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OCHSNER HEALTH LAUNCHES COVID-19 PREVALENCE STUDY TO DETERMINE VIRUS SPREAD

NEW ORLEANS – Ochsner Health is pleased to announce the launch of a COVID-19 prevalence study, which will collect data to determine the spread and impact of the virus in Orleans and Jefferson Parishes. The study will offer free COVID-19 and antibody testing to enrolled parish residents at various testing sites throughout the region. **Residents are encouraged to sign up for the study online today at testnola.org.**

Led by Principal Investigator Amy Feehan, PhD, data from the study will be analyzed to determine how widespread the virus is in our community and which populations have been most impacted. This information will help inform community reopening plans and provide healthcare providers and leaders with more information about the novel virus.

“The COVID-19 prevalence study will provide us with valuable data about the spread of the virus in our community. This is another opportunity for eligible residents to show up and stand with us to ensure a safer and healthier city and region. As I have said, it will be the data, not a date, that drives our re-opening decisions; that is to ensure that we do not endure a second and worse wave of the virus,” said New Orleans Mayor LaToya Cantrell. “Our success in the fight against COVID-19 depends on all of us, and we are calling on the people of New Orleans to be our partners in this effort.”

This is one of the first and most comprehensive prevalence studies in the country. Ochsner currently has more than 30 clinical studies and trials for COVID-19 treatment underway. In April, Ochsner, along with BioInfoExperts, LLC, [completed the first genomic sequences of COVID-19](#).

“To support our community through this unprecedented pandemic, we are putting resources into not only treating, but understanding the virus,” said Dr. Leonardo Seoane, Chief Academic Officer, Ochsner Health. “Research and clinical studies being conducted across our organization will help our hospitals, businesses and local leaders recover and prepare for COVID-19’s ongoing impact.”

“We are so grateful to partner with Ochsner Health on this study to help our parish and region better understand and recover from the impact of COVID-19,” said Jefferson Parish President Cynthia Lee Sheng. “We all know that increased testing is crucial to fighting this pandemic and we thank Ochsner for their resources and commitment to this process.”

“Together with data from the 47,000 tests that Ochsner has already administered, this prevalence study represents a critical body of knowledge as we work to better understand, and eventually treat and

prevent, COVID-19. It also demonstrates Ochsner's national leadership in developing and executing one of the first true prevalence studies in the country, while at the same time participating in more than 30 clinical studies and trials for COVID-19 treatment currently underway," said Warner Thomas, President and CEO, Ochsner Health. "Working together with New Orleans Mayor LaToya Cantrell and Parish President Cynthia Lee Sheng, we are committed to fighting this disease, stopping the spread in our communities, and emerging stronger and healthier than before."

Below is important information about the study.

Who Is Eligible for the Study?

We hope to enroll at least 2,500 participants in the study, representing a "mini Orleans and Jefferson Parish." Residents of all races, ethnicities, ages and neighborhoods are encouraged to sign up online so the study can accurately represent our community.

Participants:

- Must be 18 years or older
- Must be a resident of Orleans or Jefferson Parish
- Must not have tested positive for COVID-19 previously
 - Individuals who have previously tested negative for COVID-19 are eligible

How Does It Work?

People who are interested in participating should enroll online at **testnola.org**. Participants will be contacted if they are selected for the study via a text message with testing location details. Testing sites are located throughout Orleans and Jefferson Parishes.

Upon arrival at a designated testing center, participants will provide verbal consent and complete a brief survey. Testing includes a nasal swab (COVID-19 test) and a blood draw (COVID-19 antibody test). This process takes approximately 10 minutes from start to finish. Participants will receive their test results by online within 24-72 hours.

Participants are encouraged to enroll in Ochsner's secure online patient portal, [MyChart](#) prior to getting tested to expedite the process. You can sign up for an account [here](#).

Why Should People Participate?

Data collected in this study will provide a clearer picture of the spread of COVID-19 in the Orleans and Jefferson Parish communities. Because testing was limited when COVID-19 first occurred locally, it's possible that many residents who were infected do not know if they had the virus. Those who participate are providing valuable information that will help the region better understand and recover from the impact of COVID-19.

Testing is also completely free of charge for participants.

Where Can I Learn More?

Visit **testnola.org** or call **504-703-8283** for more information or to enroll. To learn more about Ochsner, please visit www.ochsner.org/coronavirus.

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About Ochsner Health

Ochsner Health is a system that delivers health to the people of Louisiana, Mississippi and the Gulf South with a mission to **Serve, Heal, Lead, Educate and Innovate**. Ochsner Health is a not-for-profit committed to giving back to the communities it serves through preventative screenings, health and wellness resources and partnerships with innovative organizations that share our vision. Ochsner Health healed more than 876,000 people from across the globe in 2019, providing the latest medical breakthroughs and therapies, including digital medicine for chronic conditions and telehealth specialty services. Ochsner Health is a national leader, named the top hospital in Louisiana and a top children's hospital by U.S. News & World Report. As Louisiana's leading healthcare educator, Ochsner Health and its partners educate thousands of healthcare professionals annually. Ochsner Health is innovating healthcare by investing in new technologies and research to make world-class care more accessible, affordable, convenient and effective. Ochsner's team of more than 26,000 employees and 4,500 providers are working to reinvent the future of health and wellness in the region. To learn more about Ochsner Health, please visit www.ochsner.org. To transform your health, please visit www.ochsner.org/healthyyou.