

# Taking part in research

at The Royal Children's Hospital



## Information for patients and families



As well as delivering excellent healthcare, The Royal Children's Hospital (RCH) is committed to looking for new ways of preventing, diagnosing and treating childhood diseases to improve the health and wellbeing of children. You can help, by taking part in the many studies we conduct with our dedicated research partner, the Murdoch Childrens Research Institute.

### Research on The Royal Children's Hospital campus

The Royal Children's Hospital (RCH) is one of the world's leading academic hospitals and has a long-standing and strong commitment to research. The RCH is co-located with campus partners, Murdoch Childrens Research Institute and The University of Melbourne Department of Paediatrics.

Collaboration between scientists, researchers and doctors means that research findings can quickly be put into practice. This improves treatment and healthcare for children at the RCH and around the world. Our researchers investigate a wide range of areas such as genetics, allergy, cancer, vaccines, heart disease and brain development.

Successful research relies on children and their parents/guardians taking part in research. Whilst your child is attending the hospital, your family may be approached about taking part in research. Your child's contribution could help to provide better care for both your child and for other children in the future.

You don't have to be a patient to be involved in research at the RCH. Sometimes we need healthy volunteers too. For example, some research studies ask healthy siblings of patients to participate.

### What does research involve?

This varies depending on what the researchers are investigating. It may be as simple as allowing researchers to look at your child's medical records or use left-over tissue or blood that is collected from your child as part of their routine medical care.

Involvement in other studies may include:

- Interviews, questionnaires and surveys
- Blood or urine tests
- Imaging studies such as simple x-rays or MRI scans
- Trials of new medications, medical devices, vaccines, diets, or other treatments such as psychological counselling

All research must be approved by the RCH Human Research Ethics Committee which is responsible for assessing the ethical principles of research conducted on campus, and to protect the welfare and rights of participants in research.

### What are your rights as a research participant?

- Your decision to participate in research is voluntary — this means it is your choice.
- You will be given information about the research to help you decide whether or not to participate.
- You should be given the chance to talk to others before making a decision e.g. your family, friends or other health professionals.
- You should be able to talk to the researchers if you have any questions or want more information about the research.
- If you choose not to participate, it will not affect your family's access to treatment and care at the RCH.

### Find out more

If you would like more information about research at the RCH please speak to a member of your child's treating team or visit our website: [www.rch.org.au/research](http://www.rch.org.au/research)

If you have any concerns about the research project your child is participating in or any questions about your child's rights as a research participant, and would like to speak to someone independent of the project, please contact the Director of Research Ethics and Governance on (03) 9345 5044 or [rch.ethics@rch.org.au](mailto:rch.ethics@rch.org.au)

Melbourne Children's

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