



## MicroRNA Autism Research Study

Do you or your family members have a diagnosis of autism?

Would you like to help scientists learn more about the  
cause of autism?

We are looking for families to join our research  
study.



## What is autism?

Autism is a label which describes some people who see the world differently, for example:

- They may have difficulty understanding other people's feelings
- They may prefer to spend more time on their own
- They may have difficulty in communicating
- They may have difficulty accepting change e.g. when things happen, how things happen or change in food
- They may find it hard to understand other people
- They may do things over and over again.

## What are we doing and why?

Millions of people in the world, and around 1 in 100 people in the UK are thought to have autism. At the moment we don't understand what causes it, but we know that sometimes many people in the same family have autism.

We would like to find out if tests done on blood samples can help us to understand the cause of autism. We would like to compare blood samples of people with and without autism from the same family.

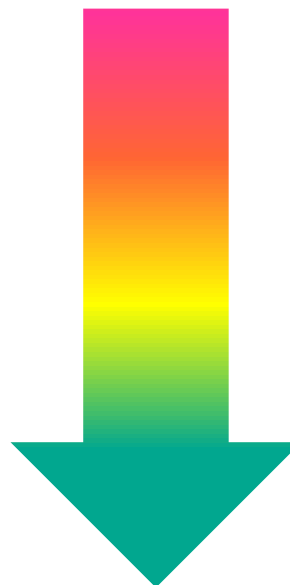
## Who can take part?

We are looking for six members of the same family (three with autism, three without) to take part in this research. The six family members need to be blood relatives and can include parents, grandparents, children, siblings, cousins, uncles or aunts.



## What does it involve?

1. You can talk to a research assistant before you decide whether or not you will take part. You can ask any questions about the study.
2. You or your parent(s) will be asked to complete a consent form to confirm you would like to be part of the study.
3. Your parent(s) will fill in some questionnaires (about your social communication and social responsiveness).
4. The research assistant or a doctor will take two samples of blood (approximately one teaspoon each) from your arm to see if they can help us understand what causes autism.



## What happens if I change my mind?

You don't have to be involved in this study. It is your choice. If you say you would like to be involved and then change your mind that's fine, just let your parent(s) and the research assistant know. You don't need to tell us why, and it will not change any of your future care.

## What are the benefits of taking part?

The research team hope that the research will lead to a better understanding around autism and the causes of autism.



## What are the risks of taking part?

Sometimes people can feel worried about a blood sample being taken from their arm. If you would like to be involved in the study but feel worried about this let us know. We have videos and pictures of what will happen, photographs of the research assistants, doctor and the equipment we will use. We will give you as much time and information as possible before we visit so you can feel ready. If you change your mind that's fine, just let us know.



## Will I find out the results?

If we find something which might be causing autism in your family we will let you know. This is the first study looking at blood samples from family members so we won't know exactly what it means. The research team are only testing a small piece of your DNA and would not know the significance of the results from these tests.

If our study finds that family blood samples might help us to understand the cause of autism then we will do more research.

## If you want to ask us anything about this study:

You can contact (*Name*), Research Assistant or Professor Barry Wright to ask questions about this study by:

**Telephone:** 01904 294244

**Email:** [research.comic@nhs.net](mailto:research.comic@nhs.net)

**Write to:** COMIC Research  
IT Centre,  
Innovation Way,  
Heslington, York,  
YO10 5NP

**Website:** <https://www.comic.org.uk/>



## For further support:

**National Autistic Society** <http://www.autism.org.uk/>

**NHS Choices** <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/autism/>

**Child Autism UK** <https://www.childautism.org.uk/>

**Scope** <https://www.scope.org.uk/support/families/diagnosis/autism>