

Why Are You Doing This Study?

Our study team is testing a new research survey to help provide a much-needed understanding of patients' beliefs about the effectiveness of the treatments they receive. This is important because of conflicting evidence showing that patients' beliefs and expectations may significantly affect treatment outcomes.

The new survey measures patient's expectations of four "complementary and alternative medicine" (CAM) treatments—acupuncture, chiropractic care, massage, and yoga—to treat chronic low back pain. To ensure the survey is valid, we need to test it scientifically with patients who have chronic low back pain and are just starting a CAM treatment.

We think this survey can help all of us better understand how patient expectations affect outcomes of treatment. CAM practitioners can also use it as a tool to talk with patients about their expectations of treatment.

Our study team is comprised of researchers from Group Health Research Institute in Seattle, WA, the University of Washington, and the University of Arizona.

What Do the Recruiting Partners Do?

We would really like to include you among our "recruiting partners." What we are asking you to do is simple: We will send you our study recruitment materials to post in your waiting area and/or at your front desk so that your new patients with lower back pain will see this information and know how to find out more about the study. Our study materials direct the patients to our website (ExpectStudy.org set to launch 7/8/2013), which has a link to the survey.

If you are interested, we will send you a packet of recruitment materials. Once you've received these materials we'd like to set up a brief phone call or in-person meeting to discuss our study and answer any questions you might have.

What Do Participants Do?

After visiting our website to learn more about the study, people who are interested will complete the screening information to determine eligibility. If they are eligible they will complete an electronic consent form and the internet-based survey, which we estimate will take about 30 minutes. They will receive \$20 for completing the 1st survey. A subset of people who are eligible will be asked to complete a 2nd survey (estimated to take about 15 minutes) and will receive another \$10.

How many participants would we like Our Recruitment Partners to recruit?

We are working with a variety of recruitment partners to have a diverse group of participants. We understand that everyone's capacity to enroll participants will vary, but we hope to enroll at least 2 participants per recruitment partner. We plan to recruit patients for 3-6 months.

Does it matter if someone has already started treatment?

Our goal is to find people using a treatment that is either new for them or that they have not used in the last 3 years. We'd prefer to find patients before they start their treatment. We will ask about half of these patients to complete a second shorter questionnaire. If necessary, we can recruit participants after their first visit.

Who is Eligible to Participate?

To be eligible, participants must be just about to start treatment for their back pain using acupuncture, chiropractic, massage, or yoga or have just completed their first visit.

How Many Participants Do We Need for the Entire Study?

Our goal is to find 240 people with chronic low back pain who are willing to complete the online survey. We hope to recruit at least 60 people who are starting each treatment.

What About Confidentiality?

We will ask participants to provide their name and address so we can send them their reimbursement, but we will not maintain a link between participant name and questionnaire answers. We are not accessing medical records or asking participants to provide any sensitive medical information. We will not have any way to link providers to patients who complete our questionnaires. We will keep a spreadsheet of all the providers we contact for administrative tracking purposes, but this will not be linked in any way to patients or participants.

Who Funds This Study?

We received funding from the National Institutes of Health, National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM).

Does My Institution Need IRB Approval to Participate?

No. Because recruiting partners are not directly involved in administering informed consent or collecting study information from participants, they are considered passive recruiters and do not need approval from an institutional review board (IRB). This is what is referred to in the federal human subjects regulations as one institution “not engaged” in another institution’s research project. Group Health researchers have IRB approval in order to complete this study. Please feel free to contact your IRB if you have questions or concerns about this. If you would like more information on the federal regulations concerning engagement in human subjects research please see <http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/policy/engage08.html>