

Information about Armenia Trauma Relief Study and Informed Consent Form

Purpose

The Armenia Trauma Relief Study is being conducted as part of an humanitarian effort to help Armenians recover from the stressful and traumatic effects of the recent hostilities with Azerbaijan and restore happy and productive lives.

You will have the opportunity to learn the Transcendental Meditation technique (TM) as part of an integrated program. More than 10 million people around the world of all races and religions have learned TM over the past 60 years. TM is a simple effortless technique you practice for 20 minutes twice a day sitting comfortably with eyes closed. Hundreds of published scientific studies show that this technique has benefits for mind, body, behavior, and environment.

What the Study will Measure

The Armenia Trauma Relief Study will monitor the effects of practice of the Transcendental Meditation technique on reducing symptoms of difficulty sleeping, anxiety, depression, traumatic stress and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) that result from stressful experiences. Symptoms of PTSD include the following: (1) not being able to sleep; (2) feeling anxious and depressed; (3) feeling as though things are out of control; (4) feeling as though no one can understand what you have experienced; (5) having repeated memories of a past stressful event; feeling emotionally distant from people around you; and (6) other similar uncomfortable experiences.

How you will Participate – Learning and practicing the TM Technique

Learning the TM technique is a 7-step process. First you will attend introductory and preparatory lectures of about 1 to 1 ½ hours each on two days. After the second lecture you will have a personal interview. On four consecutive days you will be personally instructed in the TM technique by your teacher (1-1/2 hours), and participate in three follow-up meetings of 1 to ½ hours each where you will learn everything you need to know about how to practice the TM technique properly. You will have all your questions answered.

You will practice the TM technique twice daily for about 20 minutes each time. There will be weekly follow-up meetings which may be online.

Completing Brief Standardized Tests on your Cell Phone

To be a part of the Armenia Trauma Relief Study all that is required in addition to learning and practicing the TM technique is to answer some brief standardized questions in 4 short tests that will take you about 15 minutes to complete. You will complete these sets of questions three times (15 minutes each time): (1) before you learn TM, (2) after 30 days of practicing TM, and (3) after 90 days from your date of instruction.

The tests are as follows: (1) a 20-item test to determine levels of traumatic stress symptoms; (2) a 9-item test to measure levels of depression; (3) a 7-question test to measure levels of anxiety; and (4) a 7-question test to measure sleep challenges.

Answering the questions is easy. You will be given a link to a web site that you can access by cell phone.

Here are the instructions for completing these questions:

- 1) Answer every question. Do not leave out any questions.
- 2) If you have any questions while you are completing the tests, contact the Study Administrator;
- 3) Answer each question truthfully. The information you provide is completely confidential. There are no right answers or wrong answers, only the most accurate answer you can provide about yourself.
- 4) Take your time. There is no time limit for completing the form.

Confidentiality and Protection of Your Private Information

This study is for research purposes to determine what happens when a group facing trauma learns the TM technique. All of your personal information and all records relating to each person will be kept confidential. Without your expressed written permission, no information will be released or printed that would disclose your personal identity.

Data from the tests will be used to monitor the changes with TM for all those participating in the study. But only the study administrator will have your name or other personal information and will not give that information to anyone else.

Requirements to participate in the Study

You may be part of the study if you meet the following requirements:

- 1) You do not already practice the TM technique before learning during the Study;
- 2) You participate in all 7 steps of the TM course;
- 3) You spend 20 minutes morning and afternoon practicing TM for at least the three-month study period;
- 4) You attend regular weekly follow-up meetings for 3 months;
- 5) You do not try to teach others TM or any part of the course; and
- 6) You take the tests the three times they are offered (before learning TM, after 30 days, and after 90 days).

Study Administrator

Here is the contact information for the Study Administrator. If there is any change in the Study Administrator during the Study, that information will be give to you:

Gayane Zargaryan, Study Administrator
Email: gayanezargaryan52@gmail.com
Mobile phone: +374-98-123381

If you have any questions about testing, please contact the Study Administrator.

If you have any change in your situation during the Study, please contact the Study Administrator or your TM teacher. For example if you decide for any reason to attend any psychological/psychiatric counseling sessions during the Study that you were not attending when you learned the TM technique, please inform the Study Administrator or your TM teacher so that they are aware that you are also getting this support from a psychologist or psychiatrist. This is necessary purely as a research procedure.

Risks

The risks to you are minimal in this study.

Benefits

Practice of the Transcendental Meditation technique has been shown in many scientific research studies to reduce symptoms of depression, anxiety, sleep disorders, traumatic stress and PTSD.

Informed Consent

I certify that I am ages 18 or older, that the research procedures described on this form have been explained to me, and that any questions that I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. If I am under 18, my legal guardian will sign as well. I understand the benefits and possible risks (if any) of participating in this research. The monitoring may be used to show group benefits of this program either to Armenian Government or they may be published to show the benefits of TM. I am being taught TM for free in this special project. I will not ask for any money for my participation on this project. I know that I may ask now, or in the future, any questions I have about the study or the research procedures. I have been assured that records relating to me will be kept confidential.

I understand that if I have any questions about this study I may contact the Study Administrator.

I understand that I am free to withdraw from this Study at any time. I further understand that if I do not join the Study, or if I withdraw at any time, I will not be penalized or lose benefits to which I am otherwise entitled.

I hereby consent to participate in this study.

Print Full Name as on Passport: _____

Signature: _____

Today's Date (day, month, year): _____

Birth date (day, month, year): _____

Gender (circle): Male Female

Telephone number: _____

Email address: _____

Address (number, street, city, province): _____

Occupation (examples: doctor, teacher, housewife, student): _____

Are you currently a displaced person? ____ Yes ____ No

Were you in the military during the recent hostilities? ____ Yes ____ No

Last four digits of society security or passport number: _____

If I am under 18, my legal guardian will sign below

Relationship of legal guardian to the participant: _____

Full name of legal guardian as on passport or Social Security Card:

Signature of legal guardian: _____

Today's Date (day, month, year): _____

Telephone number of legal guardian: _____

Email address of legal guardian: _____