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Monitoring the course of the COVID-19 epidemic in Estonia

Submission date
14/03/2021

Recruitment status
No longer recruiting

Registration date
16/03/2021

Overall study status
Completed

Last Edited
21/09/2021

Condition category
Infections and Infestations

[_] Prospectively registered
[X] Protocol
[_] Statistical analysis plan
[X] Results
[_] Individual participant data

Plain English summary of protocol

Background and study aims
COVID-19 is a condition caused by the coronavirus (called SARS-CoV-2) that was first identified in late 2019. The ongoing pandemic is an unprecedented global emergency. Epidemic risk management is a highly complex task in which sets of measures need to be put in place and coordinated at local, national, and international levels to minimize health and economic consequences. This complex and monumental task is highly knowledge/evidence-dependent. There are many unanswered questions on the novel SARS-Cov-2 virus including the immune response and pathogenesis at the individual level. However, the answers to very similar questions at the population level (scale of exposure/infection in the population, the effect of community mitigation measures implemented) are crucial for an effective response to the pandemic and to inform future strategies.
The main aim of this study is to estimate the prevalence of symptomatic and asymptomatic COVID-19 in the general population and how this varies over time.

Who can participate?
People selected at random from the Estonian population registry will be invited for participation

What does the study involve?
Participants will be asked to visit a national covid testing center and fill in a web-based questionnaire and undergo nasopharyngeal swabbing (collected from the back of the nose and throat).

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?
The possible benefits are that participants will get results from tests for SARS-CoV-2. The main disadvantage of taking part is the time and inconvenience of nasopharyngeal swabbing.

Where is the study run from?
University of Tartu (Estonia), and delivered by Kantar-Emor AS, OÜ Medicum Eriarstiabi, and SYNLAB Eesti OÜ (Estonia)

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?
March 2020 to December 2023

Who is funding the study?
Ministry of Education and Research (Estonia)

Who is the main contact?
Unfortunately, this study is not recruiting public volunteers.

Contact information

Type(s)
Scientific

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Additional identifiers

Clinical Trials Information System (CTIS)
Nil known

ClinicalTrials.gov (NCT)
Nil known

Protocol serial number
Nil known

Study information

Scientific Title
COVID-19 active monitoring program in Estonia

Acronym
COVEST

Study objectives
The main aim of this observational study is to estimate the prevalence of symptomatic and asymptomatic SARS-CoV-2 infection in the general population and how this varies over time.

Ethics approval required
Old ethics approval format

Ethics approval(s)

Approved 13/04/2020, Research Ethics Committee of the University of Tartu (Grant Office, University of Tartu, Raekoja plats 9, 51004 Tartu, Estonia; +372 (0)737 6215; eetikakomitee@ut.ee), ref: 310/T-1

Study design
Surveillance study based on repeated cross-sectional surveys of the general population (recruited via stratified random sampling)

Primary study design
Observational

Study type(s)
Screening

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied
COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2 infection)

Interventions
Randomly selected consenting adults are asked to visit national testing centers for a nasopharyngeal swab and fill out a web-based questionnaire.

Intervention Type
Other

Primary outcome(s)
SARS-CoV-2 prevalence measured using SARS-CoV-2 RNA RT-PCR at each of the cross-sectional study rounds (every month in 2020, six times a year in 2021, 2022/23 to be decided)

Key secondary outcome(s))
The proportion of symptomatic cases among people testing positive for SARS-CoV-2, measured using a web-based questionnaire at each of the cross-sectional study rounds (every month in 2020, six times a year in 2021, 2022/23 to be decided)

Completion date
30/12/2023

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria
1. Adult, male or female
2. Willing and able to give informed consent for participation in the study

Participant type(s)
All

Healthy volunteers allowed
No

Age group
Adult

Sex
All

Key exclusion criteria
Does not meet inclusion criteria

Date of first enrolment
23/04/2020

Date of final enrolment
30/11/2023

Locations

Countries of recruitment
Estonia

Study participating centre
University of Tartu
Ravila 19
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Sponsor information

Organisation
University of Tartu

ROR
https://ror.org/03z77qz90

Funder(s)

Funder type
Government

Funder Name
Ministry of Education and Research (Estonia)

Results and Publications

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan

The data-sharing plans for the current study are unknown and will be made available at a later date

IPD sharing plan summary

Data sharing statement to be made available at a later date

Study outputs

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
Participant information sheet	Participant information sheet	11/11/2025	11/11/2025	No	Yes
Preprint results	non-peer reviewed 1st year results	13/09/2021	21/09/2021	No	No
Protocol file			06/04/2021	No	No
Study website	Study website	11/11/2025	11/11/2025	No	Yes