

NEWS RELEASE



François Lamontagne, Neill Adhikari, and their research team receive \$1.87 million for LOVIT study

Can vitamin C help COVID-19 patients?

Sherbrooke, May 29, 2020 – For years now, Dr. François Lamontagne, an intensivist and internist at the CIUSSS de l'Estrie – CHUS, a professor and researcher at the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences at the Université de Sherbrooke (UdeS) and Centre de Recherche du CHUS (CRCHUS), and his colleague, Dr. Neill Adhikari, an associate professor in the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences at UdeS and a researcher at the *University of Toronto's Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre*, have researched the potential effects of vitamin C. They are co-leaders of the Lessening Organ dysfunction with VITamin C (LOVIT) study, a clinical trial that has taken place since 2018 in over twenty hospitals across Canada to assess the effect of high-dose intravenous vitamin C on the outcomes of patients with severe infections who are treated in intensive care.

As vitamin C was on the short list issued by the World Health Organization (WHO) of potential COVID-19 treatments that should undergo rigorous assessment, the two researchers quickly launched a complementary study to evaluate the effects of vitamin C for all COVID-19 cases requiring hospitalization.

Thanks to the visibility from the WHO's list, Dr. Lamontagne and Dr. Adhikari and their many colleagues received an additional \$1.87-million grant from the Lotte & John Hecht Memorial Foundation, which funds health research in alternative medicine.

"In light of the current pandemic, we want to evaluate the overall effects of vitamin C on the progression of infections requiring stays in intensive care and on the disease progression in all COVID-19 patients who require hospitalization. So far, we have recruited 70 COVID-19 patients from across Canada," said Dr. François Lamontagne.

About the LOVIT study

Launched in 2018, the LOVIT project studies the effect of high-dose intravenous vitamin C on mortality and the need for intensive care in patients suffering from septic shock. Studies suggest that vitamin C levels in these patients are well below normal. The researchers believe that a lack of vitamin C may explain a number of syndromes and systemic failures that can cause death in the case of COVID-19. Although the body of evidence remains inconclusive, some studies suggest that the administration of intravenous vitamin C to critically ill patients may improve chances of survival. This new study will allow researchers to test the hypothesis that vitamin C treatment reduces the risks that some hospitalized COVID-19 patients will deteriorate and have to be put in intensive care.

[Learn more about the LOVIT study](#)

Information and interview requests: Please note that Dr. Lamontagne will be available for media interviews from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm today. Please provide your name, media outlet and contact information with your interview request.

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