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The use of medical data and left-over body samples for scientific research

The Institute of Tropical Medicine conducts important scientific research. This research enables us to understand illnesses better, which in turn helps us treat them better.

We may have taken blood (or another body sample) from you to find out which illness you are suffering from. It is possible that the leftover of those samples (possibly together with some medical data) may be used at a later point in time for scientific research. Such secondary research is governed by the law on human body samples of 19 December 2008 (article 20) and also requires that we inform you about this. Only authorised researchers have access to your data and samples. Each of them is bound by professional secrecy and has also signed a confidentiality agreement.

It is also possible that your medical data is used for future scientific research. In this case, your data will always be coded (your name will be replaced by a code, which makes you not directly identifiable) and wherever possible, your data will be completely anonymised. The link with your identity will be strictly separated and this always happens under the responsibility of a physician. Your name or identifiable information will also never show up in any publications arising from such research.

For the use of medical data or body samples of hiv-patients, a written, active consent is always requested. Also, we will always require a written consent from you in case we would ever perform genetic testing on your samples.

Prior to the start, scientific research, be it with left-over samples or only coded medical data, must obtain approval from the Ethics Committee of the Institute of Tropical Medicine.

You have **the right to refuse** this future use of your samples and medical data. You can communicate such refusal to your treating doctor immediately, or you can communicate this in the future.

In case you refuse the future use of your samples or medical data for scientific research, this **will not influence the care** you receive at our clinic, now or in the future.

Possibly, researchers may discover something during such later research that is potentially hazardous to your health or the health of others. In this case, you will be informed about this out of moral and legal obligation.

If you still have questions about the future use of your body samples or data, feel free to ask your treating doctor or [Jef Verellen, ITM data protection officer](#) (03 247 07 43).