

# Families needed for study into children's common illnesses

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University of Bristol researchers led by Professor Alastair Hay are inviting Bristol families to take part in a new study to find out more about how parents manage children's coughs, colds, sore throats and ear infections in the community.

The project seeks to recruit around 450 families. It will find out how

these illnesses develop and circulate by collecting information on the symptoms, how children are cared for at home, which bugs are causing them and when parents choose to seek medical help. Previous research has only looked at these illnesses once parents have chosen to consult their GP, so not so much is known about these common infections in children who do not go to the doctor.

Families will be invited to take part between now and June 2016 via a letter from their GP. Those wanting to help will then receive weekly emails asking if their child has developed any cough, cold, [sore throat](#) or ear [infection](#) symptoms in the last seven days. When children develop symptoms, parents will be asked more questions about the illness, and a research nurse will visit them at home to collect a saliva and nose swab from the child (to identify the bacteria or viruses causing the illness).

Emma Anderson, study manager at the University's Centre for Academic Primary Care, in the School of Social and Community Medicine, said: "This is exciting research that could have a real impact on how these common childhood infections are managed in the future. We hope parents will recognise the importance of researchers understanding how they look after children in the home, and be willing to help present information online to describe the symptoms and microbiology (viruses and bacteria) of infections as they develop in the community."

Provided by University of Bristol

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