

Who Were the COVID-19 Vaccines Tested On?

April 14, 2021

Before a vaccine is approved for use, it is tested on a large number of people to confirm that it works and is safe. These are called clinical trials. Scientists who tested the COVID-19 vaccines included a wide range of people, including racially and ethnically diverse populations, in their studies.

Why were the vaccines tested on people from a variety of backgrounds?

It's important that vaccine studies include volunteers from the populations that will receive the vaccines. The scientists who tested the COVID-19 vaccines knew that people of colour were at increased risk of getting sick from and dying from COVID-19 due to factors such as barriers to accessing health care, income, education, jobs, and safe housing. Therefore, they made deliberate efforts to include people of colour in their studies. This will give everyone an opportunity to be protected from COVID-19.

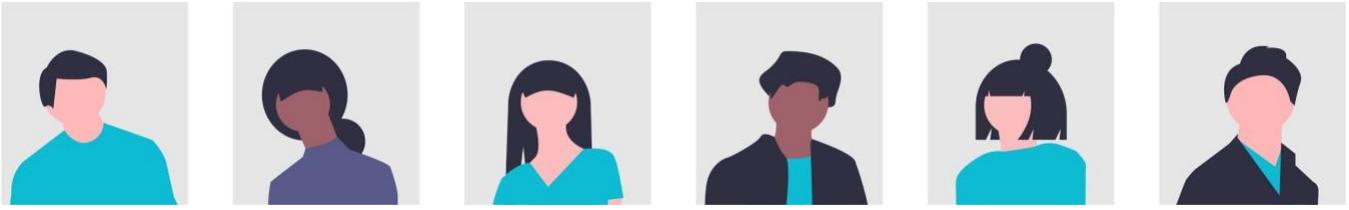
How diverse were the populations in the vaccine studies?

Scientists tested the COVID-19 vaccines (currently approved in Canada) on thousands of people from many racial and ethnic backgrounds. This table shows how diverse the populations were.

Self-identified racial or ethnic background*	Moderna Vaccine	Pfizer-BioNTech Vaccine	Johnson and Johnson Vaccine	AstraZeneca Vaccine
White	79%	83%	62%	79%
Black or African American	10%	9%	17%	8%
Asian	5%	4%	4%	4%
Indigenous ("American Indian" or "Alaska Native")	0.8%	0.5%	8%	4%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.2%	0.2%	0.3%	--
Multiracial	2%	2%	45%	--
Hispanic/Latinx	21%	28%	45%	22%
Other	2%	--	5%	--
Not reported/not known	0.9%	0.6%	3%	--

*These were the terms used in the scientific studies.

Some participants identified with more than one ethnic or racial background.



The Moderna vaccine study was conducted in the USA and the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine study was conducted in the USA, Argentina, Brazil, Germany, South Africa, and Turkey.

The Johnson and Johnson study took place in the USA, Brazil, South Africa as well as five other countries in Latin America (Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Peru and Mexico).

The analysis of the AstraZeneca vaccine combined studies that took place in 88 centres in the US, Peru and Chile.

Did the vaccines work the same way in different ethnic and racial groups?

Yes. The tests showed that the vaccines were effective in protecting against COVID-19 illness. They were equally effective in people of different racial and ethnic backgrounds.



As of April 14, people around the world, including China, Mexico, Bangladesh and South Africa, have received **825 million doses** of a variety of COVID-19 vaccines.

We hope you find this bulletin useful! We invite you to share it widely, use it as the script to record an audio or video file, or translate it into more languages to share with others. Please be sure to credit the source: Women’s College Hospital, OCASI, TAIBU Community Health Centre and Refugee 613.

Accurate as of April 14, 2021

The information in this bulletin has been validated by Canadian doctors: Meb Rashid MD, Assistant Professor, University of Toronto; Vanessa Redditt, MD, Lecturer, University of Toronto; and Isaac I. Bogoch, MD, Associate Professor, University of Toronto

