will incorrectly diagnose herpes. In such cases, your lab report might indicate antibodies for herpes even if you don't actually have herpes. This is yet another reason why the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) advises against HSV screening in non-symptomatic people due to the potential of a false-positive result. The herpes IgG test requires no preparation or food or drink restrictions. It is typically performed at a lab, a public clinic, or a healthcare provider's office. Depending on where you live and the lab you use, the test can cost between $45 and $120 or more. Public clinics tend to be cheaper. Health insurance may fully or partially cover the cost of testing; check your policy details. You can search for free or low-cost STI clinics in your area by using the GetTested locator offered by the CDC. While many facilities offer drop-in testing, some require an appointment. Upon arrival, you may be given a short pre-test counseling to establish why you feel you need the test and whether you may be at risk of other STIs. Based on your response, the counselor may recommend additional STI screenings. This includes chlamydia and gonorrhea testing for sexually active women under age 25, women ages 25 and older, and men who have sex with men. They may also offer HIV testing, which is recommended once for all people ages 15 to 65. Because genital herpes is not a notifiable disease, like HIV or hepatitis C, your information and results will not be shared with local, municipal, state, or federal health authorities. The test itself involves a simple blood draw, performed as follows: An elastic band called a tourniquet is placed around your upper arm.The injection site is cleaned with an antiseptic swab.A needle is inserted into the selected vein.Between 8 and 10 milliliters (mL) of blood is extracted into a vacuum-sealed test tube.The needle is removed, and your arm is bandaged.The tube is sent to a lab for evaluation. It is not uncommon to experience a little bleeding after a blood draw, which should subside within a couple of minutes. You may also experience soreness, swelling, or bruising at the injection site. Lightheadedness can also occur. Infection is rare. Your test results should be ready within two to five working days. The timing may vary depending on the clinic or lab. Once you are infected with HSV, it stays with you for a lifetime. There is no cure for herpes and the virus cannot be cleared by the immune system. Even so, genital herpes tends to recur less frequently over time, often to the point where outbreaks may altogether cease. A herpes IgG test is a blood test used to diagnose genital herpes. It detects antibodies produced by the immune system in response to the virus. The herpes IgG test can also determine if the infection was caused by HSV-1 (the type associated with cold sores that can be passed through oral sex) or HSV-2 (the main cause of genital herpes). The herpes IgG test is only performed if you have symptoms of genital herpes or had sex with someone you know or suspect has genital herpes. It needs to be performed after the window period to avoid a false-negative result; this can be anywhere from two to three weeks or up to 16 weeks after the suspected exposure.