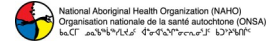




Research and Research Ethics FACT SHEET SERIES

Fact Sheet #4 – March 2009



Benefits and Risks of Health Research

Is Health Research Important?

Yes. The more we know about why people get sick and how they can be well, the better able we are to make improvements to people’s health and well-being.

Sometimes it is not easy to see the direct benefits of health research. For instance, perhaps a researcher is studying something that does not directly affect an individual or their family. But that same research might lead to a solution that will help someone else. Perhaps the results show governments that they need to change or improve their services in a certain area. Or maybe, the results allow an Inuit organization to prove a certain health problem exists so they can work toward a solution.

Health research can and should work for Inuit—and participating in it can be a rewarding experience.

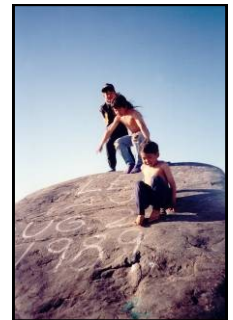
By learning more about leading research, participating in research and everyone’s rights, Inuit can make sure that health research is helpful to our communities and regions, but not

harmful to individuals and communities.

Research guidelines, among other things, encourage researchers to make sure the research will be helpful to:

- ▶ The people who take part in it.
- ▶ The community where the research takes place.
- ▶ Inuit in general.

A research participant or partner has the right to expect full information about health research and its benefits and risks to people.



What Kinds of Benefits Can We Expect From Health Research?

Our health – the knowledge coming from research could:

- ▶ Cure an illness.
- ▶ Show what kinds of services are needed.
- ▶ Prove a health problem exists so organizations can help find solutions.

Our community – when doing research in a community, researchers ideally:

- ▶ Involve a community in the research.
- ▶ Support local education and learning.
- ▶ Incorporate and respect local knowledge.
- ▶ Inform and involve the community throughout the research project.

Financial – for the individual participant:

- ▶ Research participants can ask to be paid for the time. But researchers are not allowed to pay very much. Why? To protect themselves from what is called, ‘undue inducement’. Sometimes, researchers have offered people a lot of money to get involved in very risky health research. If people really needed the money they would agree to do things they didn’t want to do. There are rules in Canada that prevent researchers from using money to tempt people to take part in research.

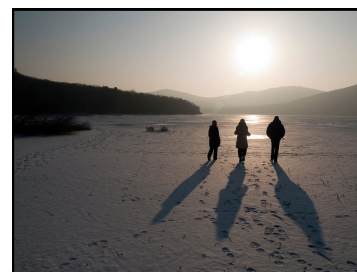
Financial – for our community:

- ▶ Researchers should pay for local services and hire local people to work with them as much as possible. It is important to know, though, that research projects are very expensive and researchers usually have very small budgets to work with, especially if they are students from universities.

Taking part in research can be a great experience. The results can help us and our communities. To make sure research and research results work for us, we stay informed about research trends, ethics and participation.

What Kinds of Risks Could Come From Health Research?

There are times when health research can be risky to the participant or even to a community if the



results are upsetting. Researchers must explain all the possible risks that could come from a research project before they start.

If an individual is thinking about taking part in health research, they need to ask questions about what they will be expected to do as part of the project, and whether parts of the research can be painful or uncomfortable.

Research and research ethics are the key focus of the **Inuit Nipingit – National Inuit Committee on Ethics and Research**. Inuit Nipingit is co-ordinated jointly by Inuit Tuttarvingat of the National Aboriginal Health Organization and Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami.

Fact Sheet #4: “Benefits and Risks of Health Research” can be retrieved from www.naho.ca/inuit/e/ethics.

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