

Participant Information Sheet

Study title: An exploratory study of natural health products and natural substances in alcohol, tobacco, and other recreational substance use

Investigators:

Principal investigator (PI)/Supervisor:

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Tēnā koe, hello and warm Pacific greetings

This participant information sheet will help you decide if you would like to take part in this study. It explains why we are doing the study, what is involved if you decide to take part, the potential risks and benefits of taking part, and what will happen when the study ends.

If you have any questions, please contact the study researchers (their contact information is at the end of this document). You are welcome to discuss with family, whānau, or friends whether you want to take part in this study. You can also forward the details of this study to any family members, whānau, or friends who may also be interested in taking part.

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to complete an online consent form.

Background:

Broadly speaking, the term 'natural health products' (NHPs) includes, but is not limited to, herbal medicines, traditional medicines, vitamins and minerals, pre- and probiotics, amino acids, dietary supplements, plants and plant-based material. NHPs (also called complementary and alternative medicines) are used for many health reasons. Natural substances are plants, fungi (e.g. mushrooms) and preparations of natural origin that are used recreationally to influence the mind, change behaviour and/or mood, to get 'high' or for a 'hit'. Some NHPs and natural substances are claimed or promoted to help prevent unpleasant effects (symptoms) and harms that some people experience from using alcohol and/or tobacco use (e.g., cure or prevent 'hangovers', to stop cravings for nicotine, and to help 'detox' the liver). Some NHPs and natural substances have also been used recreationally for their psychoactive ('mind-altering') effects.

At present, very little is known about which NHPs are used in New Zealand to help with symptoms from using alcohol, tobacco, other recreational substances or which natural substances are used for their 'mind-altering' effects.

This study aims to collect information about NHPs and natural substances that are used in New Zealand to help with alcohol, tobacco and/or other recreational substance use, or NHPs/natural substances used recreationally to influence the mind or change behaviour and/or mood (i.e., natural substances used 'for fun', to get 'high' or for a 'hit'); the study will collect this information using a pre-tested questionnaire.

About this study:

This study involves two phases:

- Phase 1 is an **online questionnaire**. You will be asked to answer questions on the following topics:
 - Use of NHPs and other natural substances in general and in relation to the use of:
 - Alcohol
 - Tobacco
 - Electronic smoking devices
 - Other recreational substances
- If you use NHPs or natural substances in relation to alcohol, tobacco and/or other recreational substances, and/or as recreational substances themselves, then you are also eligible to take part in Phase 2 of this study. Phase 2 is a follow-up **online interview** (by videolink, or audio-only, if preferred) to explore your responses from Phase 1 in more detail, and to understand your views and experiences with using NHPs and/or natural substances in relation to alcohol, tobacco and other substances, or the use of NHPs and/or natural substances themselves 'for fun', to get 'high' or for a 'hit'.

You can choose to take part in Phase 1 (questionnaire) only, or to take part in both Phase 1 and Phase 2. If you are eligible and wish to take part in Phase 2 (interviews), you will be required to indicate this and provide your contact details in a separate survey form at the end of the questionnaire.

This study is an independent study. It is a student doctoral research project at the University of Auckland.

Study procedures:

This is a nationwide study, and we aim to recruit participants across various age groups, ethnicities, and locations.

For Phase 1 (online questionnaire) we aim to recruit up to a maximum of 150 people. After this point, the study will be closed and will no longer accept new participants. For the interviews in Phase 2, we aim to recruit up to 20 people. Please note that as we can only interview up to 20 people, there is a chance that, even if you have agreed to participate in Phase 2, we may not be able to interview you.

Phase 1 (online questionnaire):

The online questionnaire will ask you questions about your use of NHPs and natural substances in relation to your use of alcohol, tobacco, electronic smoking devices, and other recreational substances.

It will take you about 20-30 minutes to complete the questionnaire, depending on your responses. You can complete and submit the questionnaire once only.

You can complete the questionnaire at a time and place that suits you. You may wish to complete the questionnaire in a private area, and to use a personal or secure device and internet connection, as you will be asked personal questions about your use of alcohol and/or other substances. Please take your time to provide information that is as accurate and reliable as possible.

You will need to complete and submit the survey all in one 'go' as the website will not 'save' partial responses. Before you start to complete the questionnaire, we recommend that you gather together any NHPs that you are taking to prevent interruptions while you are completing the questionnaire online.

The questionnaire is compatible with most devices, but it is best completed on a web browser on your computer/laptop.

Phase 2 (interview):

If you use NHPs or natural substances in relation to alcohol, tobacco and/or other recreational substances, and/or as recreational substances themselves, then you are eligible to take part in Phase 2. Taking part in the follow-up interview involves having an online discussion with the student researcher through a *video* (or audio only, if preferred) communication platform, such as Zoom. You are advised to be in a private and quiet environment to do the interview.

The interview will take about 30-45 minutes, depending on the length of your answers. The interview consists of questions about your views on, and experience(s) with the use of NHPs in relation to alcohol, tobacco, and some other substances, and your use of NHPs and/or natural substances themselves 'for fun', to get 'high' or for a 'hit'.

All interviews will be video and audio-recorded by default. If you would like to be audio-recorded only, please let the research team know when you are contacted. All interviews will be transcribed verbatim (word-for-word) by the student researcher. These interviews will be conducted between 8am and 8pm from Monday to Friday.

You are welcome to have a whānau member or support person present during your interview. However, anything they say will not be included in the interview.

If you indicate you are interested in taking part in the Phase 2 interviews, you are encouraged to download a copy of your questionnaire responses at the end of Phase 1 (you will be able to do this at the end of the questionnaire, once you have submitted your responses). We can also provide you with a copy of your responses should you forget to do this.

If you volunteer to be interviewed and are selected, please indicate on the interview consent form if you would like to receive a copy of your interview transcript for you to check and edit. If you request this, after your interview, we will send you a copy of your interview transcript. You will be able to highlight any changes you would like to make to the transcript and return it to us (by email) within two weeks of the date you receive it. If you do not return the transcript within this time, we will assume that you do not have any changes to make to its content.

Invitation to participate:

If you are aged 18 years or older, are living in New Zealand, and have EVER consumed alcohol, or smoked tobacco/tobacco products, or used electronic cigarettes/vaping devices or consumed/used any other recreational substance (including natural substances for recreational effects) we would like to invite you to participate in Phase 1 of this study.

If you use or have EVER used NHPs or natural substances in relation to alcohol, tobacco and/or other recreational substances, and/or you use NHPs/natural substances 'for fun', to get 'high or for a 'hit', then you are also eligible to take part in Phase 2 of this study.

Participation in either phase of this study is completely voluntary. If you would like to participate, you will be asked to provide your consent before completing the online questionnaire. At the end of the survey, based on the responses you have provided in the online questionnaire, you may be asked to indicate your interest and provide your name and email address if you agree to be contacted to participate in the Phase 2 online *video* interview. We will use the demographic information collected in the survey – such as age, gender, location, and ethnicity – to select up to 20 participants to take part in Phase 2. We aim to achieve a diverse range of demographic characteristics represented among the interview participants, as far as is possible.

You may choose to have an *audio* interview (if preferred). If you are Māori, you will be asked if you would like to be interviewed (in English) by a Māori interviewer. You are welcome to have a member of your whānau present during the interview if you wish. Sorry, but we are not able to offer an interview in te reo Māori.

We are conducting up to 20 interviews, so even if you agree to be interviewed, you may not be selected. If this is the case, we will inform you of this.

If you give your consent to be interviewed, and if you are selected for the interview, the student researcher will contact you via email to arrange a suitable date and time for an interview.

Possible risks and benefits of taking part in the study:

There is no direct benefit to you if you participate in this study. You are not expected to experience any physical risks from this study.

During the study, you may share information about your use of legal (and, possibly, illegal) substances, and this may make you more aware of your current use habits. By taking part, you may also share information about your substance use behaviour that is harmful to your health, or to those living with you, or someone in your care. Disclosing this information might make you feel emotionally distressed or uncomfortable.

We encourage you to contact your primary healthcare provider if you have any questions or concerns about your substance use. You can also contact the Alcohol Drug Helpline (0800 787 797) or visit their website <https://alcoholdrughelp.org.nz/> for more information. Alternatively, a list of contact information for other relevant support organisations can be found in Appendix one, at the end of this document.

This research includes basic information such as your ethnic group, geographic region, age group, and sex. It is possible that this research could one day help people in the same groups as you. However, due to the nature of the study, it is also possible that research findings could be used inappropriately to support negative stereotypes, stigmatise, or discriminate against members of the same groups as you. We will work with our partners to assist in the interpretation of the findings, to ensure that all Māori and Pacific participant data-related activities are appropriately presented and disseminated.

Please note: if you take part in an interview and if, during the interview, you disclose to the research team *illegal activity that poses a serious threat to the health and safety of an individual or the public, we will be required to disclose this information to the appropriate authorities, and possibly breach confidentiality where relevant.*

Reimbursement:

Participants who complete the questionnaire will be offered a \$20 electronic shopping voucher (e-voucher). You will be asked to provide your name and email address in a separate voucher survey form at the end of the questionnaire to receive this. Your name and email address will be stored separately from your questionnaire responses (that is, we will not link your contact information to your answers).

Participants who are interviewed will be offered a \$30 electronic shopping voucher (e-voucher). This will be emailed to you after the interview.

Data storage, retention, destruction, future use:

We recognise that the information you will share with us is sensitive and it is important that it is kept secure.

Electronic consent forms will be stored for six years. Electronic files will be stored in password-protected folders on the secure University of Auckland network.

Interview transcriptions and other study data will be retained for at least six years for the purposes of undertaking analysis and writing reports and publications. Electronic study data for each participant will be stored using a unique identifier. A separate, password-protected file linking participants' details with the unique identifier will be kept. After the study is finished and the publication process is completed, all information will be deleted.

Right to withdraw from participation:

Phase One (online questionnaire): You are able to withdraw your participation from the study at any time before or during completion of the questionnaire by closing your web browser. However, please note that once you complete and *submit* the questionnaire, we will not be able to withdraw your participation or your data.

Phase Two (interview): If you are selected for an interview, you can withdraw your participation before and during the interview, without giving a reason. Once you have undertaken the interview, you may choose to withdraw your information from the study up to *two weeks* after the date of your interview by contacting the student researcher (Rayna Sharma) or principal investigator (Jo Barnes). If you request to receive a copy of your written transcript for review and editing, you may withdraw from the study at any time before or during the interview, and up until the end of the two-week period you are offered for making changes to your transcript. Withdrawing from the study means you withdraw your participation and any information you have provided in the *interview*, without any consequences.

Anonymity and confidentiality:

Your participation in this study will remain **confidential**.

If you decide to participate in the study, the research processes will provide confidentiality for you. Your participation will only be known to the research team. We will write reports and publications from the data collected during the study. If the information you provide is reported or published, this will be done in a way that does not identify you. If we use quotes from your questionnaire responses and/or interviews, these will be de-identified.

Although efforts will be made to protect your privacy, absolute confidentiality of your information cannot be guaranteed. Even with your information being de-identified, there is no guarantee that you cannot be identified. The risk of people accessing and misusing your information is currently very small but may increase in the future as people find new ways of tracing information.

*Please note: As explained previously, if you disclose to the research team any illegal activity that poses a serious threat to the health and safety of an individual or the public, we will be required to disclose this information to the appropriate authorities and may have to **breach confidentiality** where relevant.*

You will be asked to complete a consent form before starting the questionnaire. Your contact information (name and email address) will only be collected at the end of the survey if you may be eligible and choose to volunteer for the Phase 2 interviews, based on your questionnaire responses. We will collect your email address if you wish to be provided with a summary of the results or a copy of your interview transcript. At the end of the Phase 1 online questionnaire, you will be asked to provide your name and email address to receive a \$20 shopping e-voucher. Your email address will be used to send you a \$30 shopping e-voucher following your interview.,

In all these circumstances, your contact information will be collected and stored separately from your survey responses.

Study results:

If you participate in the study and wish to receive a summary of the results, please indicate this on the consent form and provide your email address. A summary will be emailed to you once it is available.

Funding:

This study is funded by a grant awarded to Professor Jo Barnes (principal investigator) and Dr Rhys Ponton (co-investigator) from the Health Research Council of New Zealand.

Contact details:

If you have any queries regarding the study, please contact Professor Jo Barnes (principal investigator) Email: j.barnes@auckland.ac.nz, or Rayna Sharma (student researcher) Email: rayna.sharma@auckland.ac.nz.

For concerns of an ethical nature, you can contact the Chair at Auckland Health Research Ethics Committee, The University of Auckland, Private Bag 92019, Auckland 1142. Telephone: (09) 373 7599 ext. 83711. Email: ahrec@auckland.ac.nz

If you require Māori cultural support, talk to your whānau in the first instance. If you have any questions or complaints about the study, you can contact Iwi United Engaged Limited. Telephone: [0274 890 804](tel:0274890804). Email: misty@iue.net.nz

<i>Principal Investigator:</i> Professor Joanne Barnes School of Pharmacy The University of Auckland Private Bag 92019 Auckland, New Zealand Telephone: (09) 3737599 Ext.83069 Email: j.barnes@auckland.ac.nz	<i>Head of School:</i> Associate Professor Shane Scahill School of Pharmacy The University of Auckland Private Bag 92019 Auckland, New Zealand Telephone: (09) 3737599 Ext.85226 Email: s.scahill@auckland.ac.nz
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Approved by the Auckland Health Research Ethics Committee on 03/10/2024 for three years. Reference number AH28031.

Appendix one – contact information for relevant support organisations

Listed in alphabetical order

Please note: If you, a friend or whānau member needs urgent medical attention CALL 111

Alcohol Drug Helpline

0800 787 797 | <https://alcoholdrughelp.org.nz>

Alcohol Drug Helpline – Māori helpline

0800 787 798 or FREE TXT 8681 | <https://alcoholdrughelp.org.nz/contact#maori-helpline>

Alcohol Drug Helpline – Pasifika Services

0800 787 799 or FREE TXT 8681 | <https://alcoholdrughelp.org.nz/contact#pasifika-helpline>

Alcohol Drug Helpline – Youth Helpline

0800 787 984 or FREE TXT 8681 | <https://alcoholdrughelp.org.nz/contact#youth-helpline>

Are You OK (Family violence helpline)

0800 456 450 | <https://areyouok.org.nz>

Community Alcohol and Drug Services (CADS) – Auckland

0800 845 1818 | <https://www.cads.org.nz/>

Healthline

0800 611 116

The Level (New Zealand Drug Foundation)

<https://thelevel.org.nz/>

Lifeline

0800 543 354 (0800 LIFELINE) or free text 4357 (HELP)

Need to talk?

Free call or text 1737

Quit Line (Smoking cessation help)

0800 778 778 | <https://quit.org.nz>

Suicide Crisis Helpline (0508 TAUTOKO)

0508 828 865