# PARTICIPANT INFORMATION STATEMENT

Macrolide antibiotic stewardship in obstructive airway diseases
(MASTER study)

## Invitation

We are inviting you to participate in a research study. This study is looking at the correct use of azithromycin, clarithromycin, roxithromycin and erythromycin in the treatment of asthma, COPD and bronchiectasis. This study is being conducted by Professor Peter Gibson, Professor Vanessa McDonald and Dr Dennis Thomas at the Hunter Medical Research Institute, the University of Newcastle, in collaboration with John Hunter Hospital.

Before you make a decision, it is important to understand the purpose of the study and what it is involved. Please take the time to read the following information carefully. Please also discuss it with others if you wish.

## 1. Why am I receiving this information?

You have recently indicated that you are interested to know more about this study.

## 2. What is the purpose of this study?

We are inviting people who are currently taking long-term azithromycin, clarithromycin, roxithromycin or erythromycin for their asthma, COPD or bronchiectasis treatment. These drugs are effective in the treatment of asthma, COPD and bronchiectasis. However, it is not clear for how long they should be taken. Guidelines recommend a treatment duration of 6-12 months. They also recommend a drug break each year. We conducted a study a few years ago and found that there is no treatment benefit during the summer season. If there is no benefit, it might be possible to stop it. Stopping the unnecessary drugs will help to save the cost of the drug and reduce side effects. In this study, we are checking whether it is possible to stop these drugs permanently, or at least temporarily during the summer season.

## 3. Who can participate in this research?

To participate in this study

- You must be over the age of 18 years.
- You have a diagnosis of either asthma or COPD or bronchiectasis.
- You are currently undergoing treatment with antibiotics such as azithromycin, clarithromycin, roxithromycin or erythromycin for at least 6 months.
- You have access to a phone.
- You are able to provide verbal consent.
- You are willing to complete baseline and follow-up interviews.

This study is not suitable for you if you

- Have cystic fibrosis.
- Are using the antibiotic for a condition other than asthma, COPD or bronchiectasis.
- Are pregnant.
- Are unable to speak and understand English.

## 4. What will my participation in the study involve?

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be randomly (like tossing a coin) allocated to one of two different groups. It is a telephone-based study. No travel involved. All interviews will be conducted over the phone. The main components of the study are summarised in the table below.

| **Procedure** | **What will happen, and for how long?** |
|---|---|
| Study groups | People in **group one** will stop their current antibiotic and start an equivalent antibiotic. This will be azithromycin and will be provided by the study team free of charge. People in **group two** will stop their current antibiotic and start an identical placebo (a tablet that looks like the trial medication but contains no active ingredients). Neither you nor the research team will know which group you are in or what medication you are receiving. |
| Study medication | The medication (azithromycin or placebo) will be mailed to your residential address free of charge. You will need to stop your current antibiotic in summer (preferably on Dec 1st 2020) and start the allocated medication three times a week, and continue for nine months. We will include a detailed description of the dosing schedule in the medication packet. If symptoms deteriorate during the study, you can contact the study team or your GP. If needed, they will assist you to restart your previous medication. |
| Telephone interviews | This study involves 5 telephone interviews over a nine-month period.<br>• **Screening Interview:** In this interview, we will explain the study in detail and check whether it is safe for you to take part in this study. You will also have an opportunity to ask questions and seek clarifications on any matter related to the study. If the study is suitable for you, we will obtain your verbal consent at the end of the interview (this will be audio recorded).<br>• **Baseline interview:** This can be completed at the same time as the screening interview, or it can be scheduled at another time if more convenient. During this interview, we will ask some questions about your circumstances, your current health status and complete a few questionnaires.<br>• **Follow up Interviews:** There will be 3 follow-up interviews that will occur at 3-, 6- and 9-months. During these interviews, we will ask some questions about your current health status, any problems associated with treatment, adherence (how you are taking the study medications) and complete a few questionnaires.<br>Each interview will take approximately 15-20 minutes and will be scheduled at your convenience. |
| Check-in calls | You will receive up to 3 check-in calls during the first 3 months of the study. These calls are to ensure your safety and make sure that you are doing well. Each call will take around 10 minutes. |
| Data from hospital medical record | If you are a patient at John Hunter Hospital or Belmont Hospital, we may collect some data from your hospital medical records. This may include the number of hospitalisations, emergency department visits and laboratory test results. |

**5. Do I have to take part in this research study?**

Participation in this study is voluntary. It is completely up to you whether or not you participate. Your decision will not affect your relationship with the Hunter Medical Research Institute or the University of Newcastle or the John Hunter Hospital. Your decision will not affect the treatment you receive at present or in the future. It will not affect your relationship with the staff caring for you.

**6. What if I want to withdraw from the research study later after starting?**

You may withdraw at any time. If you wish to withdraw, please complete the "Withdrawal of Consent Form" and post this to us via a reply-paid envelope. You can also withdraw from the study by contacting the research team via phone, text message or email. The contact details are provided below.

New information about the approach being tested in this study may become available during the course of the study. You will be kept informed of any significant new findings that may affect your willingness to continue in the study. If such information is available, you are free to discuss it with the research team and decide whether or not to continue in the study. If you decide to withdraw from the study, you also have the option of withdrawing all data relating to you.

You can also decline to answer any question/s or parts of questions during any of the interviews.

**7. What are the possible risks, side-effects and/or discomforts?**

Azithromycin is used in this study as it is well tolerated with fewer side effects and drug interactions compared to other macrolide antibiotics. However, azithromycin may cause side effects such as diarrhoea (5%), abdominal pain (3%) and nausea (3%). Less frequent side effects include laboratory abnormalities, allergy (rash, swelling), palpitations, chest pain, flatulence, thrush, vaginal irritation, kidney inflammation, dizziness, headache, tiredness, vomiting and indigestion. Side effects such as hearing impairment, arrhythmias and QT prolongation have also been reported.

A participant may experience a change in their respiratory symptoms as they change from one antibiotic to another or from an antibiotic to a placebo. We have developed strict safety procedures in order to minimise risk. All participants will be screened to ensure they are safe to commence the study. Your information will be reviewed by a respiratory physician prior to commencing study, and as needed thereafter to assess your response to treatment. The telephone check-in calls and follow-up interviews are to ensure your safety. If your symptoms deteriorate, staff will treat you accordingly, and the study may be ceased.

**8. What are the possible benefits to participation?**

You may not personally benefit from being in this study. Involvement in the study is purely voluntary. You may withdraw at any time.

**9. What are the benefits to other people in the future?**

This study may help to establish the best approach to use long-term antibiotics in asthma, COPD and bronchiectasis. It may help to save the cost of the drug and reduce side effects.

**10. Can I have other treatments during this research project?**

You are free to take any other medications as prescribed by your doctor. It is important to inform the research team about any treatments or drugs you may be taking. It is also important to inform your doctor or pharmacist that you are participating in this study. Take this information statement with you if you visit them during the study period.

**11. How is this study being paid for?**

This study is partly funded by the following grants 1) Australian National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) under the Centre of Research Excellence scheme. 2) Practitioner Fellowship scheme, the University of Newcastle infrastructure programme. 3) Department of Respiratory and Sleep Medicine Special Purpose account.

**12. How will my confidentiality be protected?**

All information you provide will be securely stored electronically on password-protected University computers hosted at HMRI using a secure database. Your contact details will be used for research purposes only, i.e. contacting you for the study. Such information remains confidential and will not be given to any other person except as required by law.

**13. What happens with the results?**

The results of the study will be available to you at the completion of the study. De-identified group data will be presented in scientific journals and at research conferences.

**14. What should I do if I want to discuss this study further before I decide?**

The study staff will contact you in a few days to discuss the study in detail. They will also check your eligibility and willingness to take part in the study. If you would like to know more at any stage, please do not hesitate to contact the study coordinator:

Dr Dennis Thomas
T: 02 40420199
Master2020@newcastle.edu.au
Hunter Medical Research Institute
The University of Newcastle
Lot 1, Kookaburra Cct, New Lambton Heights NSW 2305.

**15. Who should I contact if I have concerns about the conduct of this study?**

This research has been approved by the Hunter New England Human Research Ethics Committee of Hunter New England Local Health District. Reference 2020/ETH02253.

Should you have concerns about your rights as a participant in this research, or you have a complaint about the manner in which the research is conducted, it may be given to the researcher, or, if an independent person is preferred, to Dr Nicole Gerrand, Manager, Research Office, Hunter New England Human Research Ethics Committee, Hunter New England Local Health District. Level 3, POD, HMRI, Lot 1 Kookaburra Circuit, New Lambton Heights NSW 2305. Telephone (02) 49214950 email HNELHD-HREC@health.nsw.gov.au.

**Thank you for taking the time to consider this study.**

**This information sheet is for you to keep.**

**Form for Withdrawal of Participation**
**(Complete only if you want to withdraw from the study after enrolling)**

I wish to **WITHDRAW** my consent to participate in the MASTER study.

**Participant Signature.**

| | |
|---|---|
| Name of Participant | |
| Signature of Participant | |
| Date | |

**The section for Withdrawal of Participation should be forwarded to**

| | |
|---|---|
| Project coordinator | Dr Dennis Thomas |
| Email | Master2020@newcastle.edu.au |
| Phone | 02 40420199 |
| Postal Address | Hunter Medical Research Institute<br>Lot 1, Kookaburra Cct,<br>New Lambton Heights NSW 2305 |