

# Improving care for sick and premature babies through research



the women's  
the royal women's hospital

## Research at the Women's

We are always improving the care we provide by carrying out carefully designed research studies.

Research at the Women's has helped thousands of babies survive and thrive, both in Australia and around the world. Every family in our nursery can take part in this work and help improve care for future babies.

## Our research projects

Sick and premature babies need specialist help from birth and ongoing help as they grow. Very premature babies need help with breathing and support for many weeks after birth. They also need help with feeding, fighting infection, growing and developing.

Our research focuses on:

- improving resuscitation and breathing support
- reducing infection
- learning about newborn development and behaviour
- assessing development through childhood.

We run many studies at the Women's. One of our researchers may invite you to take part in one or more of these studies.

We also collect information and send it to the [Australian and New Zealand Neonatal Network \(ANZNN, www.anznn.net\)](http://www.anznn.net). This helps us compare our results with babies from other neonatal units. Your baby cannot be identified from this information.

If you have any questions or concerns, please speak with a staff member.



## Questions families ask about research

### What is newborn research?

Newborn research gathers information to answer important questions to improve how we care for sick and premature babies.

### Why might you take part?

Research has saved the lives of many children and helps us keep improving the care and health of babies.

At the Women's, families who join our research projects make this possible.

Babies who take part in a study continue to receive the same, high-quality care while they are in hospital.

### Is the research safe?

Yes, all research projects are reviewed by the doctors and nurses working in the NICU.

Research and Ethics Committees also approve every study to make sure they are safe and ethically fair.

## Do you have to take part?

No. Taking part in research is voluntary.

If we invite you to join a research study, please ask as many questions as you need to decide if it is right for you and your baby.

If you do not want to take part, your baby's care will not change.

You can also change your mind about being involved at any time.

## Why don't we always ask for consent?

Sometimes, an ethics committee approves a study that doesn't ask for your consent first.

This might happen when the study compares 2 treatments that are already standard practices.

In some situations, we may ask for your consent after a study treatment has started. This can happen if treatment is needed urgently or if there was no appropriate opportunity to ask for consent beforehand.

## Who will talk with you about research?

The Women's has a large research team that includes research staff, nurses, doctors and physiotherapists. A member of the team will explain the study, give you written information and answer your questions.

## When might we talk with you about research?

You might be invited to join a study at any time during your and your baby's stay at the Women's. Sometimes we ask before your baby is born, but more often it is during the first few days in the NICU.

Different team members may speak with you about different studies during your baby's stay.

## For more information

Families help us improve the care we provide, and to share this information with others around the world.

Thank you for supporting The Women's Research Projects.

If you would like more information about our research projects, please ask to speak to:

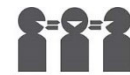
- Associate Professor Louise Owen or Associate Professor Marta Thio on 03 8345 3784.

Or call the hospital switchboard on 03 8345 2000.

You can also visit our website:

[thewomens.org.au/research/research-centres/womens-newborn-research-centre](http://thewomens.org.au/research/research-centres/womens-newborn-research-centre)

## Do you need an interpreter?



You can ask for an interpreter if you need one.

## Family Violence Support

### 1800 Respect National Helpline

You can get help if you have experienced sexual assault, domestic or family violence and abuse.

You can call any time of day or night.

1800 737 732

[1800respect.org.au](http://1800respect.org.au)