



## PARTICIPANT INFORMATION LETTER

**PROJECT TITLE:** Retraining gait patterns to prevent falls in older adults

**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS:** Dr Michael Cole  
Dr Mark Creaby

**RESEARCHER:** Dr Anna Cronström

**RESEARCHERS' DEGREE:** Post-doctoral fellowship

Dear Participant,

You are invited to participate in the research project described below.

### ***What is the project about?***

This research project aims to investigate whether audible or visual feedback provided during walking can improve specific characteristics that have been linked to falls in older adults. Most falls experienced by individuals aged 65 and above occur during walking, which suggests that people who experience several falls may walk differently to those who do not fall. In this study we will investigate whether the use of a metronome (to guide walking pace) or real-time auditory and/or visual feedback based on your walking patterns can improve gait stability in older adults who have a history of falling. The results from this study will inform the development of future research that will potentially help to reduce the risk of future falls in this population.

### ***Who is undertaking the project?***

This project is being conducted by Dr Anna Cronström and will form the basis for her Endeavour Australia post-doctoral fellowship at the Australian Catholic University under the supervision of Drs Michael Cole and Mark Creaby.

### ***Are there any risks associated with participating in this project?***

Participants will be asked to complete 3 sets of walking trials at a comfortable speed along a 9-metre long walkway. As such, some participants may experience mild fatigue and/or become unsteady during the task. To reduce this risk, participants will be encouraged to take rest breaks, as needed, throughout the data collection sessions and a member of the research team will be positioned in close proximity at all times to assist participants, should they become unsteady. The tasks involved in this study are similar to common activities of daily life and, hence, are considered to pose no greater risk than these activities.

### ***What will I be asked to do?***

All testing will be conducted in the School of Exercise Science's Biomechanics Laboratory at the Australian Catholic University in Brisbane. Prior to the walking assessments, participants will complete a series of paper-based assessments to confirm their eligibility for the study and to collect information regarding their demographics, falls history and fear of falling. Participants will then be asked to complete two assessments of gait that each involve 3 walking tasks and will be completed either with or without auditory or visual feedback. These two assessments will be separated by approximately 1 week.

***How much time will the project take?***

The two data collection sessions are expected to take no longer than one and a half hours each to complete (i.e. 3 hours total), including the questionnaires and walking assessments.

***What are the benefits of the research project?***

Although this project is not expected to have any direct benefits for the participants, participation in this project is likely to assist us in designing future research that may help in reducing the risk of falls in older adults.

***Can I withdraw from the study?***

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. You are not under any obligation to participate. If you agree to participate, you can withdraw from the study at any time without adverse consequences.

***Will anyone else know the results of the project?***

The results of this study will be published in scientific and clinical journals in a non-identifiable manner: only aggregated data will be published. After the experiment, personal information will be removed from the recorded data so that data will only be identifiable to the researchers. The data gained from the experiment will be stored securely at the Australian Catholic University, and only accessible to the researchers involved in this project.

***Will I be able to find out the results of the project?***

Given the nature of this research, each participant's personal data is not likely to be meaningful without comparison to the data collected for other participants. As such, participant's individual data will not be provided, but interested individuals are encouraged to sign up to receive a summary of the results as soon as the project is completed.

***Who do I contact if I have questions about the project?***

Any questions regarding this project should be directed to Dr Anna Cronström.

Dr Anna Cronström

Email: [anna.cronstrom@acu.edu.au](mailto:anna.cronstrom@acu.edu.au)

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***What if I have a complaint or any concerns?***

The study has been reviewed by the Human Research Ethics Committee at Australian Catholic University (review number 2018-130E). If you have any complaints or concerns about the conduct of the project, you may write to the Manager of the Human Research Ethics Committee care of the Office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research).

Manager, Ethics  
c/o Office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research)  
Australian Catholic University  
North Sydney Campus

PO Box 968  
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Any complaint or concern will be treated in confidence and fully investigated. You will be informed of the outcome.

***I want to participate! How do I sign up?***

If you agree to participate in this project, please contact Dr Anna Cronström (details provided above) to indicate your interest in participating. Thank you for taking the time to consider this information and we look forward to discussing this research with you soon.

Yours sincerely,

**Dr Anna Cronström**

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