

# COVID-19 home antibody testing research study



## Information sheet for participants

We would like to invite you to take part in a research project called 'COVID-19 home antibody testing'. This participant information sheet explains what we would like you to do and why. Please take some time to read the information. It will help you decide whether you wish to take part. We would be happy to answer any questions you have about this research, so please get in touch if anything is not clear (details below).

### What is the purpose of the research?

This is an antibody research study. Antibodies are made by the immune system to fight infection. In this study, we will use the results of antibody tests that you do yourself at home to help us understand how many people in Children of the 90s may have already been infected with the virus which causes COVID-19.

The antibody testing results should not be used to change your behaviour as there is still a great deal to learn about this virus and whether or not antibodies are important in preventing people from getting COVID-19 again.

### Why have I been invited to take part?

You have been invited to take part in this study because you completed our second COVID questionnaire and said that you would be happy for us to send you information about research involving testing for COVID-19. Or, you only completed our first COVID-19 questionnaire and therefore did not have the opportunity to let us know about these types of further research.

### What is involved?

We are inviting you to read the instructions of the antibody kit and do the test on yourself at home. The test looks a bit like a pregnancy test and uses a drop of blood taken from your finger. Please read the instruction booklet [LINK] sent with the test for detailed guidance on taking the test.

We are also asking you to go online to complete a short questionnaire that will ask you to:

1. Record any COVID-19 symptoms you may have had in recent months
2. Record your test result
3. Upload a photograph of your test result (this step is optional)

In total, this should all take around 45 minutes. It is very important that only the named person who registered to take the test and who was sent the testing kit takes the test.

### Do I have to take part?

No. Whether you take part in the study is entirely up to you. Even if you do decide to take part, you can change your mind at any time without giving a reason. You should be aware that data collected about you up to the time you decide to stop taking part may still be used as part of the research study results. If you have received the test and then decide you don't want to take part anymore, please throw away the testing kit as set out in the test instructions which come with the test.

### Confidentiality and data protection

Any data we collect from you will be stored with an individual ID number but with no personal information (your name, address or date of birth) attached. Files that link this ID number to your personal details will be securely stored. The data will be used for research purposes only and will only be analysed by researchers who have been approved by the Children of the 90s Executive. None of these researchers will have access to your personal information. We will keep your personal details confidential and separate from your research data. Your personal details will not be shared with third parties except for certain service providers working on our behalf, for example Gemini West who will be mailing out the test kits.

Children of the 90s is compliant with GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) and with the Data Protection Act (2018) with regard to the collection, processing, storage and disclosure of personal information. If you would like to find out more, please see our privacy notice here: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/alspac/participants/privacy/>

### **How will this research help others?**

The study aims to estimate how many people in Children of the 90s have been infected with the virus that causes COVID-19. We don't know yet if having antibodies gives someone long-lasting protection from the virus. The results of this study may help guide public health policy and the government's plan for its antibody testing strategy.

Other population based research studies in the UK are also asking their participants to complete the same antibody test. Analysing the information from Children of the 90s alongside these other studies will allow a greater understanding of variations across ethnicity, age, socio-economic status and geography.

### **What do the antibody test results mean?**

Antibodies are made by the immune system to fight infection. This test looks for two types of antibodies, IgM, which are often short-lasting, and IgG, which are usually longer lasting. By looking for antibodies in blood, we may be able to understand whether someone has previously been infected with the virus that causes COVID-19.

However, whilst the results themselves are very specific to a COVID-19 response, they have limited sensitivity and do not guarantee a perfect result for individual diagnosis. This is a level of error we are able to correct for in analyses of whole populations, but which make the individual relevance of results limited.

**Please be aware that the antibody test is not reliable at an individual level.**

**Whatever your test result, you must continue to follow current Government advice.**

It is very important, despite what the results of this test shows that you do not change your behaviour. It is important that you continue to follow the current Government advice based on symptoms and possible exposures. Importantly, even though a positive result here means that it is likely you have had an infection in the past, we still do not know whether this means you are protected or not infectious in the future.

### **What are the possible risks or side-effects of taking part?**

Collecting the blood sample for the self-test requires a finger prick which can feel like a little pinch and which may cause some people a small amount of discomfort.

### **How do I take part?**

If you are interested in taking part in this study, please use the unique link in your email to access the study website and complete the consent form.

**Who is organising and funding the research?**

This research is organised by Children of the 90s. Children of the 90s receives core funding from the Wellcome Trust, the UK Medical Research Council and the University of Bristol.

**Who has reviewed this research?**

This research has been reviewed and approved by the ALSPAC Ethics and Law Committee (ALEC), and the Children of the 90s Original Cohort Advisory Panel (OCAP) made up of study participants.

**Contacts for further information and complaints:**

If you wish to know more about the study, please contact the Children of the 90s participation team on 01173 310010 or email [info@childrenofthe90s.ac.uk](mailto:info@childrenofthe90s.ac.uk).

If you have any concerns or complaints, please contact the ALSPAC Executive on [alspac-exec@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:alspac-exec@bristol.ac.uk).

**Thank you for reading this document and for your ongoing support of Children of the 90s.**