



EPR Winter 2021 Update

Message From Dr. Shepherd Schurman

I hope you all are doing well during these unprecedented times. The National Institutes of Health is actively engaged in efforts to curb the COVID-19 pandemic. Many NIH research studies, including the Environmental Polymorphisms Registry (EPR), are collecting information to aid public health response efforts by looking at how environment, personal genetic factors, and COVID-19 risk are related.

Despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, many of you have continued to take part in new and ongoing EPR research activities. Your engagement is crucial in helping the fight against COVID and answering other important research questions. In this update, you will learn more about the ways to get involved and make this research possible. Stay safe and be well!



New and Ongoing Opportunities

Right now there are more ways than ever to participate in research activities with the EPR! Be on the lookout over the next few months for invitations to the following study events:

- **Report your COVID-19 Experience**—We have teamed up with other health studies to track COVID-19 symptoms and identify health and environmental factors that affect the likelihood of developing COVID-19. All you need to do is download an app and share your experience. Learn more at <https://www.monganinstitute.org/cope-consortium>. Once you download and open the app, say you are a member of the NIEHS Environmental Polymorphisms Study.
- **Consent to Whole Genome Sequencing**—If you received an invitation to take part in sequencing, we have your sample ready and all we need is your permission (consent) to conduct the testing. If you already signed up for testing and we have sequenced your sample, we may ask you to provide a saliva sample. We use these to confirm findings that might be important for your health. It is important to remember that most people will not be contacted about their findings.
- **Share Your Medical Records**—The more you share, the more we learn. When you agree to share your health records, we are able to combine this information with your survey responses and genetic information to gain a more complete picture of your health.
- **Allow Broader Use of Your Blood Sample**—With your permission, we can use the blood you gave for genetic testing to better understand your environmental exposures and health status. Please consider consenting to broader use of samples, if you receive an invitation to do so.
- **Update Your Contact Information**—EPR has many exciting developments and opportunities for you to be involved in follow-up studies. We will be reaching out to make sure we know the best ways to contact you.
- **Refer Someone**—The EPR is interested in hearing from people from all walks of life! If you know someone who would like to join the EPR, tell them to contact us.



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