

SIREN

SARS-CoV2 Immunity & Reinfection Evaluation

December 2021

Frequently Asked Questions

How effective is vaccination in protection against SARS-CoV-2 infections?

Our recent analysis found that two vaccine doses provide high levels of protection against infection, both symptomatic and asymptomatic in the first six months after vaccination. However, we found that protection waned after six months during a period where the Delta variant dominated. This finding, which has also been reported from other studies, has informed the UK Government decision to offer booster vaccine doses. Getting your booster dose will help you maintain high protection going into the winter period.

How much does immunity following SARS-CoV-2 infection protect against future infections?

Our recent analysis continues to support our earlier finding that SARS-CoV-2 reinfection is rare, and that people who have had infection have high levels of protection against future infections for several months. Most SIREN participants with previous infection have received COVID-19 vaccination, and in our recent analysis, we found that this combination of infection-acquired and vaccine-acquired immunity provides very high and sustained protection against reinfection, even 15-months or more since primary infection. We therefore continue to recommend vaccination to those who have had a previous infection to help you maintain your immunity to future infections.

What are N and S antibodies?

Depending on your site, your samples might be tested for S antibodies, N antibodies or both. In the second Participants' Newsletter [20210816 participant newsletter](#), there is brief text to explain what antibodies and the difference between S (spike) and N (nucleocapsid) antibodies are. In summary, S antibodies are generated in response to vaccination and previous infection, but N antibodies are only generated in response to infection. You can find out which tests are done by asking your local site.

Can I find out my antibody levels?

Your antibody results are communicated via your local site, as per local arrangements. Scientists do not yet know if there is a minimum level of antibodies that confers protection. This is one of the things SIREN is investigating so your involvement will help to answer this question in future.

Why don't I have antibodies?

There are several reasons you might not test positive for antibodies following your vaccine or a COVID-19 infection. It may be due to the test that your site is using; some tests will only look for N antibodies and others will look for both. You may still have antibodies, but the levels are not high enough to be picked up by the test, or it could be that your immunity has waned over time. It is important to remember that antibodies are not the only part of the immune system that protects us against COVID, and it might be that you have T-cells or other B-cells which are specialised parts of the immune system that protect us. These are being investigated as part of the VIBRANT study.

What vaccine should I get?

SIREN is not involved in the vaccine programme and is not able to give advice on specific vaccines or vaccines schedules. SIREN data is informing government guidelines so we would encourage all participants to follow current guidance.

I have not been vaccinated; will my data still be used in SIREN?

We will continue to use data from all participants within SIREN, irrespective of your vaccination status.

Can SIREN provide travel PCR testing?

SIREN is not able to provide PCR testing for travel. Government guidance is that only registered travel PCR providers can provide this service. You can find details for booking travel PCR tests here: [Book a travel test package to enter the UK](#)

How can I get involved with other research studies?

If you have enjoyed your time in SIREN, but are unable to extend your participation, and are interested in taking part in other research opportunities you could speak to your local site to find out what studies are running locally, or check the [National Institute for Health Research \(NIHR\)](#) website

Thank you for your ongoing support and invaluable participation in SIREN and we look forward to seeing you at our next event.

All the best,
The SIREN team at UKHSA