

INFORMATION Booklet

We are conducting a national medical research study to look at changes in the lining of the oesophagus (*the oesophagus is the 'food-pipe' that joins the throat to the stomach*). You have been invited to take part in this study and this brochure will tell you what the study is all about. Before you decide to take part in the study we want you to have all the facts. Please read this brochure carefully and discuss any questions you have with a member of the research team.

If you agree to take part in the study we will ask you to allow us to collect some extra biopsies at the time of your endoscopy. You will also be asked to donate a small sample of blood and to fill in a short survey form.

WHO IS CONDUCTING THE STUDY?

The study is being conducted by doctors and scientists at hospitals and institutes around Australia, including St Vincent's Hospital, Westmead Hospital, Nepean Hospital (NSW), the Flinders Medical Centre, Repatriation General Hospital (SA), the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre (VIC) and Queensland Institute of Medical Research, the Princess Alexandra Hospital, the Greenslopes Private Hospital (QLD) and others (see page 5 for the complete list of hospitals). The study has been funded by a Centres of Research Excellence Grant from the National Health and Medical Research Council of Australia (2013- 2017) and has been approved by the Research Ethics Committees of the collaborating institutions in accordance with the guidelines of the National Health and Medical Research Council of Australia.

WHY DO YOU WANT ME TO TAKE PART?

Every year in Australia, thousands of people visit their doctor with problems such as heartburn, acid reflux and Barrett's oesophagus. Reflux occurs when acid from the stomach washes up into the oesophagus, and this causes symptoms such as heartburn. Barrett's oesophagus is a change in the lining of the oesophagus which is caused by reflux, and in a few people this can lead to cancer. We are doing this study to try to find out what causes these conditions (as well as more serious diseases such as cancer) so that we can try to prevent them from occurring in the future. In particular, we want to look at the genes and environmental factors that might influence whether or not a person gets these disorders.

WHAT WILL BEING IN THE STUDY MEAN FOR ME?

Being in the study will involve the following steps:

1. completing a brief survey form about your general health (this takes about 10 minutes)
2. giving permission for the doctors conducting the study to access your relevant medical and pathology records (including preserved tissue blocks if appropriate)
3. if you are about to have an endoscopy we would like your permission to take extra biopsies
4. if you are agreeable, we would like to collect a small blood sample.

There will be no direct benefit to you from taking part in the study. However, in the future, the results of the study are likely to help people with similar problems of the oesophagus. There will be no cost to you and if you do not want to take part this will not affect your future medical care in any way.

HOW ARE THE BIOPSIES COLLECTED?

During endoscopy procedures we often collect small samples of tissue from the lining of the oesophagus. These are called biopsies. These are tested under the microscope for the diagnosis of various diseases. The results of these tests are given to you by your doctor, and they may be used to plan your care. Some of this material is left over, and we would like to save the remaining tissue for research. This material is called a tissue block.

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In addition, we are seeking your permission to collect some extra biopsies at the time of your endoscopy. These biopsies are each about the size of a quarter of a grain of rice. Two to three extra biopsies will be taken from each of the upper and lower oesophagus, the upper stomach and the duodenum. These will include any areas which have disease. Taking these extra biopsies does not cause any pain, and it is unlikely to cause any harm either. This process takes less than 5 minutes.

WHAT WILL THE BIOPSY SAMPLES BE USED FOR?

The biopsies collected for research will be stored securely in a very cold freezer and will be used only by qualified Medical Researchers. The researchers will conduct laboratory studies looking for changes in the structure and function of genes and proteins within the cells of the oesophageal lining. We aim to identify those factors associated with more severe changes in the oesophagus and those factors associated with only mild changes. We also want to develop new tests that will help to identify those lesions that are at highest risk of progressing to cancer, and to develop new treatments that will prevent cancers from developing. We may also use your biopsy for experiments in which we will grow some of the tissue in the laboratory, so that we can study how the cells grow and respond to potential therapeutic agents. This could include the development of long-lived cell lines.

These studies will be performed at one or more of the collaborating institutions in Australia (St Vincent's Sydney, Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre, Flinders Medical Centre, Westmead Hospital, Nepean Hospital, Princess Alexandra Hospital or QIMR Berghofer Institute of Medical Research). These studies have to be approved by the Human Research Ethics Committees at each institution and have to abide by the ethical and scientific principles set out by the National Health and Medical Research Council of Australia.

ARE THERE ANY RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH THIS STUDY?

Taking *extra* biopsies has minimal risk of harm, as you are already having an endoscopy and the biopsy itself is very small. However, taking the biopsies means that your endoscopy will take a few minutes longer. We have done similar research for more than 4 years in more than 1,000 endoscopy procedures, and have not had any problems.

IF I GIVE A BLOOD SAMPLE, WHAT WILL IT BE USED FOR?

We will ask your consent to collect a small amount of blood from a vein in your arm (30-40 ml or about 6-8 teaspoons). If you agree to this, the blood sample will be collected during or just before your endoscopy procedure. This will be collected through the cannula which is routinely inserted into a vein in your arm during your endoscopy. This means that you will not be asked to have any extra injections during the endoscopy, and this step will not cause any pain.

We will use your blood sample to do tests to look for factors eg proteins and changes in genes that are associated with various disorders of the oesophagus, including cancer (see section on Genetic Testing on page 4). We may be able to develop blood tests which might help to identify people with certain oesophageal diseases. It is important to have blood samples from people with and without cancer to determine whether we can detect changes in substances in the blood in people with and without oesophageal diseases.

We may also use your blood to make long-lived cell lines and will keep some of your sample indefinitely for future research studies (see the section on 'Future Research' below).

HOW IS MY PRIVACY PROTECTED?

When you fill out a questionnaire or donate a sample of blood or tissue to this study we will make every effort to protect your privacy.

- All your questionnaires and samples will be stored securely in such a way that they cannot immediately be identified as having come from you. They will be labelled with a unique number so that they do not get confused with questionnaires or samples from someone else.
- Any identifying information (your full name, address etc) will be stored separately from the samples and information you provide. Access to this identifying information is restricted to a

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small number of senior members of the study team. Your identifying details will be kept only at the institution where your biopsy was taken and in the central database at the Queensland Institute of Medical Research and will not be provided to any other laboratories.

- Your study records may be viewed for the purposes of source data auditing by members of the Ethics Committee.
- No information that could be used to identify you or your family will be included in any report on the results of the study.

CAN I WITHDRAW FROM THE STUDY?

You may withdraw from the study at any time and this will in no way affect your medical treatment in the future. If you decide now that your tissue and blood can be kept for research, you can still change your mind later. Just contact us on our *free Study Helpline* on **1800-222-600** (or see **page 5 for contact details of the Investigator and Project Manager**) and let us know that you do not want us to use your samples. Any remaining blood or tissue that has not been used will then be destroyed, however it may occasionally not be possible to destroy material that has already been processed.

WILL I FIND OUT THE RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH USING MY TISSUE OR BLOOD?

The results of research done with your tissue or blood are not likely to be available in the immediate future. This is because research can take a long time and must use tissue samples from many people before the results are known. We will not be able to give you the individual results from your samples (except in exceptional circumstances, see Genetic Testing on page 4) but everyone who takes part in PROBE-NET will be sent an information update to let them know, in general, how the study is going. You are also welcome to contact the Study Team at any time if you have questions about the study.

FUTURE RESEARCH USING YOUR SAMPLES

After we have finished this particular study we will keep the information and remaining samples that you give us indefinitely. In the future we may match your data against other health registers and we will use your samples for future biochemical and genetic studies of oesophageal and gastrointestinal diseases. We may also contact you again to ask you to take part in a follow-up study but you will be under no obligation to do so. Any extra studies that use your samples will have to be approved by the Ethics Committees at the institution carrying out the study before your information and material can be used. Any information or material given to researchers will be identified by a code only so it will be impossible for them to identify you in any way. You will not receive any notice of future uses of your information or samples.

There is a chance that information derived from the samples that you are donating under this study may, in the future, have some commercial value, for example if they lead to the development of a commercial product. You will not be compensated for your participation in the study or for any future value that the sample you have given may be found to have. However, it is our intention that if money is generated as a result of research using your samples then some will be put into a special fund to be used for future research into oesophageal cancer.

WHAT IF I HAVE MORE QUESTIONS OR A COMPLAINT ABOUT THE STUDY?

If you have questions about the study please call our *free Study Helpline* on **1800-222-600**.

If you would like to speak to someone who is not directly involved in the study, including in relation to matters concerning policies, information about the conduct of the study or your rights as a participant, or should you wish to make a confidential complaint, contacts for the Ethics Committees are listed on the last page of this document.

GENETIC TESTING AND PROBE-NET

People respond differently to things they come into contact with, such as smoke, alcohol, foods and medications. We think that the reason people respond differently is partly due to their genes. Some genes may make people more or less likely to become ill when they come into contact with particular factors. We are trying to find out which genes these are, hoping that this will lead to new treatments that act in the same way as the 'good' genes.

We would greatly appreciate your participation in the genetic part of PROBE-NET. However this decision is entirely your own and you do not have to give us any explanation if you do not want to take part.

HOW DO WE GET A SAMPLE OF YOUR GENES?

Genes are made of DNA, which is the genetic molecule of life and carries the hereditary information that underlies the physical and behavioural characteristics of all living things.

The best way of obtaining a sample of DNA is from a blood sample. When your sample arrives at our laboratory, we extract DNA from it. Scientists use centrifuges and chemicals to separate the cells and to extract purified DNA from these cells. The purified DNA will then be screened to look for genes which are thought to be related to disorders of the oesophagus.

WHAT IF WE FIND IMPORTANT GENETIC INFORMATION ABOUT YOU?

It is possible that future research using your sample may result in new genetic information about your risk of getting disorders of the oesophagus, or other conditions. If research findings are made that may have significant implications for you or your family, the researcher is obliged to submit a full report to a Scientific Committee who will then consider whether you or your family might benefit from the chance to learn more about this information.

It is your choice whether or not you wish to know of any important results and we will ask you if you want us to tell you if we do find any information that has significant implications for you or your family. We will also ask you if you want information to be given to a member of your family if we cannot contact you. **We will not give any information about you to members of your family without your permission.**

*If we find some important information and you have declared that you do wish to know of any significant results, we will do our best to contact you to ask if you still want to find out more about these findings. At that time, you would then be given genetic counselling about the implications of receiving genetic information and, if you then decided that you wished to obtain your individual results, you would be asked to give a second blood sample so that the research results could be confirmed in an accredited testing laboratory. **We will not be able to give you results directly but, with your permission, we will pass information onto a clinical testing laboratory so that they can easily repeat the test under the appropriate testing conditions.***

Currently in Australia, genetic testing does not affect your ability to obtain private health insurance (although there may be a waiting period for pre-existing conditions). It is, however, possible that in the future the fact that you have taken part in a study involving genetics may affect you or your family if you want to take out a new health, disability or life insurance policy. For instance, you may have to disclose whether you have attended a genetic counselling service when you apply for a new life insurance policy, and this may affect your policy. **We will not pass on this information about you to anyone, including your family members, without your written permission unless lawfully obliged to.** If you would like more information about genetic testing and health insurance please call the PROBE-NET Helpline on 1800-222-600.

ARE THERE ANY RISKS IF I PARTICIPATE?

When a blood sample is taken there is a chance that you might experience slight bleeding, minor bruising or pain. All blood samples will be taken by trained personnel who are qualified to manage any such problems. There is minimal extra risk in taking more biopsies at the time of an endoscopy.

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Contact details for the Project Manager- Ms Sue O'Brien, QIMR Berghofer Medical Research Institute on (07) 3845 3541 or suzanne.obrien@qimr.edu.au

Contact persons for the Institutional Ethics Committees which have approved this project:



The Secretary
Human Research Ethics Committee
Queensland Berghofer Medical Research Institute
Ph: (07) 8222 4139



This study has been reviewed and approved by the **Metro South Hospital and Health Service Ethics Committee (Princess Alexandra Hospital)**. Should you wish to discuss the study with someone not directly involved, in particular in relation to matters concerning policies, information about the conduct of the study or your rights as a participant, or should you wish to make an independent complaint, you can contact the HREC Co-ordinator on (07) 3443 8049 or email EthicsResearch.PAH@health.qld.gov.au



This study has been reviewed and approved by the **Ethics Committee of the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre**. Should you wish to discuss the study with someone not directly involved, in particular in relation to matters concerning policies, information about the conduct of the study, or your rights as a participant, or should you wish to make an independent complaint, you can contact the Ethics Committee Secretariat on (03) 9656 1699 or the Patient Advocate on (03) 9656 1870.



This study has been approved by **St Vincent's Hospital HREC**. Any person with concerns or complaints about the conduct of this study should contact the Research Office who is nominated to receive complaints from research participants. You should contact them on (02) 8382 2075 and quote 08/099.



This study has been reviewed by the **Southern Adelaide Clinical Research Ethics Committee**. Should you wish to discuss the project with someone not directly involved, in particular in relation to matters concerning policies your rights as a participant or should you wish to make a confidential complaint you can contact the Administrative Officer- Research on (08)8204 4507.



Research Governance Office
Nepean Hospital
PO Box 63
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Ethics and Governance Office
Westmead Hospital Hawkesbury Rd,
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The Secretary- Human Research Ethics Committee
Greenslopes Private Hospital on (07) 3394 7819
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