



**COVID-19 IMMUNITY
TASK FORCE**

Research Roundup

Your weekly review on COVID-related research



Spotlight on CITF-funded Research

Recovered COVID-19 individuals can have SARS-CoV-2 antibodies for at least 6 months

In a recent publication in *Viruses*, Dr. Ishac Nazy from McMaster University finds that SARS-CoV-2 antibodies against the spike and receptor binding domain are present for at least six months, confirming similar research by other CITF-funded researchers. In this publication, Dr. Nazy characterizes SARS-CoV-2 antibodies in recovered COVID-19 patients.

[Read Summary](#)



Publications from our Experts

Review on transmission characteristics of SARS-CoV-2 VOCs

A rapid scoping review highlighting the transmission characteristics of SARS-CoV-2 variants of concern (VOCs) was prepared by the Nova Scotia COVID-END Evidence Synthesis Group on behalf of the SPOR Evidence Alliance, which included CITF-funded investigator Dr. Lisa Barrett. The authors explore relevant questions, such as what criteria are used to define a new VOC, how much more transmissible are these VOCs, and why?

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Players from the first line of defence against SARS-CoV-2 may dictate disease severity

CITF Leadership Group member Dr. Allison McGeer and CITF-funded researcher Dr. Mario Ostrowski collaborated on a recent publication in *iScience* where they examined the early immune responses to SARS-CoV-2 infection. In an *in vitro* model, they found that infected cells secreted particular inflammatory proteins, and this was consistent with observations in patients suffering from COVID-19. They inferred that these proteins contribute to disease severity.

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International Research Review

Promising news for pregnant women: take one shot and help two!

Findings in recent issues of *JAMA Pediatrics* and *The New England Journal of Medicine* suggest pregnant women are more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19 than women who are not pregnant. In addition, pregnant women

with COVID-19 are more likely to have premature deliveries and other complications. Preliminary findings also show the side effects of COVID vaccination in pregnancy are no different than in similarly aged non-pregnant females.

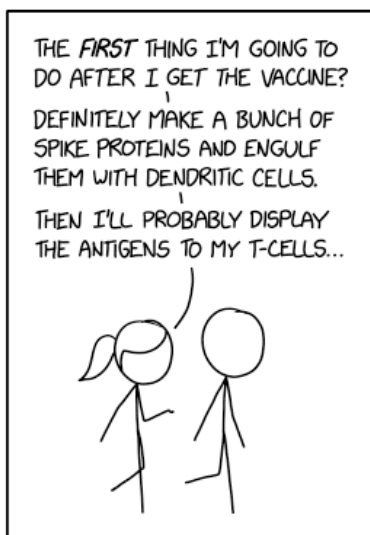
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Anti-vaccine misinformation poses a worldwide threat and international policymakers must take action: opinion

Despite the tremendous gains that the scientific community has made during this pandemic, there is still a major battle to fight: the battle against disinformation. In a recent opinion piece in *Nature*, Dr. Peter Hotez highlights the threat that anti-vaccine misinformation poses while also urging policymakers to take action.

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Smiling while wearing a mask and how to beat the pandemic blues



The COVID-19 pandemic is no joke. But in highly stressful times, kindness, humour and courtesy can help us pull through. Brian Callender and his colleagues explored what they defined as the visual content contagion in times of COVID-19 in an article published in *The Lancet*. They suggest that comics provide valuable contributions to the outbreak narrative and to the evolving visual culture of this contagion. Look for some comics in upcoming issues!

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