Canadian COVID-19 Cohort Study (CCS):
Study of the epidemiology of COVID-19 in Canadian healthcare workers

Information Sheet and Consent Form

Study information

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Funder: COVID-19 Immunity Task Force

You are being asked to take part in a research study. Please read the following explanation of what is being asked of you and about the study's risks and benefits before you decide if you would like to take part. Participation is voluntary.

What is the purpose of the study?

To determine how many people develop COVID-19 infection and the risk factors for infection, to describe the changes in the carriage of antibodies against SARS-CoV-2 over time, the incidence of re-infection, and the psychological impact of working during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Who is being asked to participate?

People working in an acute care, rehabilitation, or complex care hospital in the Calgary Health Zone who:

- are 18 to 75 years old
- work anywhere in the institution for at least 20 hours per week
    - OR is a physician, nurse practitioner, or midwife with an independent practice who cares for patients 8 hours or more per week in the institution
- available for at least the next 3 months (not retiring or going on leave), and
- have convenient access to a computer or a cell phone with internet access (to complete surveys and receive information about the study)

What do I need to do if I decide to participate?

1) Baseline survey: online survey at enrolment to assess your current risk factors (about 15 minutes)
2) Kessler Psychological Distress survey: online survey at enrolment and at the end of the study (about 2 minutes each)
3) Weekly reports (in 5 week periods):
    - Short online surveys every week (4/5 weeks) about whether you have had any symptoms (about 2 minutes)
    - One extended survey (1/5 weeks) to ask about possible exposures (about 5 minutes)
4) Illness reports: online reports every time you are tested for COVID-19: to inform the study of your test results, symptoms, and possible exposures about 5 minutes for the first and 2 minutes for each day you continue to have symptoms
5) Impact of Event Scale: online survey at the end of the study to assess distress (about 2 minutes)
6) Self collect blood samples:
    i. when you join, in 6 months, and at the end of the study;
    ii. if you test positive for COVID-19, 30 days after your test; and
    iii. before receiving each dose of COVID-19 vaccine and again 30 days after your final dose.
    - Blood collection kits will be mailed to you after the baseline questionnaire and again just before you need to collect future samples
    - Self- collection is similar to how people with diabetes check their blood sugar: a finger prick and a collection card on which you place 5 blood drops
    - The results of the antibody tests will be shared with you within a few months of the collection

How long will the study last?

The study will last until the end of the COVID-19 pandemic or 12 months, whichever is shorter

Are there any benefits or risks to participating in the study?

- You may have some mild discomfort and minor bruising at the site of blood collection; it is occasionally necessary to prick a second finger
- There is no cost to taking part in the study. All supplies are provided by the study. The study pays to have supplies shipped to your home and returned to the lab
- There is no direct benefit to being in the study beyond having access to test results. However, information learned from this study may help us reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19

Expenses associated with participating in the study

- When you complete your baseline questionnaire and the first five weekly reports, you will receive an email asking you to choose the retailer for a $20 electronic gift card
- A draw will be made every 5 weeks throughout the study for a $10 electronic gift card. All weekly reports completed within the previous 5 week period will be eligible for each draw

Voluntary participation

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may decide not to be in this study, or to be in the study now and then change your mind later. You may leave the study at any time without affecting your employment status. You may refuse to answer any question you do not want to answer. We will give you new information that is learned during the study that might affect your decision to stay in the study.

By signing this form you do not give up any of your legal rights against the investigators, COVID-19 Immunity Task Force, or involved institutions.

Data Withdrawal

Data collected will be kept for 10 years on the Mount Sinai Hospital secure server. If you express the desire to have your data removed from the study completely, we will do so.

Confidentiality

Your data will be kept confidential. You will not be named in any reports. Your name, address, and phone number can only be accessed by the study staff and are needed to ship supplies to you. The following people may look at your personal health information to check that the information collected is correct: Representatives of the Sinai Health System and the University of Calgary Conjoint Health Research Ethics Board or Health Canada.

No personal information will be shared outside the study except as required by law.

The COVID-19 Immunity Task Force (sponsor of the study) is funded by the Government of Canada to research COVID-19. Some of the data collected (COVID-19 infection status, underlying health conditions, social distancing practices, age, sex, ethnicity, education, living conditions, and travel experiences will be shared with researchers in Canada and internationally to better understand immunity, infection rates, and health outcomes relating to COVID-19. These data will be stored in a database at McGill University indefinitely. All identifying will be stripped from the data and replaced with a study code prior to sharing your data with them. General information about the research performed with these data will be available on the COVID-19 Immunity Task Force website, see https://www.covid19immunitytaskforce.ca

Who can I talk to if I have questions?

If you have any questions or concerns, or would like to speak to the study team for any reason, please call 403-955-7813 or email ovanderk@ucalgary.ca.

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant or have concerns about this study, call the Chair of the University of Calgary Conjoint Health Research Ethics Board at 403-220-7990. The REB is a group of people who oversee the ethical conduct of research studies. These people are not part of the study team. Everything that you discuss will be kept confidential.

ELIGIBILITY

Before you consent, it is important that we make sure that you are eligible to participate. Please check the items that apply to you:

☐ I am 18-75 years old

☐ I work at an acute care, rehabilitation, or complex care hospital in the Calgary Health Zone

☐ I work, on average, 20 hours per week for the hospital – OR – I am a physician, nurse practitioner, or midwife with an independent practice who works, on average, 8 hours per week caring for hospitalized patients

☐ I plan to be working for at least the next 3 months

CONSENT

☐ I have read this information sheet and I understand the study procedures

☐ I agree to be a part of the study

☐ I understand that in no way does this waive my legal rights nor release the investigators or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities.