



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

News Release

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Flu study seeks volunteers in hunt for genes linked to severe cases

Volunteers are being invited to take part in a flu study to understand why some people are more susceptible to the virus than others.

Experts are looking to pinpoint DNA differences between people who become seriously ill from flu and those who fight off the infection.

They hope to uncover specific genes that may make people more vulnerable to developing a life-threatening illness.

Flu affects millions of people around the world every year. Most cases are mild, but some people become very unwell and need hospital care.

Little is known about why some people are more susceptible than others but experts predict that part of the answer may lie in our genes.

Understanding these genetic differences could help scientists to devise new treatments, experts say.

Researchers at the University of Edinburgh are asking people to complete a short postal questionnaire and send a saliva sample for analysis.

People of all ages and backgrounds are welcome to take part, regardless of whether they have had flu or not.

A small number of those who respond may also be invited to The Roslin Institute to donate a blood sample for further tests.

Dr Sara Clohisey, who is conducting the research at The Roslin Institute, said: “With flu season well under way, we’re hoping people will come forward to help us in our vital research to understand how our bodies fight the virus.”

Volunteers can register to take part in the study at <http://baillielab.net/genomicc/>. The research is funded by Wellcome. The Roslin Institute receives strategic funding from the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council.

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