Confidentiality

How does ResearchMatch protect a volunteer’s information?

ResearchMatch takes privacy very seriously. Volunteer information will not be released to registered investigators until the volunteer has given permission. No one else is able to see volunteer health and contact information. ResearchMatch will never sell, rent or lease personal information.

Volunteer information is stored in a secure, central database at Vanderbilt University. All data sent between ResearchMatch, volunteers and investigators is encrypted using Secure Socket Layer (SSL) protection.

ResearchMatch is maintained at Vanderbilt University and is overseen by the Vanderbilt Institutional Review Board.

Detailed information can be found in the online privacy statement:

https://www.researchmatch.org/about/privacy_statement.php
Challenge: In order to answer scientific questions, researchers need volunteers for certain types of research. Many research studies are never finished because researchers cannot find enough volunteers to join.

Solution: ResearchMatch is an online tool to help connect willing volunteers with researchers and their studies.

What institutions are involved with ResearchMatch?
ResearchMatch was created through a large network of major academic institutions and is funded by the National Institutes of Health. The website is hosted by Vanderbilt University. All institutions participating in ResearchMatch have signed agreements to protect volunteer privacy. Only researchers approved by participating institutions are able to use ResearchMatch.

Does it cost money to join ResearchMatch?
No. ResearchMatch is free to join for researchers and volunteers.

Who can join ResearchMatch as a volunteer?
People of all ages and backgrounds from the United States can join ResearchMatch. A parent, legal guardian or caretaker may register someone under the age of 19 or adults who may not be able to enter information on their own.

Do volunteers need to have a health condition?
No. Although many people are interested in finding a research study because of a health condition, there are many studies looking for healthy volunteers.

Is ResearchMatch only for clinical trials?
ResearchMatch is for any type of IRB-approved study looking for people to participate.

How does a researcher register a study?
Researchers at participating CTSA institutions may register studies through ResearchMatch. Upon registration, researchers may request either feasibility or recruitment access. Feasibility access allows inclusion/exclusion criteria to be entered to obtain the number of volunteers who are potential matches or acquire data needed to design a study. Recruitment access provides all of the features of the system. To gain recruitment access, a study’s Principal Investigator and/or authorized recruitment proxy must submit sufficient evidence of an IRB approved study. ResearchMatch must be added as a recruitment tool to the protocol and must be IRB approved. The request for recruitment access will be routed to the Institution’s ResearchMatch liaison, who will review and approve the request.

Is my institution participating?
Currently, ResearchMatch is available to the sites of the Cleveland Clinical and Translational Science Collaborative, including Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland Clinic, MetroHealth Medical Center , University Hospitals Case Medical Center and the Louis Stokes Cleveland VA Medical Center.

Will an investigator’s access expire?
Yes, a researcher’s recruitment access to ResearchMatch will mirror the IRB expiration date of the study. Successful continuing review applications may be submitted via ResearchMatch.

Can volunteers change their mind about being part of ResearchMatch?
Yes, volunteers may cancel their ResearchMatch registration at any time by logging into their profile and selecting the option to remove themselves. By doing so, all information is removed and the volunteer will no longer be in the database.