What future research studies might be able to answer

Although HPS2-THRIVE is aiming to discover whether ER niacin/laropiprant protect against heart disease and strokes in people with circulatory problems, there are likely to be many other causes of these conditions. Some causes, such as high LDL (bad) cholesterol, are already known and doctors are able to treat this problem with drugs. We suspect, however, that other factors also play a part in circulatory problems, but there is limited understanding of these processes. In particular, we have limited knowledge about the influence of genes on risk of heart disease, strokes or diabetes. If we were able to preserve your blood and urine samples in a very cold freezer (containing liquid nitrogen), then future advances in medical knowledge might eventually enable us to answer some of these questions by defrosting and analysing such samples.

What are the risks of allowing my samples to be stored long-term?

There are no risks at all to you. The study coordinators in Oxford University will be the only people who are able to link test results with individual patients, and the data will be held confidentially within a secure computer system. The information from your samples, including details of your genes, will not be provided to you, your doctors, or anybody else. In particular, having these samples stored and subsequently tested would not affect your ability to obtain insurance.

How much blood would be taken?

We only need about 2 teaspoons of blood for the immediate measurements and for the long-term storage. Numbered samples would be stored indefinitely in liquid nitrogen at a secure location in Oxford University.