

## Practicalities

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There are several ways to carry out the blood sampling.

### In **UZ Leuven**:

You can either come alone or with relatives in the context of your planned consultation or treatment at the day infusion centre of the gastroenterology department.

You can also visit the project coordinator at the hospital (E449: 4th floor, brown arrow) during working hours. In case of the latter, please notify us in advance (contact information on the back of this brochure).

With your **general practitioner** or **gastroenterologist**:

After you let us know about your interest to participate, we send a box with all necessary material (blood tubes, consent form and questionnaire, letter for your doctor, request for reimbursement of expenses) to your home address. With this box you can go to your general practitioner or specialist. You can send everything back to us in the same box.

## Expenses

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All expenses for participation in the research project (co-payment doctor visit, possible postage costs, costs for transport...) will be reimbursed.

You just need to fill in a form with the necessary information (contact information, bank account number, amount of expenses) and send this back to us, along with proof of payment.

## Further information and participation

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# VLECC



## Flemish genetic research on Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis

“Vlaams Erfelijkheidsonderzoek  
Crohn & Colitis ulcerosa”

RESEARCH ON THE GENETIC  
PREDISPOSITION IN INFLAMMATORY  
BOWEL DISEASE

*Prof. Dr. M. Ferrante*

*Prof. Dr. J. Sabino*

*Prof. Dr. S. Vermeire*

## General information

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The cause of inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) is currently unknown. The two conditions, Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis, have a number of similarities, but they also show differences in certain areas.

Several factors determine whether a person will develop the disease or not. We suspect there is an interaction between a **genetic predisposition** and a number of yet unknown **environmental factors**.

Thanks to extensive research world-wide, several pieces of genetic material were identified which likely play a role in the pathogenesis of inflammatory bowel disease. From this genetic material, more than one hundred sixty genes could already be identified that would predispose to the development of IBD.

When an individual carries one or more of these aberrant genes, possibly, some as yet unknown environmental factors can provoke an inflammatory bowel disease.

## Goal of the research

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To acquire a better **understanding** of the cause(s) of IBD by the identification of **genes** in our genetic material that could lead to IBD, and by the study of various proteins in the blood and of bacteria in the intestinal tract and in the stool that may play a role in the development of IBD.

Improvement of existing **therapies** and development of new **drugs**.

## Why participate?

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Research conducted in Leuven showed that there is a **familial aggregation** of Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis in 15-20% of the patients. This means that relatives of a patient have a slightly increased risk to develop the disease. In families with multiple affected members, these patients often show a similar disease course.

### Your participation is important!

Further research may lead to a better understanding of the **disease pathogenesis** and its **treatment**. This requires that the group of patients, family members and other control subjects is as large as possible. So even if you are a healthy individual, if you're diagnosed with Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis but don't have any symptoms or if you suffer from another disease, your participation in this study is really important!



## Who can participate?

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The closest genetic link exists within a family. We are interested in families where multiple members are affected with Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis, but also in families in which only one person suffers from an inflammatory bowel disease.

## What do we need from you?

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Filling in a **questionnaire**.

A **blood sample** from you, and if possible also your relatives:

*parents of the patient*

*brothers and/or sisters with or without Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis*

*partner of the patient*

*children of the patient*

*(from the age of 16)*

*other family members with*


*an inflammatory bowel disease*

Possibly a **stool, urine** or **saliva** sample in the context of a subproject for which you might be invited to take part in at a later time point. Participation in any subproject is voluntary.

A few **small tissue samples (biopsies)** if you would ever need to undergo a colonoscopy during your treatment. We will **not** conduct an extra colonoscopy for this purpose!

## Results

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Our research results will be communicated to all participants in an **annual newsletter**.  The newsletter is in Dutch.

We will **not** communicate personal results of you or your family members, as we are conducting fundamental scientific research. Participation in the study is completely **anonymous** and the collected samples and information will not be used for other purposes than the above described.