

**Longitudinal Study of Young Children's Exposures in their Homes to Selected Pesticides,  
Phthalates, Brominated Flame Retardants, and Perfluorinated Chemicals  
(A Children's Environmental Exposure Research Study- CHEERS)**

**Questions & Answers**

**Q1: What is the CHEERS study?**

**A:** CHEERS stands for Children's Environmental Exposure Research Study. The purpose of this study is to learn about young children's exposures to pesticides and chemicals present in common consumer products used in their homes.

**Q2: Why is this important?**

**A:** Currently, the data on very young children's exposures to pesticides and chemicals in consumer products at home are very limited and not adequate for scientists to fully understand this issue. CHEERS is designed to provide more information to help scientists understand how young children are exposed to pesticides and other chemicals, when the exposures occur, and how much chemical they are exposed to at home. Your participation will contribute to the success of this important study. The results will benefit young children in the future.

**Q3: Who is in charge of this study?**

**A:** The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is the primary sponsoring agency. Florida's Duval County Health Department, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the American Chemistry Council are partners with EPA on this study.

**Q4: Why must I live in Duval County? (Why is this study taking place in Duval County?)**

**A:** CHEERS is being conducted in Duval County because of the warm weather and year-round pesticide (bug sprays) use in the area. For logistical reason, we need to have all participants in this area so our staff won't have to travel a long distance to conduct study activities.

**Q5: Who are the researchers?**

**A:** The EPA Principal Investigators are Drs. Nicolle Tulve and Roy Fortmann. The Co-Principal Investigators are Drs. Suzanne McMaster (EPA), Lisa Melnyk (EPA), and Dana Barr (CDC). Here is Dr. Tulve's contact information:

Dr. Nicolle Tulve  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (E205-04)  
4930 Old Page Road  
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709  
Tel: 919-541-1077  
Email: Tulve.Nicolle@epa.gov

**Q6: Why does my child have to be a newborn or approximately 12 months old?**

**A:** Currently, the data on very young children's exposures are very limited. Children at these ages have a lot of developmental changes that may affect their exposure to pesticides. Although there have been a number of exposure studies performed for older children, there have been few studies for this age group

**Q7: Do I have to use a certain amount of pesticides or use pesticides a certain number of times?**

**A:** No, you are not required to change any of your regular household routines or how you normally use bug sprays (pesticides). However, we do need your help to tell us when you plan to use bug sprays or when someone else is going to spray your home so we can arrange a time to do the study activities before and after the use of bug sprays (pesticides).

**Q8: What if I want to discontinue my participation? Can I stop at any time?**

**A:** Yes. Participation is voluntary and you may stop your participation at any time. Every participant is very important to the study and it is very difficult to replace someone who decides not to continue to participate. Our study director will be very happy to talk with you if you have any concerns or questions. The entire research team will try their best to make your participation an interesting and rewarding experience.

**Q9: Is there any risk to my family?**

**A:** No. You and your child will not experience any risks from participating in this study. You are not required to change any of your regular household routines. Your participation does not mean that dangerous levels of chemicals are present in your area.

**Q10: Are the results confidential?**

**A:** Yes. Your child's name, the names of your family members, and the information gathered from this study will be kept confidential. All project staff members have been trained on the subject of confidentiality and have signed an Assurance of Confidentiality. All study-related computer data files are password-protected. All hard-copy (paper) contact and identification information is stored in a locked file cabinet. Only authorized research staff has access to the study information. Once the study is completed, the identifying information will be destroyed. To help insure your privacy, we will also obtain a Certificate of Confidentiality from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. With this certificate, the researchers cannot be forced to tell people, including courts, about your study information without your written permission.

**Q11: Will my family receive the results of the study?**

**A:** Yes. You will receive a project progress report on a regular basis during the two-year study period. A final study summary report will be sent to all participants when it becomes available.

**Q12: Whom can I contact for more information?**

**A:** If you have any questions or want more information on the study, please call our toll-free number and Cherry Jackson will answer your questions. The number is 1-877-810-9530, ext. 503. Also, you may visit our website: <http://www.epa.gov/cheers/>.