

Figure 1The University of North Georgia Logo

 **Informed Consent Form**

 **Visually Impaired**

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**Does using a guide dog influence posture or sway throughout the human kinetic chain? A Pilot Study**

You are being asked to participate in a research study. Participation is this study is voluntary. Please read the information below and ask questions about anything that you do not understand before deciding if you want to participate. A researchers listed below will be available to answer your questions.

**Researchers:**

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You have been asked to participate in this study because you have the following: you are 18 years old or older; your vision has been rated as legally blind; you can walk outside of your home using a guide dog; you can walk outside of your home using a long cane.

**Purpose:**

The purpose of this study is to collect information on the way a person, who is legally blind walks while using a guide dog and then a long cane.

**Procedures:**

Each session will take approximately 20 minutes. The researchers will measure the length of your legs. This information will be entered into a computer program. You will be asked to walk on the GaitRite mat. The GaitRite mat is 16 feet long and 3 feet wide. The mat has special sensors that record you footprint. You will be asked to walk at your regular pace, six times using your guide dog and six times using your white cane.

**Risks/Benefits:**

The risk associated with participation in this study are minimal.

There are no direct benefits for your participation. However, your willingness to participate in this study will contribute to the understanding of the physical effects on a visually impaired person while using a guide dog.

Physical discomfort should not be experienced.

**Confidentiality:**

The information that identifies you in this study will be handled as confidentially as possible. Your written and data information will be identified by study number only. The written data will be stored in a locked file drawer in the head researcher’s office. The computer data will be encrypted and password protected. Only the head researcher and student researchers will access either data sets. If results of this study are published or presented, your name and other personally identifiable information will not be used.

**Voluntary Participation:**

Your participation in the study is voluntary. Even if you decide not to participate, you may withdraw from the study without penalty at any time during or after the study. You may have the results of your participation, if it can be identified.

### Statement of Consent:

I agree to participate in this study, and to the use of this study as described above.  By signing this document, I agree to have read the information in this document. I have had a chance to ask any questions I have about the study.

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|  |  |  |
| Participant’s Signature |  | Date |
|  |  |  |
| Researcher’s Signature |  | Date |

Questions or problems regarding your rights as a participant should be addressed to Dr. Troy A. Smith, Chair of the Institutional Review Board, University of North Georgia, 3820 Mundy Mill Road Oakwood, GA, (678).717.3670, IRBchair@ung.edu