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**Acting fast to collect essential samples for COVID-19 research**

Iman Osman and the Center for Biospecimen Research and Development are collecting patient samples to facilitate COVID-19 research

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What are these samples, and why are they so valuable?

We collect blood and swab remnants from patients with symptoms of COVID-19. They enable scientists to understand how the diseases starts and progresses, and to explore how best to prevent or treat the infection.

How are we collecting the samples?

We use a “universal consent” process to enable patients to voluntarily contribute their clinical data and biological samples to research. COVID-19 presents a unique challenge for collecting samples, as many patients are too sick to give their consent when they arrive at the hospital. We arranged to obtain consent once they are in stable condition, maximizing the opportunity for COVID-19 patients to contribute their samples while respecting their medical state. Colleagues from the medical community volunteer their time and talent to this endeavor, and members of our Center for Biospecimen Research and Development work alongside clinical partners to collect, track, and store the samples and consents.

How many patients have contributed?

Since March 28, we obtained samples and baseline data from more than 7,000 patients, and expect that number to reach more than 10,000 at the end of this month. To handle the influx of samples and data under these very challenging circumstances, we scaled up the capacity of our system, thanks to the efforts of many dedicated collaborators. A special shoutout to Andre Moreira, MD, PhD, Sandra Mendoza, Paolo Cotzia, MD, Una Moran, MS, Corita Grudzen, MD, Maria Aguero-Rosenfeld, MD, Jose Salcedo, Harvey Pass, MD, Leopoldo Segal, MD, Melissa Call, Jamie Kim, Center for Biospecimen Research and Development staff, and many pathology residents for their phenomenal efforts.