

Join our **WellKiwis** study and help fight the flu



Are you living in the **Wellington** region with at least one child aged 19 or younger living in your household?

We are calling for volunteers to take part in ground-breaking research into how people develop immunity to the influenza (flu) and how the virus spreads in a household. This will help scientists develop a universal flu vaccine that could put an end to flu pandemics and save millions of lives around the world.



WellKiwis
influenza study

What is the WellKiwis household study?

We're looking for families with at least one child aged 19 or younger living in the Wellington region to take part in the WellKiwis household study, a study being led by scientists at the Institute of Environmental Science and Research (ESR).

Influenza, unlike a common cold, is a serious illness that affects millions of people globally. In New Zealand, young children, older adults, and people with underlying medical conditions are particularly vulnerable to its infection.

The WellKiwis household study will follow families for up to seven years. The aim is to see how a person's prior exposure to the flu virus (or vaccine) influences their on-going immune responses to exposures to the flu over time. It will also help us to understand how the flu virus spreads from an infected person to others in a household setting.

We hope our findings will lead to more effective and longer lasting flu vaccines for everyone, prevent future pandemics and save lives.

Taking part: the benefits for you and your family

There are many ways that you and your family will benefit from being part of the WellKiwis household study, while helping to save lives:

- Your family will have healthcare professionals looking out for your wellbeing during various study periods.
- Every time one of your family members catches a cold or flu during the flu season (usually May-September), a nurse will be in contact and may come and visit them at home.

- Your family will find out quickly if any of your family members is infected with the flu or another respiratory virus (including COVID-19) and get access to the right support to keep your family healthy and well.
- You will receive a \$30 eGift card each time a sample is taken to thank you for each of your participating family members.

You and your family's journey with this study

- You can register you and your family's interest in the study.
- We will monitor your family for up to seven years.
- You will receive regular surveys to inform us if you are sick throughout the winter season.
- If you are ill, we may take a nose or throat swab to test for flu or other respiratory viruses. If the swab tests POSITIVE for the flu/COVID-19 virus, we will take two small blood samples from you.
- When the first family member (either you or someone else) tests positive for the flu/COVID-19, we will check on everyone in the family to see if the flu/COVID-19 virus spreads from the first person to other family members. We will monitor everyone's symptoms and take a nose or throat swab every 3rd day as well as a pair of small blood samples.
- If you have a flu/COVID-19 vaccination, we will also take a small blood sample.
- We will take one annual blood sample from you every year.
- There are NO medications given at any point of the WellKiwis study.



Privacy and confidentiality

You and your family's test results and information are confidential. No personal identifiable information will be published.

This study is being conducted at the Institute of Environmental Science and Research (ESR), 66 Ward Street, Upper Hutt, New Zealand.

ESR is New Zealand's Crown Research Institute specialising in science for communities – we detect and protect. ESR uses world-leading science to safeguard health, keep communities safe, protect our food-based economy, and improve the health of water and natural environment.

Find out more about the study

We want to make sure you have all the information you need to make an informed decision before participating in this important study.

Go to <http://wellkiwis.co.nz> for more detailed information on the study.

To enrol directly in the study, please contact WellKiwis at 0800 493555 (08004WELLKIWI). Or email the WellKiwis study team at WellKiwis@esr.cri.nz



Go to <http://www.esr.cri.nz> for more information on the work ESR undertakes on monitoring influenza in our communities, and the on-going worldwide studies known as SHIVERS.



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This study is being conducted at the Institute of Environmental Science and Research (ESR) at 66 Ward Street, Upper Hutt with New Zealand ethics approval (NTX11.11.102.AM58). It is a multi-agency collaboration including participating general practices in Wellington, ESR, Te Awakairangi Health Network, participating general practices, Regional Public Health, the Capital Coast and Hutt Valley District Health Boards, the Universities of Otago and Auckland, Malaghan Institute of Medical Research and St. Jude Children's Research Hospital (SJCRH). It is a part of a large international collaboration funded by United States National Institutes of Health through SJCRH in Memphis USA.