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## \$12 million invested to improve the health of children with asthma and allergies

Published: June 6, 2008



**Dr. Malcolm Sears**, professor of medicine for the Michael G. DeGroot School of Medicine and research director of the Firestone Institute for Respiratory Health

McMaster University researchers are leading a \$12 million study to investigate the genetic and environmental factors that influence the development of asthma and allergies in children.

This project, known as the CHILD study, is co-funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) and AllerGen NCE Inc. CIHR and AllerGen are investing \$6 million each over six years.

Dr. Malcolm Sears, professor of medicine for the Michael G. DeGroot School of Medicine and research director of the Firestone Institute for Respiratory Health is leading the study.

The study will follow 5,000 Canadian children from pregnancy through early childhood and investigate the roles of indoor and outdoor environmental exposure, infections, nutrition and genetics in the development of asthma and allergies. Expectant mothers will be recruited for the study in four regional centres across the country - Vancouver, Edmonton, Winnipeg and Toronto.

"This study will help us understand why allergies and asthma are common problems in children, and it will help develop new therapies, medications, prevention and management strategies to control these chronic illnesses," explained AllerGen Scientific Director Dr. Judah Denburg, Professor of Medicine at McMaster University.

"Almost one in five Canadians suffers from asthma and one in three have allergies. The incidence of asthma and allergic disease have steadily grown over the past 30 years," Dr. Denburg said.

"The CHILD study will not only benefit the treatment and control of asthma and allergies," explains Dr. Sears, "but the home-based environmental assessments of indoor air quality may well influence future home construction regulations."

"This unprecedented study will examine the beginnings of diseases that cause so much distress to many Canadians," said John Kelton, dean and vice-president of the Faculty of Health Sciences. "At McMaster we've had a focus on respiratory and allergy conditions for more than 40 years, so we're glad to host AllerGen and be the headquarters for this important research."

In making the announcement June 6, Mike Wallace, MP for Burlington, said: "Asthma and allergies are serious issues for hundreds of thousands of children and their parents, and we are committed to ensuring that we provide healthy

environments for our children to live in."

Dr. Peter Liu, scientific director at the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, said: "This research will gather greatly needed information on air quality and genetics. We hope this research will help us reduce the number of Canadian children suffering from asthma, allergies and respiratory diseases."

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## Mac prof leads five-year study of asthma, allergies in children

News Jun 07, 2008 Hamilton Spectator

(Jun 7, 2008)

The federal government has announced a \$12-million, five-year project to study the causes of asthma and allergies in children.

Known as the Child Study, the project will be sponsored by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) and AllerGen NCE Inc. Each will invest \$6 million over five years.

Burlington MP Mike Wallace announced the project in Hamilton yesterday on behalf of federal Health Minister Tony Clement.

Story continues below▼

"Asthma and allergies are serious issues for hundreds of thousands of children and their parents, and we are committed to ensuring that we provide healthy environments for our children to live in," Wallace said.

Dr. Peter Liu, scientific director for CIHR, said the study involves collecting information on air quality and genetics. "We hope this research will help us reduce the number of children suffering from asthma, allergies and respiratory diseases," he said.

Dr. Malcolm Sears, a professor of medicine at McMaster University and director of the Firestone Institute for Respiratory Health, will lead the study.

The project will involve 5,000 children who will be studied from womb to early childhood. It will investigate the roles of indoor and outdoor environmental exposure, infections, nutrition and genetics in the development of asthma and allergies. Expectant mothers will be recruited in Vancouver, Edmonton, Winnipeg and Toronto.

Experts say about one in five Canadians suffers from asthma and one in three has allergies, and the incidence of the diseases has grown steadily in the past 30 years.

[plegall@thespec.com \(mailto:plegall@thespec.com\)](mailto:plegall@thespec.com)