
Welcome to the OPEN Study Newsletter

The aim of this and future newsletters is to keep participants like yourself informed about the OPEN Study and its progress. We are also interested to hear your views, so if there is anything that you would like to see discussed or explained in future newsletters, please let us know.

Message from Dr Alan Dangour



I am a public health nutritionist and the lead researcher on the OPEN study. Thank you very much for agreeing to take part in the study. We believe that the study is very important and may help to define the amount of vitamin B12 needed in our diet to keep us healthy and active as we get older. The OPEN study is funded by the UK Food Standards Agency.

The study is coordinated from the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) which is Britain's national school of public health and a leading international institution for research. At LSHTM we run studies trying to identify simple cost-effective interventions which can help maintain health in later life. We really enjoy the challenges that arise in conducting these studies and have been overwhelmed by the interest in our work from our study participants. You will have already had some contact with Ken Whyte who is the OPEN Study Manager. Ken is also based at LSHTM along with the study statistician and most of the study team.

The nursing aspects of the OPEN study are managed by the Medical Research Council, General Practice Research Framework (GPRF). The GPRF is a network of over 900 general practices interested in research. Senior members of the GPRF in London are also part of the OPEN study team. You were invited to join the study as your practice is a member of the GPRF or the Primary Care Research Network.



Recruitment to the study

Research nurses in seven general practices are currently identifying people who are interested in joining the study. As all participants must be examined by Professor Mills at King's College Hospital, the practices have to be within reasonable travelling distance of the hospital. To date, practices in Acton, Beckenham, Colchester, Cranleigh, Crawley, East Horsley and Tonbridge are participating. You are one of the two hundred people aged 75 years and over who will be recruited into the study.

Study tablets

When you joined the study you were given four months supply of your study tablets and future supplies are sent directly to your home. It is important that you remember to take one study tablet every day. It may be helpful to have a routine for taking your tablets, for example by always taking your tablet at breakfast time. If you are going on an extended holiday or are moving house please let us know.



Keeping in touch with you

Ken is your main point of contact on the study and he will telephone you approximately every two months throughout the study. Each call will only take a few minutes. You can give Ken any information you wish to pass on to the study team.

OPEN Study website

If you have access to the internet, you may be interested to know that we have set-up a study website which contains lots of useful information. We update the website regularly with information on the progress of the study. Do have a look at: www.open-study.org.uk

Thank you for your help

And finally... all of us working on the OPEN study would like to take this opportunity to say a big '**Thank you**' to you for taking the time to help us with this important study. Your contribution is crucial to the progress of the study and we really appreciate your on-going commitment.

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