

News contact: Sarah Maichle
(919) 695-6413
sarah.maichle@duke.edu



Multiple Sclerosis Recruitment Effort of the MURDOCK Study Draws Participant from Virginia

Tuesday, April 10, 2012 marked an important day for Ms. Maria Chavez of Staunton, Virginia when she drove four hours south of her home to Kannapolis, North Carolina. This was her first time visiting the region and her trip represented a unique motivation for coming. She enrolled in the MURDOCK Study Multiple Sclerosis (MS) study at CMC-NorthEast, Medical Arts Building (MURDOCK Study Suite, 1st floor). Lead study investigator, Dr. Simon Gregory of Duke University and the David H. Murdock Research Institute, was also present during Ms. Chavez's enrollment.

Ms. Chavez learned about Duke University's MURDOCK Study after doing a Google internet search for "MS study". From there, she reached out to study coordinators in the Kannapolis office to schedule her visit. Since there are no limitations on where a volunteer must live according to MS study participation criteria, Ms. Chavez was eligible and willing. She was diagnosed with MS in 2008 and has been seeking opportunities to participate in clinical research to contribute to better understanding the progression of the disease. Ms. Chavez noted: "This is not my first time participating in a research study; however, this is the first research study I am involved in that is studying the genetics of MS. I believe that this kind of research holds much promise in better understanding MS and finding new and effective treatments."

The MS Study of the MURDOCK Study is trying to recruit 1,000 patients (ages 18 and older). Enrollment in the study is easy – individuals diagnosed with MS are asked to schedule an appointment at a convenient MURDOCK enrollment location. At the time of the visit, each individual will be consented to participate and small samples of blood and urine will be collected in addition to two brief questionnaires, one related to the individual's medical history and demographics and a second one addressing his/her MS diagnosis. A visit takes less than one hour and each volunteer will be compensated for their time and willingness to participate. This is not a drug study so participants will not receive any form of treatment. Rather, this is an effort to identify a large group of individuals who suffer from the same disease. Ms. Chavez aptly pointed out the need for a study like this: "There are many unanswered questions in MS – are there any markers that can be used to predict MS progression

and/or treatment response in patients? I hope that by participating in this study, I can contribute to the further understanding of MS that will answer some of these questions.”

MS is the most common neurological disorder among young adults and more than 90% of those who suffer from MS are diagnosed before age 55. Females are 2-3 times more likely than males to develop MS and children of affected females are at a significantly higher risk of developing MS than children of affected males.

Additional information about the MURDOCK Study and what a study visit entails is available at the study website, www.murdock-study.org or by phone, 704-250-5861.