

Virus Watch

Adult (Age 16+) Participant Information Sheet

Blood tests

Version 1: 01/09/2020

We are inviting a sub-set of Virus Watch participants to take part in a study of immunity to COVID-19 and other common respiratory infections. It is very important that we understand how many people have been infected with COVID-19 and whether infection leads to protective immunity that can stop people getting infected again. To do this we need to take small volumes of blood. This blood is tested for antibodies to COVID-19 and also for other aspects of the immune response.

What does this part of the study involve?

During the autumn of 2020 and spring of 2021 we will invite you and your household by telephone (or email if we cannot reach you) to attend a local clinic in your area where we will take blood samples. Alternatively you may be offered a home visit.

Please do not attend this appointment if you or a member of your household has had any symptoms of COVID-19 such as high fever, a new continuous cough or loss or change to your sense of smell or taste in the previous 14 days. We will reschedule your appointment for a later date.

Only a small amount of blood is required:

- Adults (age over 16 years): 20 mls (4 teaspoons),
- Children aged 15 years and younger: 10 mls (2 teaspoons),

We would like all members of the household to attend (together or separately) and have their blood taken and if you need it, we will provide you with an online voucher to compensate you for your travel costs (please email us at viruswatch@ucl.ac.uk with Travel Costs in the subject heading). **Children aged 15 years or less are encouraged to provide a blood sample but can take part in the study even if they do not want to have a blood sample taken.**

We will also offer finger prick antibody tests to:

- children who do not want to provide a blood sample but agree to a finger prick test
- adults who are unable to provide a blood sample
- children and adults taking part in the “*Enhanced Follow-up*” arm of Virus Watch

The finger prick test collects a drop of blood onto a bit of paper in a testing cassette. Tests done using this method may not be as accurate as a full blood sample but will still provide valuable information. The results are ready in 10 minutes.

What happens to the blood samples and test results?

Blood samples will be analysed for immune response to COVID-19 and other respiratory infections by the Francis Crick Institute.

Finger-prick test results will be available during your blood taking appointment, and we will ask you to share them with us by taking a photo of the result and uploading it to our secure survey link. If you do not have a mobile phone, please just upload your test result. We will provide detailed instructions on how to do this.

The results of your full blood test will be sent back to you when they are available.

One of the blood specimens will be stored and used to identify proteins in the blood that may protect against COVID-19. The results from these tests **will not** be fed back to you.

Further information.

What happens if the test is positive? Both tests will only identify whether you have had a COVID-19 infection in the past. They do **not** mean that you have a COVID-19 infection now. Unless you have any symptoms of COVID-19 you do not need to self-isolate.

Do I have to take part? No. It is up to you to decide whether to take part or not.

What if I change my mind about taking part? You are free to drop out of the study at any stage. Please contact the study manager at viruswatch@ucl.ac.uk

What if I still have questions? Please e-mail viruswatch@ucl.ac.uk with any further questions you have.

What if I am unhappy about the way the study is conducted? Please contact the study manager at viruswatch@ucl.ac.uk If you are not satisfied with the response contact UCL Ethics Committee: ethics@ucl.ac.uk.