

April 24, 2015

Ms. «motherfirstname» «motherlastname»  
«address1»  
«address2»  
«city», «state» «zip»

Dear Ms. «motherlastname»:

On behalf of the Birth Defects Study To Evaluate Pregnancy exposureS (BD-STEPS), I want to thank you for allowing us to interview you for our study. We will learn more about the causes of birth defects by gathering information from a large number of mothers. Your willingness to participate has been most valuable to us and will also be of value to other mothers and children in the future.

To keep you and other participants informed, we publish an electronic newsletter every year that updates participants on the progress of the study. You can access this newsletter at [www.bdsteps.org](http://www.bdsteps.org).

<<To better understand genetic and other biologic factors that may contribute to birth defects, we are also asking for your consent to request some of the leftover heel stick blood that was already collected shortly after your baby’s birth by the < **Screening Program**>. For every baby born in <State>, a few drops of blood from the baby’s heel (bloodspots) are dried on a card to test for rare conditions. After the tests are done, there are usually some bloodspots left over. The bloodspot samples will allow us to study genetic and other biologic factors that may contribute to the causes of birth defects. Your participation is voluntary, meaning you can choose to take part or not. And, you may withdraw your child’s bloodspot samples from this study at any time.

Please read the enclosed information called “Informed Consent for Release of Leftover Newborn Bloodspots.” If you choose to participate in the study, please sign the consent form and return it to us in the postage-paid envelope. A second copy of the consent form is enclosed for your records. We’ve included a \$10 gift card to thank you for your time, which you can use even if you choose not to participate.>>

If you have any questions, please contact one of our study staff at 1-888-743-7324 or you can contact me at <Local **PI/Study Coordinator contact name and local contact number**>.

Thank you for helping us to better understand and prevent birth defects.

Sincerely,

<Insert local PI name and local contact>

Enclosures