CDC Mixes Up Coronavirus Test Results

The CDC recently admitted to combining coronavirus test results with coronavirus antibody results, in their tally for COVID-19 testing. A positive coronavirus antibody test means that someone has built up antibodies due to previously coming into contact with the virus. A positive coronavirus test means that someone is currently infected with the virus. The CDC has been combining negative antibody test results with negative viral tests. Doing this can both lower the accurate percentage of currently infected people and overlook the fact that many more people have already had the virus.

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Image: Shutterstock: An epidemiologist runs PCR tests to detect specific genetic regions of SARS-nCoV-2 virus.

> *Even if traces of COVID-19 are found in an antibody test, those results are not logged by states or by the CDC as "positive" results for an acute infection. Grouping the two together could make it seem that a smaller percentage of people who have received tests are positive with COVID-19, since antibody tests do not measure acute infections at all.*
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> *CDC's National Dashboard Includes COVID-19 Data That Expert Says Mixes 'Apples To Oranges'*

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A CDC employee speaking on the condition of anonymity said that [combining test results] "would make it difficult to assess the actual number of infections at a given point in time." Additionally, they pointed out that CDC infection rate website does state that some states may combine testing results. This information, however, is not entirely accurate. As recently as May 18th, the CDC tracker website claimed that the testing data reported was data from viral testing only.

Statistics have come out that show antibody numbers are radically higher than originally thought, meaning many people have already had the virus (with or without symptoms), making the death rate much lower than currently reported.

Sources:

- *'How Could the CDC Make That Mistake?'* -The Atlantic
- *CDC's National Dashboard Includes COVID-19 Data That Expert Says Mixes 'Apples To Oranges'*-WLRN
- *Scientists Warn CDC Testing Data Could Create Misleading Picture Of Pandemic* -NPR
- *CDC acknowledges mixing up coronavirus testing data* -The Hill