

## **PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET**

### **CYNNES: Changes in the immune sYstem iN respoNse to heatwavES**

You are being invited to take part in some research. Before you decide whether or not to participate, it is important for you to understand why the research is being conducted and what it will involve. Please read the following information carefully.

#### **What is the purpose of the research?**

We are conducting research on the health impacts from changing climatic conditions, such as increased frequency, severity, and duration of heat, which are being felt by millions across the world, and are projected to worsen. Climate change is no longer a future problem, with five of the ten highest recorded temperatures in the UK occurring in the last 7 years (>+36°C). The purpose of the study is to determine the impact of heat on immune responses and inflammation by tracking immune responses to natural heat exposures.

Your participation in this study will comprise of a blood sample donation on three separate occasions occurring before, during, and after a period of elevated heat.

#### **Who is carrying out the research?**

The data are being collected by the SWansea IMmunology (SWIM) research lab at Swansea University and is overseen by Professor Cathy Thornton. This research has been given a favourable ethical opinion by Swansea University Medical School (SUMS) Research Ethics Committee (RESC), project reference 2 2024 10553 9703.

#### **What happens if I agree to take part?**

Taking part in this study first involves answering a few questions about yourself (e.g., your age, sex and ethnicity) and your health (e.g., smoking, any chronic disease, and any contraceptive status). If you agree to help with this research, you will be required to provide blood samples on three occasions before, during, and after a period of elevated ambient heat (>26°C). The sampling will be segmented across an undefined time period whereby an initial baseline sample will be taken on enrolment. The second blood sample will be collected after the first heatwave day, followed by the final date of sample collected 9 – 12 days after the heatwave has concluded. Blood sampling will take place on Swansea University campus by a qualified phlebotomist.

#### **Are there any risks associated with taking part?**

The research has been approved by Swansea University Medical School Research Ethics Committee, reference 2 2024 10553 9703. There are no significant risks associated with participation. Taking a blood sample may cause minor discomfort and/or bruising at the site of donation. If you have, or are at risk of having, a blood borne disease please do not participate.

Please do not participate if you have a chronic or significant inflammatory condition (e.g. Crohn's disease, type 1 diabetes etc), or if you are pregnant or breastfeeding.

### **Data Protection and Confidentiality**

Your data will be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR). All information collected about you will be kept strictly confidential. You will be assigned a unique study number that will be used to label your samples and link to the laboratory data gathered using your samples. The personal information provided by you will only be viewed by Professor Cathy Thornton and her immediate research team. All collected identifiable data will be destroyed on or before 28th February 2027 when it is no longer required for these research endeavours.

All electronic data will be stored on a password-protected computer file on a Swansea University laptop. All paper records will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in Professor Cathy Thorntons lockable office. Your consent information will be kept separately from your responses to minimise risk in the event of a data breach.

### **What will happen to the information I provide?**

An analysis of the information will form part of our report at the end of the study and may be presented to interested parties and published in scientific journals and related media. *Note that all information presented in any reports or publications will be anonymous and unidentifiable.*

### **Is participation voluntary and what if I wish to later withdraw?**

Your participation is entirely voluntary – you do not have to participate if you do not want to. If you decide to participate, but later wish to withdraw from the study, then you are free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason and without penalty. You can withdraw by contacting [immunology-studies@swansea.ac.uk](mailto:immunology-studies@swansea.ac.uk).

### **Data Protection Privacy Notice**

The data controller for this project will be Swansea University. The University Data Protection Officer provides oversight of university activities involving the processing of personal data and can be contacted at the Vice Chancellors Office.

Your personal data will be processed for the purposes outlined in this information sheet. Standard ethical procedures will involve you providing your consent to participate in this study by completing the consent form that has been provided to you.

The legal basis that we will rely on to process your personal data will be processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest. This public interest justification is approved by the Swansea University Research Ethics Committee.

The legal basis that we will rely on to process special categories of data will be processing is necessary for archiving purposes in the public interest, scientific or historical research purposes or statistical purposes.

### **How long will your information be held?**

All collected identifiable data will be destroyed on or before 28th February 2027 when it is no longer required for these research endeavours. The laboratory data that we generate using your blood will be held for 10 years after the study has finished. This is so that we can ensure all our findings from the study are published in scientific journals and comply with the regulations regarding this.

### **What are your rights?**

You have a right to access your personal information, to object to the processing of your personal information, to rectify, to erase, to restrict and to port your personal information. Please visit the University Data Protection webpages for further information in relation to your rights.

Any requests or objections should be made in writing to the University Data Protection Officer:-

University Compliance Officer (FOI/DP)  
Vice-Chancellor's Office  
Swansea University  
Singleton Park  
Swansea  
SA2 8PP  
Email: [dataprotection@swansea.ac.uk](mailto:dataprotection@swansea.ac.uk)

### **How to make a complaint**

If you are unhappy with the way in which your personal data has been processed, you may in the first instance contact the University Data Protection Officer using the contact details above.

If you remain dissatisfied, then you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: -

Information Commissioner's Office,  
Wycliffe House,  
Water Lane,  
Wilmslow,  
Cheshire,  
SK9 5AF  
[www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk)

### **What if I have other questions?**

If you have further questions about this study, please do not hesitate to contact us:

[Immunology-studies@swansea.ac.uk](mailto:Immunology-studies@swansea.ac.uk)