

A novel, painless and simple screening test for the onset of corticospinal tract disease/dorsal root ganglionopathy in Friedreich's Ataxia

What is the study about?

The main aim of this research is to allow us to develop a more accurate method of monitoring the progression of your condition. This will then allow us to work out whether a particular treatment is slowing the progression of the disease in future clinical trials.

What is involved?

A combination of clinical assessments and non-invasive neurophysiological tests, a blood test and a very small skin sample. The blood test and skin biopsy would be done only at the baseline visit, whereas the clinical assessment, blood tests and some of the neurophysiological tests will be repeated at 6, 12 and 18 months.

The neurophysiological tests are non-invasive and include electrical nerve stimulation and magnetic brain stimulation. These tests are standard clinical practise and will take no longer than **90-120 minutes**. Blood sampling and skin biopsy can cause minor discomfort. A local anaesthetic agent will be applied before skin biopsy. The skin biopsy can sometimes leave a small scar.

How do I find out more about the study?

The chief investigators of the project are Dr Mark Baker and Prof Patrick Chinnery, based at Newcastle University and the Royal Victoria Infirmary, Newcastle upon Tyne.

You will also be able to find details about our study on the Ataxia UK website:

<http://www.ataxia.org.uk/pages/research.html>

Contact details:

If you would like more information about the study or want to let me know about your decision to participate, please contact me, Dr Vandy Dhawan, by leaving an answer phone message on 0191 2086897 with your contact details or email me at vandana.dhawan@ncl.ac.uk

Thank you very much for taking the time to read this information.