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TEDS Biomarkers Project

A study about young peoples' experience of stress

The information below is to help you understand what the study is about. Please take time to read this information sheet and consider whether or not you wish to participate. If you have any questions then please feel free to contact us on our freephone number.

What does taking part involve?

Participation initially involves each twin completing a questionnaire. We will post these to you with a freepost envelope for their return. This questionnaire should take no more than half an hour to complete, and will ask questions relating to personality, lifestyle, sleep routine and health.

We will ask each twin to provide a small saliva sample, by spitting or drooling into a small (5ml) plastic tube that will be posted with the questionnaires. By examining certain parts of the saliva, or 'biological markers', we will be able to see what effect the experience of stress has on the body. An important part of the saliva collection is the time it takes to give the sample. There is no 'right' or 'wrong' time, but we do need to know how long it takes, so we will ask you to time yourself.

Since the time of day affects the biological markers we are looking at, we would like you to take the sample in the afternoon or early evening. The sample will then be collected by a medical courier service and returned to us. The sample must be collected on the same day, and we will ask you to store the saliva in the fridge until collection time.

We understand that certain days may not be convenient for you. As such, if you agree to participate then we will contact you with times and dates when the medical courier service can collect the sample to schedule a time for collection.

We will also provide a thermometer for the twins to take their temperature and a tape measure for them to measure their waist.

Eligibility

In order to take part, we require that **both** twins be willing to participate in the study. We also require that they are in good health at the time of giving the saliva sample – for example, that they are not experiencing cold or flu symptoms. Please let us know as soon as possible if either twin is unwell in the run up to the saliva sample being taken. We will also contact you via telephone

before they provide the sample in order to check that they are both well and not suffering from any illnesses which may interfere with the results.

Rewards

We would like to send the twins a £10 voucher each to say thank you for the time and effort that participating in our research involves. If you participate in the project, we will ask you to indicate whether you would like an iTunes or a Love2Shop voucher. Love2Shop vouchers can be redeemed in hundreds of high street stores nationwide, including HMV, Waterstones and New Look, as well as for some leisure activities and restaurants. The vouchers will be sent once we have received both the questionnaires and the saliva.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

Findings from the study will be published in scientific journals. Your family's information will be kept strictly confidential and anonymous. As a result of your participation we hope to plan a larger study to look at the stress that young people experience around the time of their GCSE exams.

Do you have to take part?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do take part, you are free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason. Your decision not to take part in this study will not affect your involvement with TEDS.

Confidentiality

All information collected during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. The data that you provide will be entered into a dataset together with other participants' data, and you will be identified in this dataset only by participant number. In order to arrange collection of the saliva sample we will be required to provide the medical courier firm with contact information for you.

Consent form

If you are willing to participate in this study, please complete and sign the enclosed consent forms. Please note that the deadline for returning these forms is November 10th, 2010.

Queries?

IF you have any questions do not hesitate to call us on our FREEPHONE line 0800 317 029, or email us at teds-project@kcl.ac.uk.