



**School of Human Communication Sciences**

Division of Allied Health  
Faculty of Health Sciences  
PH: (03) 9479 1937

Dear Sir/Madam,

We are inviting you to participate in a research project about **swallowing in people with Parkinson's disease** conducted by speech pathology researchers at the School of Human Communication Sciences, La Trobe University.

This study is to *examine swallowing function* in people with Parkinson's disease, before and after electrical stimulation (E-stim) treatment. To carry out this research, we need participants who are people with Parkinson's disease and have swallowing difficulties. We use a safe, portable device called *VitalStim*.

You will be taught to use the *VitalStim* device at home, by a qualified speech pathologist, and then loaned the device for 4 weeks, to use it daily for swallowing exercises. The speech pathology researcher will visit you at home, once weekly, to help you use the device, and to answer any questions that may arise.

You will need to attend two 1-hour sessions at Diagnostic Imaging Centre at Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre, East Melbourne, for **two swallowing assessments**; once before and one after using the *VitalStim* device.

**We will organize and pay for your return taxi journey** to attend both these appointments; they will be on a **Wednesday**, some time between **3.30pm -5.00pm**.

This assessment consists of an X-ray study of your swallowing. The radiation you will receive from the swallowing studies is just above background radiation from the sun, which is well within safety limits.

You will also be asked to complete three printed questionnaires, about your swallowing and your quality of life.

If you are interested in being part of this study, please complete the form attached. Your participation in this research would be greatly appreciated.

If you need more information about the study, please contact either the speech pathology researcher, Kim Matthews (PH: 03 9479 1820; e-mail: [k.matthews@latrobe.edu.au](mailto:k.matthews@latrobe.edu.au) ) or the speech pathology Honours degree student to this study, Laura Chua (PH: 0421 551 503, [ttchua@students.latrobe.edu.au](mailto:ttchua@students.latrobe.edu.au)).

Both will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you.

Kind regards,

Professor Alison Perry  
*Chair, School of Human Communication Sciences*  
*La Trobe University*



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**Expression of Interest**

**Study title: The use of E-stim with people who have dysphagia associated with Parkinson's disease: A pilot study.**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (please PRINT your name), am interested in participating in the above study.

I am interested in the above study and would like to have more information.

I am happy for the Research Associate and/or the student researcher to the above study to contact me by phone.

I understand that my contact information (below) will be used to contact me, by phone or by mail, about this study.

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone No: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form, in the enclosed pre-paid envelope provided, within two weeks of receiving this form.

You will then be contacted as soon as we receive this form.