INFORMATION SHEET

A Randomised, Double-Blind, Placebo-Controlled Study to Evaluate the Efficacy of SRS-MHT-44 against Long COVID in Adults Aged 18-65 Years

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You are invited to participate in this study.

Background

Long COVID or post-COVID-19 syndrome is when people experience continued symptoms for longer than 12 weeks after their initial COVID-19 infection. Long COVID is associated with a range of mental and physical symptoms, with common symptoms including fatigue, shortness of breath, heart palpitations, chest pain or tightness, lightheadedness, brain fog, and loss of taste and smell. Estimates of the prevalence of long COVID vary significantly, but it seems to be affecting a significant portion of the population. Unfortunately, treatment options are limited.

SRS-MHT-44 is a liquid herbal formula containing more than 30 herbal ingredients that have been shown to influence immune function. Some of these ingredients include curcumin, ashwagandha, ginseng, and ginkgo biloba. In this study, we are interested in examining the effects of SRS-MHT-44 in improving quality of life and symptoms associated with long COVID.

This study will be conducted by Dr Adrian Lopresti and Dr Stephen Smith (Clinical Research Australia).

Information about the funding source and declaration of interests

This study is funded by SRS BioScience of Longevity, Ltd, the company that produces the liquid herbal extract (SRS-MHT-44) used in this study. However, this study is independently managed by Clinical Research Australia (CRA) without external influence from SRS BioScience.

Aim of the study

We would like to know whether taking SRS-MHT-44, three times daily for 8 weeks, improves quality of life and symptoms associated with long COVID. We will also assess changes in blood markers associated with inflammation, immunity, and general health.

What does participation involve? **(see study flow chart on page 3)**

This study will comprise several steps as outlined below:

Step 1: Completion of initial online screening

This questionnaire takes approximately 10 minutes to complete. It provides us with information relating to the eligibility criteria. If, based on the results of the screening questionnaire, you are assessed as 'likely' eligible, you will be contacted for a phone interview. Ineligible volunteers will be informed by email that they do not fulfil the eligibility criteria.

Step 2: Phone Interview for an initial assessment of eligibility

If you are potentially eligible to participate in the study, you will be interviewed by a researcher. The interview will be conducted over the phone (approx. 15 minutes). The purpose of this interview is to obtain relevant background information (e.g., age, sex, illnesses, medication use, etc.), provide you with further details about the study and what the next step is in the qualification process, and assess other relevant eligibility criteria. This includes obtaining further details about the symptoms you have been experiencing since contracting COVID-19.

If you have been assessed as eligible to participate in this study, an appointment will be arranged for a face-to-face assessment at our offices located in Duncraig.

Step 3: VISIT 1: Face-to-face assessment (approx. 45 mins)

During this meeting, the following tasks will be completed:

1. The signing of the study consent form. This must be signed before we proceed with the study.
2. Discussion of your current symptoms since contracting COVID-19.
3. Confirmation of the absence of symptoms that indicates you currently have a COVID-19 infection. This includes asking you about your current symptoms and measuring your body temperature with an ear thermometer. We will also administer a COVID-19 Rapid Antigen Test. The results must be negative for you to proceed further in the study
4. Women of childbearing age will be required to have a urine-based pregnancy test to ensure they are not pregnant.
5. Measurement of your oxygen saturation (using a finger pulse oximeter), sitting blood pressure, pulse, height, and weight.
6. Administration of questionnaires that assess your current symptoms and quality of life
7. Provision of a 4-week supply of study medication (either SRS-MHT-44 or a placebo)
8. Blood collection. You will be required to have a blood sample collected from you. This will involve you visiting your nearest Pathwest collection centre. A blood sample will be collected from your vein, where we will measure for markers associated with inflammation, immunity, and general well-being.

Step 4: 8-week intake of liquid formula (SRS-MHT-44 or placebo)

In this study, we will be using a randomised, double-blind, placebo-controlled design. This means that half of the participants will be placed on SRS-MHT-44, and the other half will be placed on a placebo liquid.

Neither you nor the investigator will know which group you have been placed into. This random placebo allocation is important for us to assess the true effects of SRS-MHT-44 on long COVID symptoms and overall quality of life.

You will be required to take 15 mls THREE times daily with or without food.

** Placebo involves providing a substance with no known treatment effects. In this case, the placebo will contain distilled water, saline solution, glycerine, caramel colour, and flavouring.*

It is extremely important that you take this liquid every day. We will ask you to download a simple pill reminder application on your phone to help you to remember to take the supplement every day.

Step 5: Day 15. Completion of an online questionnaire

After 2 weeks of taking the supplement, you will be asked to complete an online questionnaire. These are similar to the ones administered during your face-to-face visit. We will also ask if you have been experiencing any adverse effects associated with your supplement intake. Questionnaires will take approximately 5 to 10 minutes to complete.

Step 6: VISIT 2: Day 31, face-to-face re-assessment (approx. 30 mins)

During this meeting, the following tasks will be completed:

1. Measurement of your oxygen saturation (using a finger pulse oximeter), sitting blood pressure, pulse, and weight.
2. Administration of questionnaires that assess your current symptoms and quality of life
3. Provision of another 4-week supply of study medication (either SRS-MHT-44 or a placebo)

Step 7: Day 45. Completion of an online questionnaire

Two weeks after your visit 2 appointment, you will be asked to complete an online questionnaire. These are similar to the ones administered during your face-to-face visits. We will also ask if you have been experiencing any adverse effects associated with your supplement intake. Questionnaires will take approximately 5 to 10 minutes to complete.

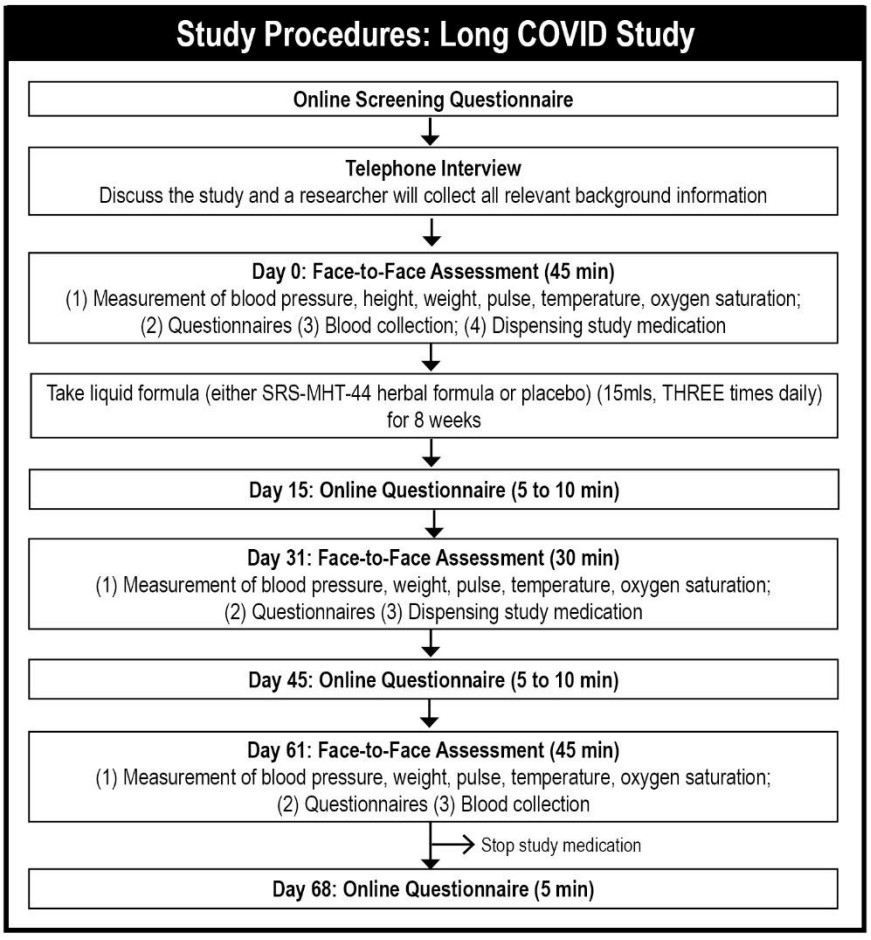
Step 8: VISIT 3: Face-to-face assessment (approx. 45 mins)

During this meeting, the following tasks will be completed:

1. Measurement of your oxygen saturation (using a finger pulse oximeter), sitting blood pressure, pulse, and weight.
2. Administration of questionnaires that assess your current symptoms and quality of life
3. Blood collection. You will be required to have a blood sample collected from you. This will involve you visiting your nearest Pathwest collection centre.
4. You will now stop taking the study medications.

Step 9: Day 68. Completion of an online questionnaire

One week after you have stopped taking the liquid formula, you will be asked to complete a final online questionnaire. This questionnaire will take approximately 5 minutes to complete and will ask if you have experienced any adverse symptoms since stopping the liquid formula.



Compensation for participating in this study

To compensate you for your travel costs and time associated with participating in this study, at the end of visits 1 and 2 you will be given a $40 Coles Group voucher, and at the end of visit 3, a $60 voucher.

Criteria for inclusion/ exclusion in this study

To be included in the study, the following inclusion criteria must be met:

1. You are aged between 18 to 65 years
2. You have a body mass index (BMI) between 18.5 and 30 kg/m^2
3. You suffered from a COVID-19 infection at least 3 months ago, and this was confirmed by a rapid antigen or PCR test

4. You suffer from long COVID. Long COVID is the continual experience of a range of physical and mental symptoms that developed after an initial COVID-19 infection and have been present for at least 3 months. These symptoms must have appeared after you had a COVID-19 infection.

If any of the exclusion criteria below are met, you will not be suitable for participation in this study:
1. You currently have a COVID-19 infection
2. You suffer from a serious medical condition including but not limited to cancer, type 1 diabetes, kidney disease, heart failure, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, or autoimmune disease,
3. You suffer from an unstable medical condition (other than long COVID) that has required recent hospitalisation or treatment changes, or there will be a requirement for treatment modifications during the study period.
4. You are pregnant, breastfeeding, or intend to fall pregnant in the next 3 months
5. In the last 30 days, you have received, or intend to receive during the study period, a COVID-19 vaccine or booster or any other treatment for active/long COVID
6. You have received any blood, plasma products or immunoglobulins within the past 60 days or intend to do so during the study period.
7. You have received any immunosuppressive treatments within the past 90 days or intend to do so during the study period.
8. In the last 3 months, you have taken part in another interventional study or intend to do so during the study
9. You have any surgery or treatments scheduled during the study period that, in the opinion of the researcher, may compromise adherence to the study
10. You have a history of allergic reactions or hypersensitivity to the ingredients in the experimental product or placebo
11. Your currently smoke or have been a heavy smoker within the last 3 years
12. You have a history of excessive alcohol consumption and/or drug abuse in the last 12 months

Voluntary participation and withdrawal from the study

It is important that you understand that your involvement in this study is voluntary. While we are grateful to have you participate, we respect your right to decline. There will be no consequences to you if you decide not to participate, and this will not affect any future treatment/service. If you decide to discontinue participation at any time, you may do so without providing an explanation. If you withdraw, any assessments already conducted may continue to be used for analysis.

Please note that if you choose to commence treatment for your COVID symptoms, other treatments to improve your immunity, or you require treatment for any other condition during the study, this may result in withdrawal from the study. Your health is the utmost priority, and your choice/need to commence new treatment before completing this study is respected and supported.

Your privacy

Your privacy is very important to us. Your participation in this study and any information will be treated in a confidential manner. Your name and identifying details will not be used in any publication arising out of the research. Following the study, the data will be kept in a de-identified format, in a locked cabinet in the office of the Investigator and will be held for statistical analysis for future publication. Re-identifying codes will be retained for 6 months in case this is needed and will then be destroyed.

Possible benefits

Long COVID is recognised as a problem that is affecting a significant portion of the population. Unfortunately, treatment options are limited. Identifying new safe and effective treatments will therefore be important for the community.

Possible risks

Participation in this study carries little risk and many measures will be in place to decrease the likelihood of potential risks. Below is a list of possible risks associated with participating in this study:

- SRS-MHT-44 is a proprietary blend of over 30 herbal ingredients. Some of the herbal ingredients include curcumin, ginger, Panax ginseng, saffron, ashwagandha and ginkgo biloba. The herbal ingredients in SRS-MHT-44 have a long history of use in traditional medicine, and many are commonly included in over-the-counter

supplements that can be purchased in health food stores and pharmacies. Therefore, these herbal ingredients are considered safe and well-tolerated by most users. Although reported side effects are infrequent, there have been reports of mild digestive complaints (e.g., nausea, stomach cramps, bloating). SRS-MHT-44 also has a relatively bitter taste. There have been no reports of any severe side effects from the intake of SRS-MHT-44, although this cannot be totally ruled out.

- Further details about SRS-MHT-44 and its intake are included in the 'SRS-MHT-44 Information Sheet'.

In this study, we will collect a blood sample from your vein (venepuncture). Although venepunctures are very safe, there is a possibility of developing bruising at the site of the needle puncture. This usually appears within 24 hours and may range in size from a small spot to a large purple bruise. While bruising can be unsightly, it is not dangerous and will slowly disappear over a few days. Very rarely, a small artery that contains blood at a much higher pressure than in veins will lie unusually close to or underneath a vein. In this situation, the artery may be accidentally punctured at the time of venepuncture. Bruising on the lower part of the arm over the next 2 to 3 days will likely develop. Again, this is not dangerous and will gradually disappear over a couple of weeks. Although extremely rare, some people may have a tiny branch of one of the sensory nerves of the arm running over the surface of the vein. Rarely, the needle will hit this tiny nerve on the way into the vein. This may cause a short, sharp electric-shock type pain. This may be all that occurs but, in some cases, a tingling type of pain may persist for 1 to 4 weeks as the nerve heals. This is inconvenient and may be unpleasant, but it eventually subsides. Another rare complication is for a small clot (or thrombus) to form in the vein at the site of the venepuncture. This is noticed as a small firm lump just under the skin at the venepuncture site. The lump may or may not be tender and will go away over a couple of weeks. Finally, although extremely rare, an infection at the site of puncture can occur. Please notify us immediately if this occurs. To minimise all these risks, blood collections will be collected by a qualified and experienced phlebotomist using current best practices.

What to do if you experience significant side effects

If you experience any significant illness, injury, or side effects from taking your supplements, please contact Dr Adrian Lopresti or Stephen Smith immediately (contact details are below). You may be asked to cease participating in the study and to seek medical advice

Dr Stephen Smith: Ph: 9448 7376 | Mob: 0412 813 518 | Email: steve@clinicalresearch.com.au

Dr Adrian Lopresti: Ph: 9448 7376 | Mob: 0411 969 797 | Email: adrian@clinicalresearch.com.au

Feedback on study results

It is estimated the results of this study will be finalised in late 2024. A summary of the results obtained from all participants in this study will be emailed to you when they have been published in a peer-reviewed journal.

Questions

If you would like to discuss any aspect of this study, please feel free to contact Dr Adrian Lopresti on 08 9448 7376.

We would like to thank you in advance for your assistance with this research project. We look forward to hearing from you soon.

If you are interested in participating in this study, please contact Dr Adrian Lopresti on 9448 7376 or email adrian@clinicalresearch.com.au

This study has been approved by the National Institute of Integrative Medicine (NIIM) Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) (Trial Reference Number: 0116E_2022). If you have any reservation or complaint about the ethical conduct of this research, and wish to talk with an independent person, you may contact the NIIM Research Ethics Office (Tel. 03 9804 0646) or e-mail hrec@niim.com.au). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.