

Massey recruiting pregnant women for sleep research

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If you have been pregnant for less than 35 weeks with one baby, are above 16 and can easily fill in questionnaires in English, you have the perfect profile to participate in a Wellington-based research project about sleep.

Massey University's Sleep/Wake Research Centre is looking for 500 Maori and 500 non-Maori women in Wellington, Hutt Valley, Kapiti Coast, Wairarapa, Manawatu and Hawke's Bay.

The study investigates the relationship between sleep in late pregnancy and birth outcome (duration of labour and type of birth), and the link between sleep early after child birth and changes in mood.

PhD candidate Bronwyn Sweeney says most women experience changes to their sleep when they are pregnant.

"For some women the change is quite profound."

The project, which includes filling in two questionnaires and answering questions during a phone interview, will help figure out what may be an acceptable, normal amount of sleep change and what would be an extreme change of sleep.

"Sleep affects a lot of our life. We know there are real consequences when people experience poor sleep," says Ms Sweeney.

Capacities to think and solve problems can for example be affected.

This three-year project is the third one the Sleep/Wake Research Centre has run about pregnant women's sleep.

The first study showed that women have their poorest sleep just before and after delivering their baby, Ms Sweeney says.

A feasibility study was then run in 2007, and the team re-

ceived fundings in 2009 to start the current large-scale study.

"The past 6 months were very busy scoping the project and getting ethical approval," says Ms Sweeney.

Researchers from Otago University and the University of California are also collaborating on this project.

The recruitment is done through midwives, clinics, child birth classes, posters, advertisement and word of mouth.

Eighty women have been recruited so far, but the team will be looking for more candidates until the beginning of 2011.

"We don't need to meet them and they can do their survey in their own homes," says Ms Sweeney.

The team will start analysing data early next year.

More info:

Visit: sleepwake.massey.ac.nz
To participate: email mumssleep@massey.co.nz, or phone 0800MUMSLEEP (0800 686 7537), or text SLEEP to 5222
Anybody interested will be sent an information pack.

A \$20 gift voucher will be given to the candidates going through the following process which requires about 1h15 minutes of their time:

Step 1: a sleep and lifestyle questionnaire to be filled in when the volunteer has been 35 to 37 weeks pregnant.

Approximate time: 30 minutes

Step 2: a phone interview about sleep, organised when the baby is six weeks old.

Approximate time: 3 to 5 minutes

Step 3: a questionnaire to be filled in 12 weeks after the baby is born.

Approximate time: 40 minutes