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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Funders: COVID-19 Immunity Task Force & Canadian Institutes of Health Information

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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, the uptake and impact of COVID-19 vaccines, 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 associated with IWK Health or Nova Scotia Health who:

- are 18 to 75 years old;
- work anywhere in the institution(s) for at least 20 hours per week;
    - OR is a physician, nurse practitioner, or midwife with privileges who works, on average, 8 hours or more per week caring for patients;
- 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) An online survey at enrolment and every 12 months to assess possible sources of exposure (~15 minutes)
2) Short online surveys
    i. every second week about whether you have had any symptoms (~2 minutes) One week in ten, the survey will be a bit longer and ask about your exposure to other ill people (~5-7 minutes)
    ii. once about whether you intend to be vaccinated against COVID-19 (~3 minutes)
    iii. once about reasons to/not to be re-vaccinated against COVID-19 (~3 minutes)
    iv. after each COVID-19 vaccination (~1 minute each dose)
    v. every 6 months to assess your level of stress (~2 minutes)
    vi. once at the end of the study to assess the psychological impact of working during the pandemic (~4 minutes)
3) Online illness/test questionnaires
    i. When you are tested for COVID-19, even if you have no symptoms (~5 minutes)
    ii. When you have symptoms that might be COVID, even if you are not tested (~ 5 minutes)
4) Self-collect blood samples
    i. when you join,
    ii. 30 days after each positive test result for COVID-19,
    iii. 30 and 180 days after each dose of COVID-19 vaccine,
    iv. If you are not vaccinated: every 6 months after joining
    v. If you are not re-vaccinated: every 6 months after your last dose of vaccine.

    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 6 months of the collection. If you have 2 samples due within a few weeks of one another (e.g., when you join and after a dose of vaccine) we will ask for only one.

How long will the study last?

The study will last until the end of the COVID-19 pandemic or December 1st 2023, whichever is shorter

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

- You may have some acute pain and minor bruising at the site of blood collection; it is occasionally necessary to prick a second finger
- 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

- 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
- When you complete your baseline and K-0 questionnaires, and the first five bi-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 10 weeks throughout the study for a $10 electronic gift card. All adult bi-weekly reports completed for that 10-week period will be eligible for the draws (1 certificate is drawn for every 500 biweekly reports in each period).

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.

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 information collected for the study will be kept on secure servers using encryption software for up to 120 days after the end of the study. It will then be transferred to the Sinai Health System server and kept there for 10 years before being destroyed. The following people may look at your personal health information to check that the information collected is correct: Representatives of the Sinai Health System, Nova Scotia Health, IWK Health Research Ethics Boards 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 information 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, concerns, or would like to speak to the study team for any reason, please call Dr. Brenda Coleman, PhD, at covid.study@sinaihealth.ca or call (416) 294-6383 or, if long distance charges apply, 1-888-307-3357 (weekdays between 9AM and 7PM Atlantic time).

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant or have concerns about this study, call the Nova Scotia Health Patient Relations at (902) 473-2133 or healthcareexperience@nshealth.ca, or IWK Health Research Ethics Board 902-470-7479. 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.

☐ I am 18-75 years old

☐ I work at IWK Health or Nova Scotia Health

☐ I work, on average, 20 hours per week for the hospital(s) – OR – I am a physician, nurse practitioner, or midwife with admitting privileges or private 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 (I am not planning to retire or go on leave)

CONSENT

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

☐ I agree to be a part of the study