

## Who is involved in the Atlantic PATH?

We are funded by the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer, an independent agency established by the federal government to accelerate action on cancer control. We have the support of the Nova Scotia Departments of Health and of Health Promotion and Protection, Dalhousie University, Cancer Care Nova Scotia and the Canadian Cancer Society.

Key members of the team are:

**Dr. Louise Parker, Principal Investigator**, is a professor of Medicine and Pediatrics at Dalhousie University and holds the Canadian Cancer Society (Nova Scotia Division) Chair in Population Cancer Research. She is an expert in the role of environment exposures in cancer.

**Dr. David W. Hoskin, Co-Principal Investigator**, is a professor of Pathology and of Microbiology & Immunology at Dalhousie University and holds the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation – Atlantic Region Endowed Chair in Breast Cancer Research. His research interests include the anti-cancer properties of naturally occurring substances that are found in fruits and vegetables.

**Dr. Jennifer Payne, Project Manager**, is an epidemiologist with experience in chronic disease, with an emphasis on cancer.

**Dr. Trevor Dummer, Academic Director**, is a health geographer whose current research focuses on the use of mapping and other geographic tools to understand the relationship between the environment and health, particularly related to cancer risk.



**Partnership For Tomorrow's Health**  
For the benefit of future generations

## What is the Atlantic PATH?

The Atlantic PATH is part of a national study investigating the effects of environment, lifestyle and genes on cancer. The \$42-million national study, known as the Canadian Partnership for Tomorrow Project, is funded by Canadian Partnership Against Cancer and is the largest cancer research project ever undertaken in Canada.

The Canadian Partnership for Tomorrow Project will follow the health of 300,000 people, including 30,000 in Atlantic Canada, who are between the age of 35 and 69 years for 30 years. Those taking part in the study will answer questions about their health, diet and lifestyle; provide blood, urine, saliva and toenail samples; and have various measurements taken.

This study will help researchers find out why some people develop cancer and others don't, so that we can find new ways of preventing this disease. It will also help us find ways of spotting cancer earlier, when it may be easier to treat.

This research is particularly important for Atlantic Canada, which has the highest rates of cancer in the country. Each year, more than 13,400 Atlantic Canadians are diagnosed with cancer and 6300 die of it. The disease touches everyone living here personally or through family and friends. You can find out much more about the Atlantic PATH on our website ([www.atlanticpath.ca](http://www.atlanticpath.ca)).

## How can I take part?

If you are currently between 35 and 69 and you live in Atlantic Canada, you can volunteer to take part in the Atlantic PATH by emailing [info@atlanticpath.ca](mailto:info@atlanticpath.ca) with your name, date of birth and mailing address. You can also write to us with that information at The Atlantic PATH, Fourth Floor, 6050 University Avenue, Halifax B3H 1W5 or call us at 902-494-PATH (7284) in the Halifax area and toll-free at 1-877-ATL-PATH (285-7284) elsewhere in Atlantic Canada.

You may also be randomly selected to receive an invitation package. If you do receive a package and want to participate, simply show up at our Assessment Centre during the hours suggested in the letter, or at another time which may be more convenient for you. The Assessment Centre's hours of operation are included in the invitation letter and are also available on our website ([atlanticpath.ca](http://atlanticpath.ca)).



Tel: 902 494 PATH (7284)  
Toll Free: 1 877 ATL PATH (285 7284)  
Fax: 902 494 2089  
Email: [info@atlanticpath.ca](mailto:info@atlanticpath.ca)

Partnership for Tomorrow's Health  
Room 453, 6050 University Avenue  
Halifax, NS B3H 1W5



## I didn't volunteer, so how did you get my name and address?

If you didn't contact us to volunteer but received our invitation package, your name was randomly selected from the Nova Scotia Medical Services Insurance database by Medavie Blue Cross, who mailed the invitation letter on our behalf.

The Atlantic PATH doesn't have your name and address, or any other information about you. In fact, we will only know you were randomly selected to receive an invitation if you contact us.

## What does taking part in PATH involve?

Taking part in the Atlantic PATH involves:

- Visiting one of our Assessment Centres for about 1½ - 2 hours to answer some simple questions, have some standard measurements taken and give small samples of blood, urine, saliva and toenails.
- Agreeing to allow us to follow your health over a number of years through cancer registries, hospitalization records and other health-related databases.
- Consenting to have your samples and other information stored by us, to be used by researchers for many years. To maintain confidentiality, personal information which could identify you is kept separate from health-related information and samples provided to researchers.

**Participation is entirely voluntary. You can withdraw from the study at any time over the life of the project.**



## What happens during the Assessment Centre visit?

During your visit to our Assessment Centre, we will tell you more about the project and, if you agree to take part, you will:

- Be asked about your health, lifestyle, diet and environment. The questions can be downloaded from our website and answered ahead of time to reduce the length of the Assessment Centre visit. Please be sure to bring all completed questionnaires with you when you visit the Assessment Centre.
- Have your blood pressure, pulse rate, standing and sitting height, weight, body fat, grip strength and bone density measured.
- Provide small samples of blood, urine, saliva and toenails for long-term storage and analysis.
- Receive information about the measurements taken during the visit, if you'd like. Please note that this information is not intended as a health check.

## Do I need to do anything before the Assessment Centre visit?

We'd like you to complete the brief questionnaire included with your invitation package. The questionnaire asks you about such things as:

- Medications, vitamins and dietary supplements you take on a regular basis.
- Medical conditions that you or your family may have.
- Names and addresses of two friends or relatives we may contact, if we lose touch with you. Please be sure to get their permission before providing their contact information.

At the Assessment Centre, you will be asked to complete additional questionnaires using our touch-screen computer system. These questionnaires can be downloaded from our website at [www.atlanticpath.ca](http://www.atlanticpath.ca) and completed beforehand to reduce the length of your visit. Please be sure to bring all completed questionnaires with you to the Assessment Centre.

## How do I withdraw, if I want to?

We hope you won't withdraw from the study, since it's important that a broad cross-section of Atlantic Canadians take part in the project. However, participation is entirely voluntary and you can withdraw at any time over the life of the project.

If you decide to withdraw during your Assessment Centre visit, simply advise one of the staff that you don't want to take part any longer. If you decide to withdraw later, you can do so by calling us toll-free at 1-877-ATL-PATH (1-877-285-7284) or 494-PATH (494-7284) in the Halifax region. You can also email us at [info@atlanticpath.ca](mailto:info@atlanticpath.ca) or write to us at Atlantic Partnership for Tomorrow's Health, Fourth Floor, 6050 University Avenue, Halifax, NS B3H 1W5.

## How will my personal health information be kept confidential?

Protecting your privacy is a top priority for us. We have a number of measures in place to ensure that your personal health information is kept confidential. For example:

- Personal identifying information, such as your name or address, is removed from study data and biological samples and kept separately under strict control with restricted access. All data is stored anonymously.
- All data collected by the Atlantic PATH is protected by advanced encryption methods which convert the information into forms which cannot be read by others.
- Researchers working with samples, measurement information and questionnaires will not have access to any identifying information about you. They will also require Research Ethics Board approval before accessing the study data.

