

## WHAT IS COCO90S?

You are one of our Children of the 90s, a group of around 14,500 children born in the Avon area in 1991 and 1992. Scientists have been studying you ever since and are constantly making discoveries that make a difference to lives around the world. We are very excited that the Children of the 90s are now having children of their own, and we are keen to follow these pregnancies, births, babies and children. We are calling this study Children of the Children of the 90s or COCO90s for short. This study is unique in providing a three-generation resource for scientists around the world to research key social and health issues in the future.

## WHO CAN BE PART OF COCO90S?

You can if you are about to become, or already are, a mum or a dad. We are also interested in your partner and will be asking them if they would like to be a part of the study too. It doesn't matter how much you have been involved in the study in the past, we would love you to be involved in this ground-breaking research.

## WHAT IS THE AIM OF THIS STUDY?

Since recruitment of their mothers during pregnancy, in the early 1990s, and their subsequent births, thousands of Children of the 90s have attended clinics and have completed questionnaires. Here are some of the discoveries that have been made possible through our research with your help, that are now benefitting the next generation of parents and children:

- Confirming the benefits to babies of sleeping on their back and showing that this has no unintended harmful effects
- Children brought up in very hygienic homes are more likely to develop asthma

- Peanut allergy may be caused by the use of skin creams containing peanut oil in early life. All creams including nappy creams must now carry a health warning about this possible danger
- Research into the rise in obesity, that included participants in Children of the 90s, has been used by the government to develop ways to tackle the problem of obesity

We want to continue to be at the forefront of health research and this looks more and more likely to involve studying DNA and genes. There is a new science called epigenetics that looks at whether the same genes have different effects depending on whether they are turned 'on' or 'off'.

Epigenetics might explain how genes and other things interact to affect health and development. For example, what your mother ate in her pregnancy might have affected whether some of your genes were switched on or off and this in turn might even affect your children.

It is thought that epigenetic effects change over time. For example, if you become ill or alter your diet this might change a chemical on your DNA (DNA methylation) which could then change whether a gene is switched on or not.

We are in a unique position to be involved in this research, because we already have DNA from many of you and your parents, along with detailed information about your health and development. Studying your child as well will allow us to look at the effect genes, lifestyles and epigenetics have on health and development across three generations.

## WHAT WILL THIS STUDY INVOLVE?

We would like to continue to collect information about your general health and your experiences and expectations about becoming a parent. If you are female we will collect some detailed information about your health during pregnancy and birth. We will then follow the health and development of your child. All this will be done in a number of ways:

1. Questionnaires
2. Asking your permission to look at your medical records

3. Collecting samples like blood and saliva
4. Inviting you to our study centre or letting us visit you at home to carry out some simple measures like weight and blood pressure. This will involve repeated visits and questionnaires over the coming years.

## **DO I HAVE TO TAKE PART?**

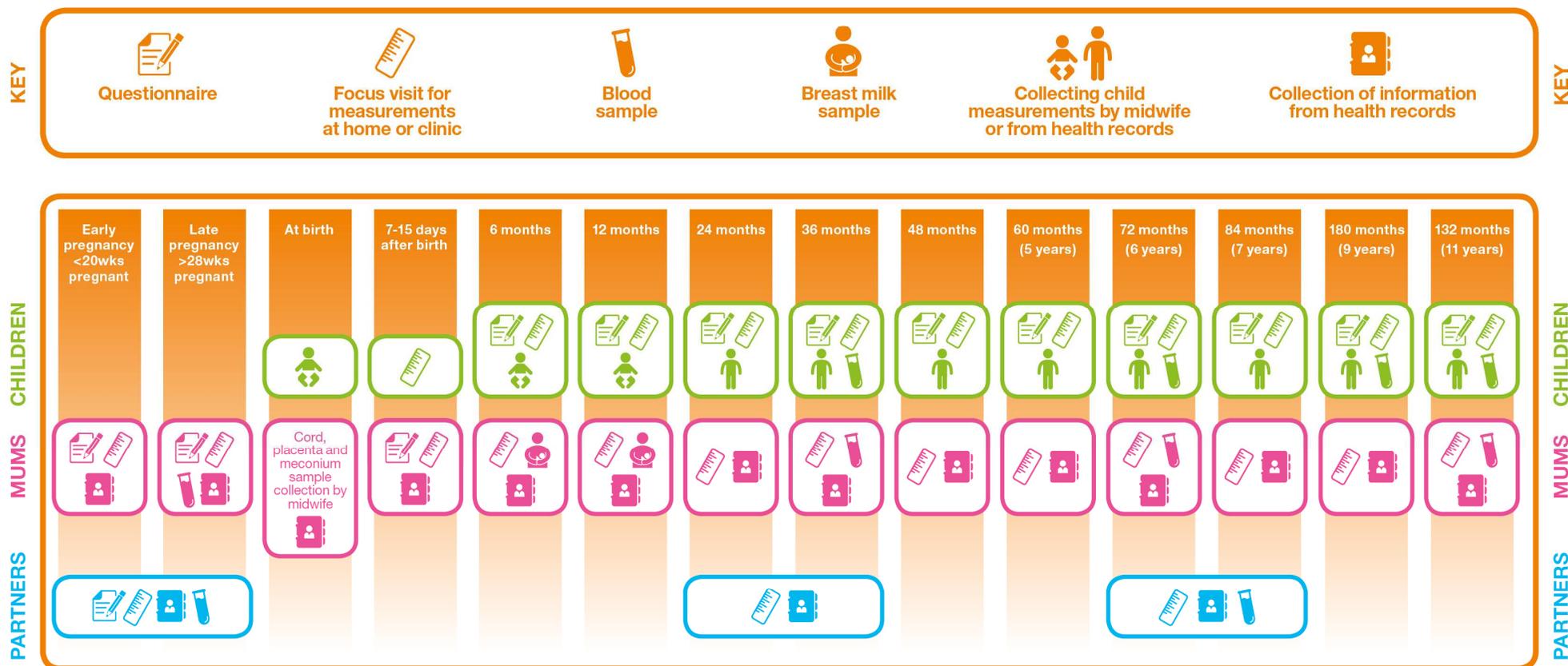
No! Participation in this study is completely voluntary. If you do decide not to take part in COCO90s this will not affect your continued participation in Children of the 90s.

We understand the commitment involved in taking part in research and that having young children is a very busy time in your life, so we will always give you the option not to come to an individual visit, give a sample or complete a questionnaire if it is not convenient for you. This will not affect you being invited in the future. Also, you are free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason.

## YOUR INVOLVEMENT

The table below shows all the possible visits and sample collection times for COCO90s.

Once you have enrolled in COCO90s we will invite you (and your child once they are born) to each session unless you tell us you no longer wish to be part of COCO90s. Remember you can choose not to complete these visits or sample collections at any time without it affecting you or your child's future involvement. In addition, we will also ask you to complete a questionnaire as part of your enrolment and then further questionnaires roughly once a year.



## **ARE THERE ANY ADVANTAGES OR DISADVANTAGES TO ME TAKING PART?**

As with all our research we hope our discoveries will help people in the future. Some of the measures and tests we carry out are similar to those carried out by your midwife or doctor, but this is not a replacement for your normal medical care. We may sometimes get results that indicate an increased risk for some health problems so if you have agreed to receive feedback, we will inform you of any results outside the normal range and give you a letter to take to your doctor.

The main disadvantage is we require your time, and we really value this. We will therefore pay your travel expenses and give you a £20 shopping voucher to thank you for any visits you attend. You are free to take part in as much or as little of the study as you wish. Other than this we do not see any disadvantages to taking part.

## **HOW DO WE ENSURE CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA PROTECTION?**

All data and information we have about you is stored with a unique ID number. Researchers do not need and will never see your name, address or exact date of birth (sometimes researchers will be given the month and year of birth, for example if they wanted to study 'season of birth' effects). The information we keep about you is held securely and access to them is restricted to key COCO90s staff. We will never share your details with anyone else except in exceptional circumstances where we feel there is a risk to the safety of you or your child.

## **HOW IS THIS STUDY MANAGED AND FUNDED?**

The COCO90s study is part of the Children of the 90s study which is run by the University of Bristol. Expert scientists oversee this research. The scientific director for Children of the 90s is Professor George Davey Smith and the principle investigator is Dr Nic Timpson. The lead scientist for COCO90s is Professor Debbie Lawlor.

The study is funded by the Wellcome Trust, the UK Medical Research Council and the University of Bristol.

## WHO HAS APPROVED THIS STUDY?

- The Children of the 90s Executive Committee, which is made up of senior researchers and managers.
- The NRES Committee South West – Central Bristol. This is an independent group that looks at all research involving NHS patients. It is there to protect your safety, rights, well-being and dignity.
- The Children of the 90s Law and Ethics Committee, made up of experts in research ethics and study participants, have approved the overall aims of the study.

## WHAT DO I DO NEXT?

1. Complete the enclosed consent form
2. Return this to us in the pre-paid envelope
3. Please pass the 'partners pack' to your partner so they can decide if they wish to be involved in this research
4. Once we have received your consent form and the details about your pregnancy/child we will send you your first questionnaire and an invite for a focus visit.

## CONTACTS AND FURTHER DETAILS

If you would like to contact us for further information or have any comments regarding COCO90s please contact the study team;

Tel: 07772 102649

Text: coco90sFI and your name and date of birth to 07772 102649

Email: [coco90s@childrenofthe90s.ac.uk](mailto:coco90s@childrenofthe90s.ac.uk)

Website: [www.childrenofthe90s.ac.uk/coco90s/](http://www.childrenofthe90s.ac.uk/coco90s/)

Or join us on [Facebook.com/childrenofthe90s](https://www.facebook.com/childrenofthe90s)

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