



COVID-19 IMMUNITY  
TASK FORCE

# Spotlight on CITF-FUNDED RESEARCH



## CITF Events



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

Seminar Series | Research Results & Implications

## People at higher risk due to other health conditions & COVID-19



November 24, 2022 | 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. EDT

### Join us for the 11th seminar in our *Research Results and Implications* series

People who suffer from health conditions and/or take medications that leave their immune systems compromised are at greater risk of more severe COVID-19.

Our 11th *Research Results and Implications Seminar* brings together CITF-funded researchers studying people with **HIV, immune-mediated**

**inflammatory diseases (IMID), inflammatory bowel disease (IBD), chronic kidney disease (CKD), and solid organ transplant recipients (SOTR).** They will discuss their findings and address questions of concern including:

- What are the risks that individuals with immune problems face from SARS-CoV-2 infection?
- Are vaccines safe and effective for these individuals?
- How do medications that impair the immune system affect COVID-19 and vaccine effectiveness? Are all medications alike?
- What added precautions should people with these health conditions take to prevent themselves from being infected with SARS-CoV-2?

**Preliminary list of presenters (more to come):**

- (IMID) **Sasha Bernatsky, MD, PhD**, Professor of Medicine, McGill University; Senior Clinical Investigator, Research Institute of the McGill University Health Centre
- (HIV) **Ann N. Burchell, PhD**, Scientist, MAP Centre for Urban Health Solutions, Li Ka Shing Knowledge Institute, St. Michael's Hospital, Unity Health Toronto; Associate Professor, Department of Family and Community Medicine, University of Toronto; Adjunct Scientist, ICES
- (IMID) **Vinod Chandran, MBBS, MD, DM, PhD, FRCPC**, Associate Professor, University of Toronto; Staff Rheumatologist, University Health Network and Sinai Health
- (SOTR) **Deepali Kumar MD, MSc, FRCPC, FAST**, Professor of Medicine, University of Toronto; Transplant Infectious Diseases Consultant, University Health Network; Director of Transplant Infectious Diseases, University Health Network
- (CKD) **Matthew Oliver, MD, MHS, FRCPC**, Associate Professor, University of Toronto; Staff Nephrologist & Division Head of Nephrology, Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre; Regional Medical Lead – Toronto Central – Ontario Renal Network, Ontario Health
- (CKD) **Sara Wing, MDCM, FRCPC**, Clinical Associate, Division of Nephrology, St Michael's Hospital, Toronto

**Moderator:**

**Catherine Hankins, MD, PhD**, Co-Chair, COVID-19 Immunity Task Force; Professor of Public and Population Health, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, McGill University

[Register Now](#)



## Seminar Series Research Results & Implications

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### Thank you for making our tenth *Research Results & Implications* seminar such a success

More than 230 people attended our seminar, *COVID-19 and older Canadians: Where are we now?*, on October 18.

Thanks to all who participated and a big **thank you** to our presenters: **Dr. Zabrina Brumme** of Simon Fraser University; **Dr. Andrew Costa** of McMaster University; **Dr. Tim Evans**, Executive Director of the COVID-19 Immunity Task Force; **Dr. Allison McGeer** of the University of Toronto; **Dr. Manish Sadarangani** of the University of British Columbia; **Dr. Sharon Walmsley** of the University of Toronto; and our moderator, **Dr. Samir Sinha** of the University of Toronto.

Now available, the slides presented by our panelists and the video of the seminar.

[See the presentation](#)

[Watch the video](#)



## CITF-Funded Research Results

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### Effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccines in people living

## with HIV

A CITF-funded study published in *AIDS* highlights that – prior to Omicron – two doses of COVID-19 vaccines offered substantial protection against symptomatic illness, as well as hospitalization and death in people living with HIV (PLWH).

[Read more](#)

## A third dose of COVID-19 vaccine yields greater protection in allogeneic stem cell transplant recipients

A CITF-funded study published in *Transplant Cell Therapy* shows that a third dose of COVID-19 vaccine resulted in stronger humoral and cell-mediated immunity in allogeneic stem cell transplant (Allo-SCT) recipients, when compared to the initial 2-dose vaccine regimen.

[Read more](#)

## Systematic review of the serology assays used in COVID-19 seroprevalence surveys

A preprint, not yet peer reviewed, from the CITF-funded SeroTracker team found that third party or independent evaluations from manufacturers indicated that the manufacturers appear to overstate the sensitivity and specificity of their serological assays targeting SARS-CoV-2. This may have an impact on the validity of estimates and impose bias by under- or over-estimating seroprevalence by up to 9.5%.

[Read more](#)

## Researchers around the world agree that seroprevalence studies of SARS-CoV-2 are essential and must be sustained

A report published in the *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, prepared with the participation of the CITF-funded SeroTracker team,

presents the outcomes of the April 2022 Keystone symposium on the successes and challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. Important takeaways included the paramount importance of continued seroprevalence studies in understanding the dynamics of SARS-CoV-2 infection and immunity.

[Read more](#)

## **Risk factors associated with SARS-CoV-2 infection in Canadian healthcare personnel**

The Omicron wave caused a much higher number of SARS-CoV-2 infections in healthcare personnel than previous waves of pandemic activity. Group activities and working in close proximity with other people also increased the risk of SARS-CoV-2 infection. These interim results, which were not peer reviewed, were the subject of a poster presentation at the OPTIONS XI Congress by CITF-funded researchers.

[Read more](#)



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