

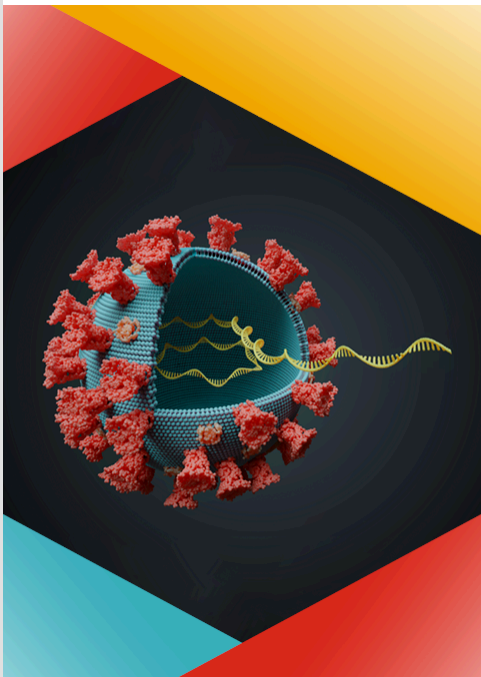


COVID-19 IMMUNITY
TASK FORCE

Spotlight on CITF-FUNDED RESEARCH



CITF Events



Seminar Series | Panel Discussion

Omicron and other variants of concern: finding our way forward



COVID-19
IMMUNITY
TASK FORCE

GROUPE DE TRAVAIL
SUR L'IMMUNITÉ
FACE À LA COVID-19



CanCOVID

in partnership with



CoVaRR+Net

Thank you for making our fifth seminar with CanCOVID, in partnership with CoVaRR-Net, such a success!

Last week, some 400 people attended our panel discussion, *Omicron and other variants of concern: Finding our way forward*.

Thanks to all who participated and a big **thank you** to our panelists: **Dr. Anne-Claude Gingras**, Lunenfeld-Tanenbaum Research Institute, University

of Toronto; Functional Genomics & Structure-Function of Variants of Concern Pillar Lead, CoVaRR-Net; **Dr. Jeff Wrana**, Lunenfeld-Tanenbaum Research Institute, University of Toronto; Viral Genomics & Sequencing Pillar, CoVaRR-Net; **Dr. Mark Brockman**, Simon Fraser University; Immunology & Vaccine Protection Pillar, CoVaRR-Net; **Dr. Ciriaco Piccirillo**, Research Institute of the McGill University Health Centre; Immunology & Vaccine Protection Pillar Co-Lead, CoVaRR-Net; **Dr. Jun Liu**, University of Toronto; and **Dr. Marc-André Langlois**, University of Ottawa, Executive Director, CoVaRR-Net; and our moderator, **Dr. Catherine Hankins** of McGill University, Co-Chair of the COVID-19 Immunity Task Force.

COMING SOON | 6th CITF/CanCOVID Seminar Series: Research Results & Implications - Pediatric vaccination

The Public Health Agency of Canada estimates that immunization has probably saved more lives in Canada in the last 50 years than any other health intervention. Understandably, parents have concerns when new pediatric vaccines are introduced. Therefore, along with our partners at CanCOVID, the CITF is assembling its experts to address what we know about pediatric vaccination against COVID-19 for the sixth in our monthly *Research Results and Implications* seminar series.

Please join us as we discuss:

- Research on how vaccines work for a child's immune system, which is different from that of an adult.
- Current seroprevalence among children.
- Why COVID-19 can be serious for children, especially the Omicron variant.
- Vaccine safety among children.

Consult our [website](#) for further details and the date, which we will announce soon.



CITF-Funded Research Results

COVID-19 among Ontario elementary and secondary school education workers

In this CITF-funded study, Drs. Brenda Coleman, Sharon Straus and Allison McGeer, from the University of Toronto, studied the risk of SARS-CoV-2 infection among elementary and high school education workers in Ontario. Their results, published in the *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, found that a significantly higher proportion of education workers got SARS-CoV-2 from their households than from work or social situations. The researchers emphasize that using protective measures at home when a family member has been exposed to SARS-CoV-2 would help reduce the risk of infection.

[Read More](#)

Neutralization capacity against SARS-COV-2 in blood donors

This study, published in *Microbiology Spectrum* and carried out by CITF-funded researchers Drs. Steven Drews and Sheila O'Brien of Canadian Blood Services, characterized the neutralization capacity and the breadth of protection against SARS-CoV-2 and its variants of concern (Alpha, Beta, Gamma, and Delta). The authors gathered data based on the serological profile of Canadian blood donors. They found that those who were neither vaccinated nor previously infected had no pre-existing neutralizing antibodies. The highest absolute levels of neutralizing capacity were in vaccinated blood donors, further reinforcing the requirement for vaccination even in people who have been previously infected.

[Read More](#)

A systematic review and meta-analysis of seroprevalence of SARS-CoV-2 in Africa

This systemic review, released in a preprint that has not yet been peer reviewed, estimated that seroprevalence in Africa (due to infection or vaccination) rose from 3% in Q2 2020 to 65.1% in Q3 2021. The review was conducted in partnership between SeroTracker (a CITF-funded initiative) and the World Health Organization UNITY initiative. When looking at the ratio of

seroprevalence from infection to confirmed cases, there was a very wide spread across countries ranging from 10:1 to 958:1, meaning that many infections may go by undetected.

[Read More](#)



Global seroprevalence of SARS-CoV-2: Updated data from SeroTracker

A study carried out by SeroTracker (a CITF-funded project), in partnership with the World Health Organization, found global SARS-CoV-2 seroprevalence (due to infection or vaccination or both) was 45.2% by end of June 2021. Depending on the region, seroprevalence varied from as low as 2.5% to as high as 94.9%. In the second quarter of 2021, the ratio of seropositive blood samples to identified cases in low and middle-income countries was approximately 45.3:1, suggesting that many infections were still going undetected in a period where vaccines were not yet widely available. The study is a preprint, which has been updated, and not yet been peer reviewed.

[Read More](#)



From Preprint to Publication

mRNA vaccines administered with a 16-week interval between doses elicit strong antibody responses

Findings from a real-world vaccination study of seniors residing in long-term care facilities were recently published in the *Lancet Healthy Longevity*. It was conducted by investigators from the CITF-funded UNCOVER study, including Dr. Donald Vinh of the Research Institute of the McGill University Health Centre (RI-MUHC) and Dr. Marc-André Langlois of the University of Ottawa, and the CITF Secretariat (Dr. Bruce Mazer, Associate Director, Strategy, affiliated with the RI-MUHC). The study found that dual Pfizer and Moderna vaccines and a mix-and-match series elicited similar antibody responses four weeks after the second dose.

[Read More](#)

Antibody responses to two-dose COVID-19 vaccination in people living with HIV

In a research study originally released as a preprint, and now published in *npj vaccines*, Drs. Zabrina Brumme and Mark Brockman, from the BC Centre for Excellence in HIV/AIDS and Simon Fraser University, evaluated antibody responses to COVID-19 vaccines in people living with HIV who were receiving suppressive antiretroviral therapy. While the group found that antibody responses following one COVID-19 vaccine dose were modestly lower in people living with HIV compared to those without HIV, this discrepancy disappeared one month after the second vaccine dose. Similarly, three months after the second vaccine dose, there continued to be no effect of HIV infection on COVID-19 vaccine responses after adjusting for

sociodemographic, age, and vaccine-related factors. These findings emerge from a CITF-funded pan-Canadian study headed by Dr. Aslam Anis of the Canadian HIV Trials Network.

[Read More](#)



Recruiting for CITF-Funded Studies

The **EnCORE study** is part of a pan-Canadian research project examining the immune response to the COVID-19 vaccine over time in children, conducted in partnership with the **Spring study**, **CHILD study**, and **TARGetKids**. The EnCORE study, led by Dr. Kate Zinszer at the Université de Montréal, is currently recruiting children in the Montreal area, who are between 4 and 11 years old and who have not yet received both doses of the COVID-19 vaccine. Home visits can be arranged for blood and saliva collection, and a compensation to study participants is given. If you are interested in participating, or know someone who could be, please contact us at info@etudencore.ca or 1-866-362-6730 for further information.

MOSAIC is a pan-Canadian study examining the immune response to a third (booster) dose of mRNA COVID-19 vaccines in adults, conducted in partnership with **CIRN**. The study, led by Dr. Joanne Langley at Dalhousie University and Dr. Manish Sadarangani at University of British Columbia, is currently recruiting individuals over 30 who have not yet received a booster dose of an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine. MOSAIC is taking place in several cities across Canada (Halifax, Quebec City, Winnipeg, Penticton, Kamloops and Vancouver). Visit <https://cirnetwork.ca/mosaic/study-sites/> to contact the study site nearest you.



Share!

Know policymakers or researchers who may be interested in our latest research results? Please share this email and encourage them to subscribe!

[Sign Up](#)

Have a publication we should review or know about? Please share with us at research@covid19immunitytaskforce.ca

Missed an issue of Research Roundup? [View back issues.](#)

The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the views of the Public Health Agency of Canada.