

Study of new moms to explore differences in infant development

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(Medical Xpress) -- In a new study to be conducted by the Macquarie University and the University of New South Wales called PRAMS - perinatal regulation and mood study, researchers will attempt to answer some of the fundamental questions asked by mothers around the world – why are babies all so different?

Why do some babies sleep, feed and settle more easily than others? Why do some babies love to explore while others prefer familiar faces and toys? Why are some babies so much more active than others?

This study, funded by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), is one of the first to look at the world of the infant from pregnancy through the first six months of life in order to answer these questions.

Dr. Kerry-Ann Grant, the project coordinator, and her team are currently recruiting pregnant women to take part in the study. The women will be invited to complete some questionnaires and an interview about their health and wellbeing and experience of pregnancy. The researchers will also assess [mothers'](#) temperament and ask about their expectations of motherhood.

Researchers will be looking at different aspects of the mother-child relationship in pregnancy and early infancy. When babies are three months old, the researchers would like to hear about mothers' experiences in caring for her new baby, the baby's behavior, sleeping and feeding patterns and how the mums are feeling about their new role. When babies are six months old researchers will explore the baby's development, temperament and behavior.

In addition to anecdotal data, the team will also be collecting saliva samples from mothers and [babies](#) to look for biomarkers (hormonal and genetic) that may be linked to individual differences in infant development.

For their time, participants will receive a report about their baby's development and temperament, a copy of the booklet "Understanding and Supporting Your Baby's Development" and a gift voucher.

Provided by Macquarie University

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