

MEDIA RELEASE

NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

DATE: FRIDAY 26 MARCH 2010

ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors



Volunteers needed for UTAS health and climate study

UTAS School of Human Life Sciences researcher Sibella King is calling for volunteers from Northern Tasmania for testing on the effect of temperature changes on people with chronic disease such as diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

Ms King's study seeks to determine the effect of heat, humidity, and cold on central blood pressure and blood coagulation in healthy people, and in people with type two diabetes.

She said climate change scientists predict increases in global temperature of 1.5 to 5.8 degrees by 2100 which may lead to a greater incidence of, and variability in extreme weather events in the future.

"Repeated exposure to such extreme temperature variations may have serious health consequences for individuals with underlying chronic disease," she said.

"Exposure to sudden extreme variations in temperature and humidity cause changes to your circulation which aims to maintain your body's blood pressure and temperature.

"Heat exposure dilates the skin's blood vessels and increases the heart rate to maintain falling blood pressure whilst exposure to cold constricts them and is accompanied by increased blood pressure. These effects are thought to partially explain the higher incidence of heart attacks seen in winter".

Study volunteers need to be:

- Over 18 years old;
- Healthy OR suffering from type two diabetes;
- Available to attend five testing sessions over two to five weeks starting in April 2010.

Participants will undergo height and weight, blood pressure and body temperature measurements and have blood collected by trained university researchers. Results of personal vascular function will be available to participants at the end of the study.

People wishing to be involved in the study should contact Sibella King, ph. 6324 3688 or email Sibella.King@utas.edu.au

MEDIA ARE INVITED TO A TESTING SESSION WITH SIBELLA KING ON MONDAY 29 MARCH, 11AM, AT THE EXERCISE PHYSIOLOGY LABORATORY, HUMAN MOVEMENT BUILDING, ROOM G127.

For more information contact Sibella King, ph. 0438 097 777 or Sharon Webb, University of Tasmania, ph. 0438 510 616

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