FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Survivor Corps and Yale School of Medicine work together to expedite scientific findings

(New Haven, CT)—A Yale School of Medicine team is launching a new study to determine the effect of vaccination on people with persistent symptoms months after SARS-CoV-2 infection, a condition known as long COVID. The study, led by Yale faculty Akiko Iwasaki, Aaron Ring, Wade Schulz, Charles Dela Cruz and Harlan Krumholz, will explore potential underlying causes of long COVID and possible ways to help those suffering.

Survivor Corps, a grassroots COVID advocacy group, suggested the study to researchers at Yale, after results from a poll they posted on their Facebook group suggested that individuals with long COVID may be finding relief after full vaccination. The results of the poll showed 40% of people reported mild to full resolution of their long term symptoms after they received their vaccine, a large enough percentage to warrant a formal study.

In addition to working closely with Survivor Corps, the Yale team has also collaborated with the Patient-Led Research Collaborative, a group of citizen scientists with long COVID, to further develop surveys for the study.

“I have wanted to understand what is driving long COVID disease for a while. After seeing the survey done by Survivor Corps showing that 40% of long haulers experience improvement in their symptoms after the vaccines, I got so excited!” Akiko Iwasaki, who will serve as the project lead, said. “Understanding the immune responses before and after vaccines holds the key to learning about long COVID disease and will provide an opportunity to design rational therapeutic approaches.”

Akiko Iwasaki is the Waldemar Von Zedtwitz Professor of Immunobiology and Molecular, Cellular, and Developmental Biology at Yale University. She is also a principal investigator at the Howard Hughes Medical Institute.

“Survivor Corps is dedicated to bringing patient voices to the forefront of scientific research. This partnership reflects a new vision of Citizen Science where citizens and scientists work in collaboration to honor the needs of patients and accelerate the pace of scientific discovery,” said Diana Berrent, the Founder of Survivor Corps.

The study will involve cutting edge immune profiling techniques pioneered by Akiko Iwasaki and Aaron Ring and the data science platforms developed by Wade Schulz. The Yale New Haven Health Center for Outcomes Research and Evaluation is leading the efforts to work with participants to characterize their symptoms and response to vaccination. The study will draw participants from the New Haven area, but intends to expand its reach in the near future.

For more information about this study, please email covidrecovery@yale.edu.

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About Survivor Corps

Survivor Corps is a grassroots community of over 165,000 COVID-19 survivors mobilizing to educate and support each other, while advocating for engagement in scientific research to help stem the tide of the pandemic, advocate for Long COVID patients and assist in the national recovery. Survivor Corps is the Epicenter of HOPE. www.survivorcorps.com

About Yale New Haven Health Center for Outcomes Research and Evaluation

The Center for Outcomes Research and Evaluation (CORE) is dedicated to applying scientific methods and developing scientific approaches to address the clinical and healthcare policy challenges that face our country and the global community. We have assembled a talented, multidisciplinary group who are committed to developing solutions to the practical needs of medicine and healthcare. Our organization combines the highest academic ideals with a pragmatic approach that emphasizes the production of useful knowledge. We are distinguished by our creativity, dedication, experience and skills - and our commitment to having our work make a tangible difference to patients, the public and society.

About Yale School of Medicine

Yale School of Medicine educates and nurtures creative leaders in medicine and science, promoting curiosity and critical inquiry in an inclusive environment enriched by diversity. We advance discovery and innovation fostered by partnerships across the University, our local community, and the world. We care for patients with compassion, and commit to improving the health of all people.

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