



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA



**SeroNet Newsletter
Issue I**

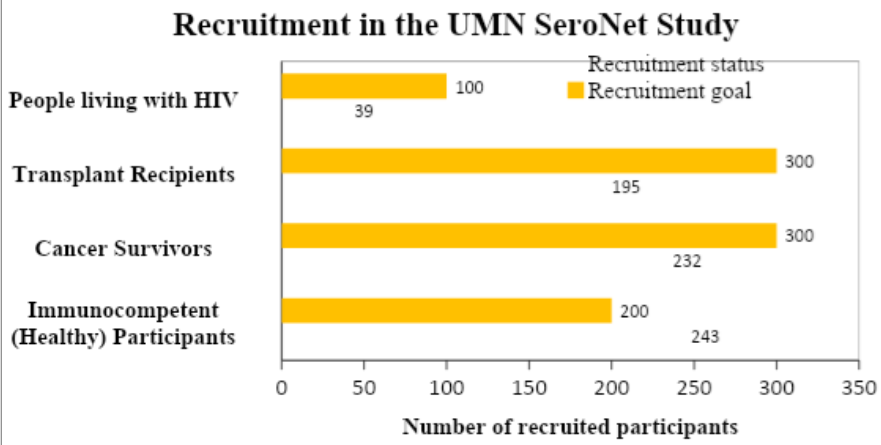


Dr. Amy Karger was born and raised in Kansas and came to MN in 1998 after being accepted into the MD/Ph.D program at Mayo Clinic. She then completed her clinical pathology residency and clinical chemistry fellowship training at the UMN. She is proud to be the program director for the UMN SeroNet capacity building center, with the primary focus on leading a comprehensive Covid-19 vaccine response study.

What is the SeroNet COVID-19 Vaccine Response Study?

At the University of Minnesota School of Medicine, we are conducting a National Institute of Health (NIH)-funded Covid-19 vaccine durability study. We are part of the National Cancer Institute's Serological Sciences Network (SeroNet), which is the nation's largest coordinated effort to examine the immunological response to the COVID-19 vaccination. The network aims to enhance the ability to measure immune responses and accelerate the development of treatments and vaccines.¹

The University of Minnesota SeroNet study is focused on examining the immune response to COVID-19 vaccination among immunocompromised individuals. We are recruiting recipients of chemotherapy, radiation therapy and immunotherapy, transplant recipients, people living with HIV and a group of immunocompetent individuals as a control population. Recruitment started in June 2021 and current recruitment efforts are summarized in the figure below.



The above chart indicates the number of participants currently enrolled in our study compared to the target enrollment number in our study in each cohort



Rachel Richards is one of the SeroNet research assistant coordinators. She was born and raised in Minnesota. Rachel studied biomedical engineering at Penn State University and returned to MN to build a career. She joined the SeroNet team to make a real, positive impact in her community, and is very proud to see how many people are willing to donate their time to support research that helps others.



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What do we study?

Each participant receives two test results after their study visit. The first test detects the presence of anti-nucleocapsid Covid-19 antibodies. These antibodies are created upon exposure to the Covid-19 virus. A positive result for this test would indicate a possible past Covid-19 infection. The second test detects the presence of anti-spike RBD Covid-19 antibodies. These antibodies are created upon receiving the Covid-19 vaccination. A positive result indicates detectable levels of the antibodies. A detectable range is considered greater than 0.80 U/mL (units of antibodies per milliliter). The exact numerical level is not associated with a clinical value for protection. However, a positive result does indicate the presence of antibodies from the vaccine in your sample. By the end of this study, we are hoping to understand the relationship between immunocompetency and the levels of COVID-19 antibodies over time

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- Beginning in May, the study will provide both quantitative and qualitative results to participants. Quantitative data will only be given to the anti-spike RBD Covid-19 antibody test.
- Participants will receive \$50 around the anniversary of their first visit, and an additional \$50 at the end of their participation.
- Please visit seronet.umn.edu for FAQs regarding the SeroNet study.

Appreciation

Lastly, our gratitude goes out to all those who are participating in our study. You are the primary reason for the success of this study, and we look forward to your continued participation over the course of the two years from the date of your first study visit.

1.) <https://www.cancer.gov/research/key-initiatives/covid-19/coronavirus-research-initiatives/serological-sciences-network>