

2021 VEC NEWSLETTER

We hope you enjoy reading this newsletter of the Vaccine Evaluation Center's COVID-19 research that has gained our focus through the past year.

The PREVENT-COVID Study: PRospEctiVe EvaluatioN of immuniTy after COVID-19 vaccines

In collaboration with the BC Centre for Disease Control, VEC researchers are looking to gain better understanding of the immune responses to the approved COVID-19 vaccines in Canada. Multiple COVID-19 vaccines will be used in Canada and best use of these vaccines will help us control the pandemic as quickly as possible. Most vaccine companies have used their own tests to measure immune responses to their vaccines. Each vaccine company uses a different test and it is not possible to compare these results directly between different vaccine trials. Therefore, we do not know how the vaccines compare against each other – or how long immunity lasts after vaccination. The purpose of this study is to measure the short- and long-term immune responses generated by different COVID-19 vaccines in adults. We are accomplishing this by collecting finger prick samples of blood before each vaccine dose and at 6 timepoints up to 19 months after dose 2 of the vaccine is administered. The goals of the study are to help researchers understand immunity to COVID-19 after vaccination and to help guide policies and recommendations for how these vaccines are used.



Dr. Julie Bettinger

**"COVID-19
VACCINATION
SAVES LIVES
AND WILL
END THE
PANDEMIC."**



In this issue, we share with you our COVID-19 research:

PREVENT-COVID

SHARE

**SPECIAL IMMUNIZATION
CLINIC: SIC-COVID**

THE SPRING STUDY

COVID-19 POLICY STUDY

CANVAS-COVID STUDY

CONNECT WITH US:

For more information on the publications outlined in this newsletter and to stay up to date on the studies the VEC are currently working on, please visit our NEW website: <https://bcchr.ca/vec>



Vaccine Evaluation Center
950 West 28th Ave
Vancouver, BC. V5Z 4H4
vecstudies@bcchr.ubc.ca

Secondary Household Attack Rate Evaluation of COVID-19

SHARE-COVID is a household transmission study that aims to develop a better understanding of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. This study is looking at an initial “index case” and the rate at which COVID-19 spreads (or does not spread) to the other members of the same household. At the same time, researchers will also be evaluating the number of infected household members who become symptomatic (vs. asymptomatic) and the differences between adults and children. This study involves recruiting households from the Greater Vancouver area, in BC, as well as Montreal, QC; where at least one member of the household has been infected with COVID-19. Study visits take place in the participant’s home, within at least 14 days after the onset of the index case’s symptom; where samples will be collected from all household members over the course of 1 month. These include blood, nasal and saliva samples.



Dr. Hana Mitchell

“COVID INFECTION CAN BE MORE SEVERE IN PEOPLE WHO ARE IMMUNE COMPROMISED AND VACCINES MAY BE LESS EFFECTIVE. I AM A SITE INVESTIGATOR FOR THE NATIONAL REGISTRY OF COVID-19 INFECTIONS IN SOLID ORGAN TRANSPLANT RECIPIENTS - FORTUNATELY WE HAVE HAD NO CASES TO REPORT THUS FAR. WE ARE CURRENTLY PREPARING FOR A NATIONAL STUDY THAT WILL LOOK AT SAFETY AND IMMUNOGENICITY OF COVID-19 VACCINES IN THE SAME POPULATION, PENDING CONFIRMATION OF FUNDING.”

Optimizing the clinical management of patients with adverse events following COVID-19 vaccination and potential contraindications to vaccination in the Special Immunization Clinic Network

SIC-COVID is a Canada-wide, observational study looking at adverse events following immunization (AEFI) that take place following the COVID-19 vaccine, as well as patients who may have existing contraindications (CI) to receiving the vaccine in the first place. The goal of this study is to develop standardized, Canada-wide, protocols for assessing and managing patients who fall into these categories. This includes how doctors will assess the causality of the AEFI, as well as how they will determine whether or not a patient should be revaccinated post-AEFI, or if a patient with CI should be given the vaccine in the first place. Secondly, in the case of a potential new AEFI of concern that may emerge down the road, the study will be able to help inform the public health response.



The SPRING Study: Severe acute resPiratory syndrome–Related coronavirus 2 prevalence In children and youNG adults in British Columbia: an observational study

Researchers at the Vaccine Evaluation Center are investigating to find out how many children and young adults in BC may have been infected with SARS-CoV-2. Many COVID-19 cases in children, as well as in adults, have been mildly symptomatic or asymptomatic. This study will help researchers better understand the true rates of COVID-19 infection among children and youth in BC by including information about asymptomatic infection.

Children — with their parents' consent — and young adults under the age of 25 can participate in this study. It involves answering a questionnaire and receiving a self-collection kit to do a heel or finger prick blood sample at home that will be used to detect antibodies to the COVID-19 virus. Participants will be notified of their test results.

The data from this study will give researchers a better handle on the trajectory of the pandemic among youths and help policymakers in government, school districts and universities make informed decisions. Over 2,500 individuals are participating in this study, and we are actively looking for more participants, visit our website for more details.

COVID-19 Policy Study: Understanding the Effects of Public Health Outbreak Control Policies and Implementation on Individuals and Communities: A path to improving COVID-19 Policy Effectiveness



Various public health measures and policies have been implemented since January 2020 to control the spread of COVID-19 and prevent further global impact of the pandemic. This study is a collaboration between researchers at the VEC and researchers and health care providers across Canada, China and Bangladesh to understand the impact of these policies on individuals and communities. We are seeking the experiences, perspectives and views of a range of people affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and related public health measures. The study will involve interviews with policy makers, health care providers, people experiencing marginalizing conditions such as homelessness and food insecurity, social service providers and members of the media.

CANVAS-COVID Study

The Canadian National Vaccine Safety (CANVAS) Network is a national research platform that monitors vaccine safety after vaccines are approved for use. We are using this platform to monitor the safety of the COVID-19 vaccines in Canada. Using short online surveys, we collect information about whether or not health events occur after receiving COVID-19 vaccines. We also collect health events from people who have not received a COVID-19 vaccine. Those who are interested can self-register at www.canvas-covid.ca (vaccinated participants must register within 1 week of their first dose in order to receive the surveys). This study will collect safety data from 50,000 participants for each type of COVID-19 vaccine from each participating site across Canada, in addition to 50,000 unvaccinated participants. Unvaccinated participants may join the vaccinated group if they choose to receive the vaccine. You can participate here: <https://canvas-covid.ca/>



Dr. Manish Sadarangani

"THIS YEAR HAS BEEN CONSUMED BY WORK RELATED TO COVID-19, WHERE WE HAVE BEEN WORKING CLOSELY WITH LOCAL AND NATIONAL PARTNERS, INCLUDING THE BC CENTER FOR DISEASE CONTROL, REGIONAL HEALTH AUTHORITIES, THE PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY OF CANADA AND THE CANADIAN IMMUNIZATION RESEARCH NETWORK. OUR RESEARCH HAS HELPED TO UNDERSTAND HOW COVID-19 IS TRANSMITTED, THE ROLE OF CHILDREN IN THE PANDEMIC, THE MOST EFFECTIVE TREATMENTS FOR COVID-19, INCREASED KNOWLEDGE OF THE IMMUNE RESPONSE AFTER COVID-19 INFECTION, AND WE HAVE NOW STARTED STUDIES TO EVALUATE THE COVID-19 IMMUNIZATION PROGRAM."