



COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO HEALTH AGENCY
PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT
PROVIDER HEALTH ADVISORY

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Reminder for Interpreting Valley Fever Test Results

San Luis Obispo County has the third highest rate of Valley Fever in California. Recent research suggests that rates may continue to rise following periods of drought, particularly in wetter coastal regions. With currently high rates, projected increases, and the importance of timely detection, Public Health offers clarification for interpreting test results:

A negative Complement Fixation Serum (CFS) result does not indicate or confirm the absence of Valley Fever. Not all Valley Fever patients develop a detectable level of IgG antibodies needed for complement fixation. UC Davis estimates that about 15% of patients who have been serologically confirmed for Valley Fever never develop a detectable complement fixation titer.

Valley Fever should not be ruled out if CFS results are negative. **Refer to the serology results for confirmation.**

Below are two examples of laboratory documents belonging to individuals with *confirmed* Valley Fever in which they had positive serology tests but negative CFS results.

In this document, the positive serology result is listed below the CFS result:

Complement Fixation Serum

Complement Fixation Serum	Negative	Ref. Range/Males Negative
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Complement fixation provides a semi-quantitative assessment of coccidioidal IgG antibodies. Negative (<1:2) titers do not rule out active coccidioidomycosis.

Immunodiffusion Serum

Immunodiffusion Serum	A Positive IgG	Ref. Range/Males Negative
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Detection of coccidioidal IgG antibodies by immunodiffusion is a specific indication of active or previously active coccidioidomycosis even in the absence of a detectable titer by complement fixation. The absence of detectable IgM could indicate the infection was not recently acquired.

Interpretation Serum

Interpretation		Ref. Range/Males
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This patient has undergone a coccidioidal infection as yet well-focalized. Absence of precipitin-type (IgM) antibody (we detect only CF (IgG) antibody on immunodiffusion) makes uncertain the recentness of the infection.

Public Health Department

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In this document, the positive serology result is alluded to in the interpretation section:

Complement Fixation Serum		Ref. Range/Females
Complement Fixation Serum	Negative	Negative
Complement fixation provides a semi-quantitative assessment of coccidioidal IgG antibodies. Negative (<1:2) titers do not rule out active coccidioidomycosis.		
Interpretation Serum		Ref. Range/Females
Interpretation	This specimen is negative for coccidioidal antibody by complement fixation. Thus the coccidioidal infection (indicated by our positive immunodiffusion) serologically as yet appears well focalized.	

Please interpret CFS results with caution and always refer to the serology results for confirmation of Valley Fever.

For more information on Valley Fever in SLO County, visit www.slocounty.ca.gov/valleyfever.