



SPARK, a new online research initiative, aims to advance our understanding of autism by transforming the research landscape. SPARK, a landmark research partnership, will connect researchers to a large group of individuals with autism and their biological families.



Vanderbilt University Medical Center
615-322-6533 | SPARK@vumc.org

www.SPARKforAutism.org/VU

SPARK: Simons Foundation Powering Autism Research for Knowledge
©2016 Simons Foundation

SPARK Primary Investigator: Wendy Chung, MD, PhD • Protocol Number: 20151664
Western Institutional Review Board



Help Speed Up
Autism Research
Join SPARK today



What is SPARK?

- SPARK is a free online study with a simple mission: to speed up research and advance the understanding of autism
- SPARK aims to be the largest study of its kind with the goal of building a community of 50,000 individuals with autism and their families across the nation
- The entire autism community is encouraged to participate, including adults and children diagnosed with autism, as well as their biological parents and siblings
- By dramatically increasing the number of research participants, SPARK aims to help facilitate research that has not yet been possible

An important part of SPARK is the collection of DNA so it can be analyzed to expand our understanding of the role of specific genes in the development of autism. SPARK will ask you to share basic information about your medical and family history, and if you choose, a DNA sample using a saliva collection kit.



SPARK is sponsored by the Simons Foundation Autism Research Initiative (SFARI), a scientific initiative of the Simons Foundation.

Why Participate in SPARK?

While we are making significant progress learning about autism, we simply don't know enough. By joining SPARK, you're helping accelerate research to find causes and treatments for autism.

Additionally, you may qualify to receive:

- Updates on the latest research
- Access to experts who will arm you with information to help address daily situations
- Results from the analysis of your or your family's DNA, in the event that you opt to receive this information and a genetic cause for autism is identified
- A \$50 gift card for the individual with autism once your family has completed registration in SPARK and mailed back the saliva samples

Register for SPARK Today

To learn more about SPARK and register online via a secure portal, visit www.SPARKforAutism.org/VU. All data provided to SPARK will be stored without any identifying information and kept confidential.

What to Expect After Registration

After you register, a saliva kit will be shipped directly to your home with clear instructions for collection and return shipping. The kit includes a tube for collecting saliva, as well as an absorbent swab that can be used for any child who is not able to spit. If you prefer, you can provide a saliva sample in-person by scheduling an appointment at your local clinical site or hospital participating in SPARK.

Registration Process

- 1 Register at SPARKforAutism.org/VU



- 2 Consent to share your data



- 3 Share family history, behavioral and medical information



- 4 Consent to provide a saliva sample



- 5 Provide saliva DNA sample(s)

