



Frequently Asked Questions

What is the purpose of the HOME Study?

The purpose of this research is to learn about how aspects of the home environment affect health. We are specifically focusing on the quality of air in homes. We will identify key factors that impact indoor air quality (such as stove use and types of stoves, heat sources, old v. new homes, temperature, moisture, ventilation and air exchange rates). What we learn also will help us understand how exposure to air pollution from outdoor and indoor sources may vary across different types of homes.

Who is doing this research?

CRESSH: HOME is one of three research projects built out of CRESSH (Center for Research in Environmental and Social Stressors in Housing across the life course). CRESSH is a joint collaboration between Boston University School of Public Health and Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health that is investigating environmental health inequalities in Massachusetts. These universities are partnering with local Chelsea-based organization GreenRoots and additional Dorchester partnerships are being formed through collaboration with Health Resources in Action, a Boston-based public health organization.

Why was I invited to participate?

You were invited because you currently live in Chelsea or Dorchester, MA. We are recruiting 100 residents from each city. Participants must also be 18 years or older and speak English, Spanish, or Vietnamese. Only one participant from each household is eligible.

What are other eligibility requirements?

Our goal is to recruit a sample of households across Chelsea and Dorchester, with different home and resident characteristics. Additional eligibility will be based on your 1) length of time you have lived in your residence, 2) plans to stay in current residence for the next year, 3) type of residence (condo, single or multi-family, etc.), 4) geographic area/neighborhood, and 5) participant characteristics (families with children, adults over 65, etc.).

What are the benefits of participating in the study?

Participants will have the option of receiving information on concentrations of particulate matter and NO₂ measured in their home; air pollutants with known health risk. We also hope to provide resources on how to improve indoor air quality and home health.



What are the possible discomforts of participating in the study?

You may feel uneasy answering personal questions, allowing study team members to conduct a visual assessment of your residence and allowing environmental samplers to be placed in your home. No medical testing (blood, urine, blood pressure, etc.) or physical activity will be required to participate in the study.

What is the time commitment?

Participants will complete the study over two 7-day measuring periods, one week in the summer and then one week again in the winter (order may vary). The first week-long measuring period can happen in the summer or the winter. Day one of the first visit will take about 60-90 minutes and will take place in your home. Day seven will last about 15-20 minutes. About 6 months later, we will contact you again and ask to schedule a repeat of the visits.

What will the visits include?

Day one of the visit will include: 1) answering questions about housing, your environment, health, and stress, 2) setting up equipment to measure air quality and temperature in your residence, 3) a visual assessment of your living room, kitchen, and main bathroom to assess environmental conditions like ventilation, mold, and pests, 4) instructions on completing a one-page log about activities in your home and 5) completing an optional sleep assessment.

Day seven of the first visit will include: 1) collecting all of our sampling equipment, 2) collecting completed daily activity logs and sleep diaries if applicable, and 3) asking a few brief follow-up questions.

In the opposing season (summer or winter), we will repeat the same two visits again. Some participants will not need to repeat the sleep assessment.

What is involved in sleep assessment?

We will ask you to consider completing an optional sleep assessment that includes: wearing an activity/sleep monitor to identify sleep/wake times and quality of sleep, completing a daily sleep diary (7 days), allowing us to place an indoor weather station in the room where you sleep, and allowing us to draw a picture of the room where you sleep.

Will I be compensated for my time?

Participants will receive a \$40 gift card to a local store at the end of the first week-long visit. Another \$40 gift card will be provided upon completion of the second (opposing season) week-long visit. Additionally, a \$20 gift card will be provided for those who complete optional sleep assessment during season one and an additional \$30 gift card provided to those who complete two seasons of sleep measures (up to \$130 in gift cards total for participation.)



Will you ask me to wear a GPS?

We asked you to wear a GPS device to help us learn about your travel patterns and whether time spent at home versus outside of the home affects your home's air quality. The device gives us information about where you are, but does not give us any information about what you are doing or who you are with. Wearing the GPS device is optional and refusal to wear it will not impact your ability to participate in the study.

Are there any risks involved in participating?

There are no risks aside from your perceived discomfort associated with the completion of surveys and collection of sampling information. You may feel uneasy answering questions, allowing study team members to conduct a visual assessment of your residence, allowing environmental samplers to be placed in your residence, and wearing a GPS device to track your activity and location. You do not have to answer any questions you feel uncomfortable answering.

What about privacy?

All data collected from you and your home will be identified using a participant ID. Any record that includes your name, phone number, street address, or email address will be kept in password protected and secured files or any paper versions will be kept in a locked file cabinet and access to these records will be restricted to researchers involved in this study. No personal or identifying information will be shared with anyone outside of the study team, including the local partnering organizations.

Am I required to participate in the study?

No, participation in the study is voluntary.

What should I do if I am interested in participating in the study?

Please contact our study team at 617-384-8802 or by email at www.thehomestudy@gmail.com