



**COVID-19 IMMUNITY  
TASK FORCE**

# Spotlight on **CITF-FUNDED RESEARCH**



## **CITF Announcements**

### **Infection-acquired seroprevalence in Canada increases slightly in April**

Our Seroprevalence in Canada page has just been updated with data to April 30, 2023. The latest results from more than 20 studies show that infection-acquired seroprevalence among Canadians of all age groups increased to 78.5% (95% CrI: 75.4 to 81.1), with adults 60+ having the largest percentage increase in seroprevalence of all age groups.

[Read more](#)

### **PHAC and CITF support Canadian Blood Services with \$6 million for extended COVID-19 antibody research**

The Public Health Agency of Canada, through the CITF, has extended funding to Canadian Blood Services (CBS) to continue its research on the prevalence of antibodies to SARS-CoV-2 in blood donors. The \$6 million funding will allow CBS to continue its research through 2023-2024, leading to a greater understanding of how the virus continues to circulate in Canada and the levels of vaccine-induced antibodies among Canadians.

[Read more](#)



## CITF-Funded Research Results

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### **Almost 80% of Canadian blood donors have infection-acquired antibodies against SARS-CoV-2**

The latest CITF-funded seroprevalence report from Canadian Blood Services showed that approximately 80% of adult blood donors had infection-acquired seroprevalence in April, which is slightly higher than in March (78.8%). Younger donors (ages 17-24) continued to have the highest seroprevalence compared to other age groups.

[Read more](#)

### **People vaccinated against COVID-19 are more likely to neutralize Omicron than unvaccinated individuals**

A CITF-funded study, published in *Microbiology Spectrum*, found that vaccinated donors, regardless of infection status, were more likely than unvaccinated donors to neutralize Omicron when assessed by a plaque reduction neutralization (PRNT<sub>50</sub>) assay.

[Read more](#)

### **Third and fourth vaccine doses improve immunity to SARS-CoV-2 in adults with immune-mediated inflammatory diseases**

A CITF-funded study, published in *The Journal of Immunology*, demonstrated that third and fourth doses of vaccine sustain and broaden immune responses to SARS-CoV-2 in adults with immune-mediated inflammatory diseases (IMIDs). The authors conclude that these findings support the recommendation for three- and four-dose primary series vaccine regimens in people with IMIDs.

[Read more](#)

## **The risk of SARS-CoV-2 infection among school staff was no greater than community infection risk after the first wave of Omicron infections in BC**

A CITF-funded study, now published in *BMJ Open*, found that despite frequent COVID-19 exposures, SARS-CoV-2 seroprevalence among school staff in the Vancouver area remained no greater than in the community reference group. Results are consistent with the premise that many infections among school-based employees were acquired outside the school setting, even during Omicron.

[Read more](#)

## **Canadian dentists reported low rates of psychological distress early in the COVID-19 pandemic**

A CITF-funded study, published in *Journal of Dental Research*, reported low rates of psychological distress symptoms among Canadian dentists early in the COVID-19 pandemic. Researchers did find that there was a moderate association between dentists' stress levels, as measured through saliva hormone cortisol testing, and the number of COVID-19 cases in Canada.

[Read more](#)

## **Self-reported COVID-19 vaccination status highly accurate among Québec residents**

A CITF-funded study, published in *JMIR Public Health Surveillance*, found that self-reported COVID-19 vaccination status, when compared with the Québec Vaccination Registry as a reference standard, was accurate in 96% of cases. This means most patients were able to correctly report whether they had been vaccinated or not.

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