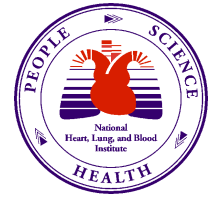


FYI from the NHLBI



Public Interest News from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute

Vol. 2, Issue 1, May 2001

Message from the Director

It was a pleasure to meet with many of you in January at the Institute's Second Annual Public Interest Organization Meeting. Such meetings are essential for the Institute and our National Heart, Lung, and Blood Advisory Council to learn how we can better meet the needs of our constituents. I urge you to tap into the cooperative spirit that was apparent at this year's meeting by developing ways to work together toward common goals. If you know of specific activities that the NHLBI can undertake or facilitate to help you to help one another, please let us know by writing to NHLBI.Listens@nih.gov.

As many at the meeting noted, you can help us "get the message out" by distributing materials such as the *FYI from the NHLBI*. To celebrate May as High Blood Pressure Education month, show your loved ones that food can be good for you and taste good at the same time; make a meal using recipes from our Interactive Guide to Lowering High Blood Pressure, www.nhlbi.nih.gov/hbp.

This year's World Asthma Day, celebrated on May 3, draws attention to the global burden of asthma and the need to improve asthma care worldwide. The theme, *Joining Together Against Asthma*, recognizes the need for persistent and collective efforts at local, national, and international levels to address this growing problem.

We also have been working on other outreach activities. This February, the NHLBI and other federal agencies made a formal commitment with the American Heart Association to coordinate efforts to reduce the impact of heart disease, stroke, and other cardiovascular diseases. As a part of this endeavor, we are supporting several population- and community-based public education and health promotion programs about the warning signs and symptoms of heart attack and stroke, many of which will be featured in future *FYI from the NHLBI* issues.

Sincerely yours,

Claude Lenfant, M.D.
Director

Study Reveals Link Between Salt Sensitivity and Risk of Death in People without Hypertension

Results from an NHLBI-supported study, published in a recent issue of *Hypertension: Journal of the American Heart Association*, show that sensitivity to salt increases the risk of death even for people with normal blood pressure. Although salt has been associated with hypertension for years, new research reveals that salt sensitivity (a measure of how blood pressure responds to salt intake) increases risks of developing other conditions such as kidney problems.

According to Dr. Myron Weinberger, Director of the Hypertension Research Center at the Indiana University School of Medicine and the study's principal investigator, about 26 percent of Americans with normal blood pressure and about 58 percent of those with hypertension are salt sensitive. Because there is no easy way to test for salt sensitivity, Dr. Weinberger advises all Americans with normal blood pressure to follow the federal recommendation of having no more than 2,400 milligrams of sodium a day.

Because only 10 percent of dietary sodium is added by salting food at the table, Americans interested in reducing their sodium consumption should be careful about the sodium content of processed foods. But how to interpret food-labels? "Sodium free" and "salt free" both mean the product contains 5 milligrams or less of sodium per serving." A serving of a "low sodium" product has 140 milligrams or less of sodium. "Reduced sodium" or "light in sodium" means the product contains at least 25% or 50% less sodium than the regular version, respectively.

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size	1 package
Servings Per Container	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories	230 Calories
	%
Total Fat	3g
Saturated Fat	1.5 g
Sodium	470 mg
Total Carbohydrates	

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“I didn’t know I could disagree with my doctor”

ENDOW participant, quoted at the Community Prevention Research in Women’s Health Conference, October 27, 2000, Bethesda, MD

Award-Winning Project Empowers Women to Make Health Care Decisions

The ENDOW (Ethnicity, Needs, Decisions of Women) Project, sponsored in part by the NHLBI through the Women’s

Health Initiative, received an International CINDY (cinema in industry) award and a Telly award for its video to educate women about communicating with health care providers.

Although the video’s target audience is women facing surgery, the film and accompanying pamphlets teach decision making skills that women can apply to all aspects of medical care. The pamphlets, “The Wise Woman’s Guide to Making Decisions” and “The Decision is Yours - Talking to Your Doctor,” can be viewed online at www.dopm.uab.edu/endorw/intervention.html.

NHLBI Public Outreach Activities Acknowledged by NIH Community

On March 5, 2001, NIH Acting Director Dr. Ruth Kirschstein honored the *FYI from the NHLBI*, the *NHLBI Express*, the NHLBI’s Cardiology Unit Patient Information page, and other winners of the first annual NIH Plain Language Awards. The awards are one way the NIH is encouraging its staff to implement the federal Plain Language Initiative to make all communication with the public “more responsive, accessible and understandable.” The NHLBI’s Cardiology Unit Patient Information page, highlighted in December’s issue of the *FYI from the NHLBI*, received a “superior plain language product” award; both the *FYI from the NHLBI* and the *NHLBI Express* received honorable mentions as examples of how plain language can be used to reach a critical part of the Institute’s constituency.

NIH Sites Recognized as Leading Sources of Health Information

When Time Inc.’s *ON Magazine* picked its Best Health Web Sites, it included NIH-sponsored Web sites such as MEDLINEplus and ClinicalTrials.gov. The March 5, 2001, issue also contained an article featuring online information sources geared toward educating patients about clinical trials, which included an interview with ClinicalTrials.gov’s Dr. Alexa McCray who spoke at the NHLBI’s Second Annual Public Interest Organization Meeting. A third article described how patients were researching health information on sites such as MEDLINE and using the information to stimulate discussions with their physicians. According to the article, many physicians welcome the opportunity to learn from their patients, particularly when patients bring them information from respected, peer-reviewed publications.



News from Capitol Hill

Fiscal Year 2002 House Appropriations Hearings

The NIH directors are scheduled to testify before the House Appropriations Subcommittee for Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education in mid-May. However, committee members have already heard from some of them in the course of earlier NIH budget hearings that, rather than focusing on institute-specific activities, allowed the directors to address broad NIH topics.

On March 28, NHLBI Director Dr. Lenfant served on the chronic diseases panel with directors of the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, National Eye Institute, National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research, National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases, and National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine. In oral testimony, Dr. Lenfant emphasized the importance of focusing on disease prevention and treatment, reminding those in attendance that nearly all of the diseases studied by the NHLBI are chronic. Members of the subcommittee expressed interest in the application of research results to the treatment of patients, relationships between heart disease and diabetes, causes of asthma in children, and research on sickle cell disease and hemophilia. In addition to institute-specific questions, members asked questions about broader NIH issues including stem cell research and funding for young scientists entering biomedical research.

The remaining two panels met on April 4. The first, titled “Life Span,” addressed research to enable people of all ages to live productive lives and to get necessary health care. Life span research encompasses all NIH areas of interest and covers all ages, from prenatal development and infancy through old age. The second panel, “Special Populations,” addressed issues of particular significance to minorities and other groups that experience a disproportionate burden of disease. Summaries are available on the NIH Office of Legislative and Policy Analysis Web site (olpa.od.nih.gov).

New Legislation

Two new bills have been introduced that include provisions relevant to the NHLBI. The *Pulmonary Hypertension Research Act of 2001 (H.R. 1297)* would provide for expansion of NHLBI pulmonary hypertension research and coordination of that research with similar activities of other NIH institutes and centers. Provisions in the *Comprehensive Tuberculosis Elimination Act of 2001 (H.R. 1167)* would require the NHLBI to expand, intensify, and coordinate basic and clinical research and related activities with respect to TB. It also recognizes the NHLBI’s current Tuberculosis Academic Awards program and would authorize a new career development program for clinically trained professionals who are committed to research in pulmonary infections and TB. The full text of these bills can be found by searching the Library of Congress’ Thomas database at thomas.loc.gov.

Conference Grants are Available from the NHLBI

If you are interested in partnering with the NHLBI for conferences and other meetings, consider applying for an "R13" conference grant. To learn more about R13 funding opportunities, read grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/nihgps/part_iii_5.htm, grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/gps/app7.htm, and the surrounding pages. Application forms and instructions are at grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/phs398.html. Please read the instructions carefully, since they may direct you to other relevant forms. For example, some applicants will need to provide additional information regarding lobbying activities before federal law will allow their applications to be considered. After you've decided that a conference grant is right for your organization, but before you apply, please contact the appropriate NHLBI staff member listed at grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/not97-006.html. We look forward to learning about additional opportunities to partner with your groups.

New NHLBI Research Initiatives

From time to time, the NHLBI invites investigators to submit grant applications or contract proposals for specific research programs. We currently are soliciting applications for the following programs. Unless a due date is noted below, applications are accepted for February 1, June 1, and October 1 deadlines each year. For a full description of these and other research initiatives, visit www.nhlbi.nih.gov/funding/inits/index.htm.

Ancillary Studies in Heart, Lung, and Blood Disease Trials (RFA-HL-00-012)

- Applications Due: See announcement.
- Objective: To conduct mechanistic studies using patients and patient materials from clinical trials related to heart, lung, and blood diseases.

Biobehavioral Research for Effective Sleep (PA-00-046)

- Objective: To support research on sleep-related problems found in healthy and chronically ill individuals with acute and chronic sleep deprivation.

Cellular and Molecular Mechanisms of Primary Pulmonary Hypertension (PA-00-043)

- Objective: To promote research in primary pulmonary hypertension with an emphasis on understanding disease mechanisms.

Comprehensive Sickle Cell Centers (RFA-HL-01-015)

- Applications Due: 9/25/01
- Objective: To support basic, applied, and clinical research on sickle cell disease, and to provide relevant patient support service activities in diagnosis, counseling, and education.

Functional Tissue Engineering for Heart, Vascular, Lung, Blood, and Sleep Disorders and Diseases (PAR-01-006)

- Applications Due: See announcement.
- Objectives: To stimulate engineering of biological substitutes for damaged tissues and organs and to promote development of novel tissue regeneration and remodeling approaches.

Pathogenesis and Treatment of Lymphedema (PA-01-035)

- Objectives: To stimulate research on the biology of the lymphatic system, to characterize the pathophysiologic mechanisms that cause the disease, and to discover new therapeutic interventions.

Physical Activity and Obesity Across Chronic Diseases (PA-01-017)

- Objectives: To examine relationships between physical activity and obesity, to improve methodologies for assessment of physical activity and energy balance, and to test interventions that incorporate physical activity for obesity prevention or treatment related to chronic diseases.

Response to the Presidential Vaccine Initiative - Overcoming the Tuberculosis Latency Challenge (RFA-AI-01-009)

- Applications Due: 7/16/01
- Objective: To elucidate the mechanisms underlying persistent, asymptomatic infection with *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*.

SBIR/STTR Technologies for Monitoring and Performing Resuscitation (PA-01-054)

- Objective: To foster better systems and methods for monitoring of genetic, molecular, biochemical, physical or metabolic derangements associated with circulatory, hypoxemic, or traumatic arrest and for elucidating the unique pathophysiology of irreversible injury following multiple organ or whole-body ischemia and reperfusion.

SCOR: Molecular Medicine and Atherosclerosis (RFA-HL-00-015)

- Applications Due: 6/15/01
- Objective: To support molecular research on the etiology and pathophysiology of atherosclerosis.

Self-Management Strategies Across Chronic Diseases (PA-00-109)

- Objectives: To expand research on self-management interventions, such as those used in treating blood disorders, and to understand their implications in treating other chronic diseases.

The National Heart, Lung, and Blood Advisory Council's February Meeting

In his introductory remarks, Dr. Lenfant acknowledged the public members who attended the public interest organization (PIO) meeting the previous day. Council members who attended the PIO meeting noted that the Institute had been responsive to the concerns, needs, and issues raised at the 2000 meeting. It was suggested that future meetings include opportunities for the representatives to collaborate with "like" organizations, more break-out sessions, and workshops on non-profit organizational issues.

Dr. Lenfant discussed a number of legislative developments including funding for the NHLBI. The final NHLBI appropriation for fiscal year (FY) 2001 was \$2,299 million, 13.6% more than the amount for FY 2000. Another item of interest was the Public Health Improvement Act, which requires the Secretary, DHHS, to make recommendations for placing and maintaining automatic external defibrillators (AEDs) in federal buildings. Dr. Lenfant provided copies of a newspaper article about a woman whose life was saved by an AED after she went into cardiac arrest while attending an inaugural gala in Washington, DC. Washington is one of 25 cities participating in a study to evaluate the feasibility of placing defibrillators in public places to improve emergency treatment for victims of cardiac arrest.

Dr. Carl Roth, NHLBI, presented data relevant to the NIH Revitalization Act of 1993 and its mandates that women and minorities be included in all clinical studies conducted by the NIH. He also described a proposal to capitalize on the rich, multidisciplinary research environments of Program Project Grants and Specialized Centers of Research by allowing applicants for these programs to apply for an additional \$100,000 to advance the skills of new investigators in areas related to the NHLBI's mission. The NHLBAC endorsed the concept but questioned whether \$100,000 would be enough.

After briefly describing a newly authorized loan repayment program that allows scientists to work in research environments in exchange for partial repayment of their educational loans, Dr. Lenfant described a legislatively mandated increase in the salary cap for FY 2001 grants and cooperative agreements. The cap of \$143,100 was raised to \$157,000 for the first quarter of FY 2001, which began October 1, 2000; as of January 1, 2001, the cap was increased to \$161,200.

In its closed session, the Council awarded 187 grants for a total cost of \$73,469,214.

The *FYI from the NHLBI* staff thanks Ms. Paula Polite, member of the NHLBAC and President of the Sarcoidosis Research Institute, for her efforts in preparing this summary. Full minutes of Council meetings are available at www.nhlbi.nih.gov/meetings/nhlbac.



Spotlight on Our Web Site

Two New Tools to Help You Get Where You Need to Go: Looking for the article in last year's *FYI from the NHLBI* on the Institute's mission but don't

remember *which* issue it was in? Tired of waiting for pages to load so you can search through back issues, looking for that research advance you knew you read "a few months ago?" You need the *FYI from the NHLBI* index, at www.nhlbi.nih.gov/public/fyindex.htm. On the other hand, if you have the opposite problem of knowing *exactly* where to find the information you want, but you get tired of drilling through multiple layers of *NHLBI Express* pages to the link you need, hop aboard the *Direct Express* (www.nhlbi.nih.gov/public/direct.htm). The new page features the most popular *NHLBI Express* stops, but trades the user-friendly explanations and graphics, which can often make a trip on the *NHLBI Express* enjoyable, for a more streamlined effect that shaves precious minutes from downloading times.

Sleep Well, Do Well with the NHLBI Star Sleeper Campaign: The NHLBI named Garfield the cat as its "Star Sleeper" and enlisted the aid of the famous kitty to teach children about the importance of getting enough sleep. Through starsleep.nhlbi.nih.gov, children (and the young-at-heart) can play educational games and download the new Garfield Star Sleeper Fun Pad, a book of games and puzzles with embedded sleep messages. Adequate sleep (nine hours a night for most children) is associated with good health and performance, as well as fewer accidents (an even more critical issue when children reach adolescence and need to be aware of the dangers of drowsy driving). The message of the campaign, targeted to children ages 7 to 11 years old, is that sleep is important to doing your best in whatever you do, including school activities, sports and other after-school activities, and good family relationships and friendships.

GOLD Report Released

Scientists from the Global Initiative for Chronic Obstructive Lung Disease (GOLD) released the first international guidelines for the diagnosis, management, and prevention of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) -- currently the fourth leading cause of death in the United States and the world. Said Dr. Lenfant, "COPD has become a major public health problem worldwide. That's why we, with the World Health Organization, initiated the GOLD program. We hope the report will increase worldwide awareness of COPD and help the millions of people who suffer from it." The incidence of COPD is increasing, and the disease is expected to rank as the third leading cause of death, surpassing stroke, by 2020. The report is available through the NHLBI Web site and www.goldcopd.com.

Upcoming Events			
Date	Activity	Details	For Additional Information
5/13/01 - 5/23/01	American Thoracic Society International Conference	San Francisco, CA. Program covers the latest information in clinical, basic, and behavioral sciences regarding respiratory disease and public health education.	www.thoracic.org/icframe.html
6/14/01, 9/6/01, 10/18/01	National Heart, Lung, and Blood Advisory Council	8:30am - 2:00pm, NIH Main Campus, Building 31C, Conference Room 10, Bethesda, MD. Open to the public.	www.nhlbi.nih.gov/meetings/nhlbac
7/27/01-7/29/01	Aplastic Anemia & MDS International Foundation Annual Patient and Family Conference	St. Louis, MO. "The Status of Research and Treatment of Aplastic Anemia and Myelodysplastic Syndromes."	www.aamds.org/conferences.html
8/21/01 - 8/24/01	1 st National CDC Prevention Conference on Heart Disease and Stroke	Atlanta, GA. "Building and Expanding Comprehensive State-Based Cardiovascular Health Programs."	www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/cvd/conference
8/25/01 - 8/28/01	30th Annual Scientific Meeting - International Society of Experimental Hematology	Tokyo, Japan. ISEH 2001 is designed to present the latest basic and translational research findings related to experimental hematology.	www.iseh.org/iseh/events/2001.html

Need More Information?

- For **health related questions and publications**, please contact the trained information specialists at the NHLBI Information Center (NHLBIinfo@rover.nhlbi.nih.gov) or write to the Information Center at P.O. Box 30105, Bethesda, MD 20824-0105.
- For communications pertaining to NHLBI **policies and priorities**, contact the NHLBI Office of Legislative and Public Liaison (SL34V@nih.gov).
- For **additional information regarding NHLBI events**, consult the references provided or www.nhlbi.nih.gov/calendar/nhcal.htm. Most NIH Institutes also maintain calendars, accessible through their Web sites. Links to the Institutes' Web pages are at www.nih.gov/icd.

May is High Blood Pressure Education Month

Being physically active is one of the most important steps you can take to prevent or control high blood pressure, but it doesn't have to mean sweating, puffing, and panting. And, finding time to "exercise" may be easier than you thought. Activities you already do, such as gardening, spring cleaning and painting, mowing the lawn, raking leaves, playing with young children, and walking, can improve your heart health. All you need are 30 minutes on most, and preferably all, days of the week. You even can divide it up – as long as you do at least 10 minutes at any one time. For more information on high blood pressure and moderate activities to help you control it, visit the NHLBI high blood pressure education program's Web site: www.nhlbi.nih.gov/hbp.

Recent Advances from the NHLBI

Inhaled Corticosteroids Do Not Slow Progression of COPD: A recent *New England Journal of Medicine* paper ended controversy about effects of corticosteroids in people with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). The study showed that patients treated with inhaled corticosteroids experienced no significant slowing of the decline in lung function that makes COPD ultimately fatal. However, they had fewer symptoms, lower health care utilization, and some improvement in the sensitivity of the lungs to external stimuli than members of the placebo group. They also experienced more bruising and a small amount of bone loss. Dr. Robert Wise of Johns Hopkins University noted "The bone loss was not clinically important. However, we don't know whether it would progress with prolonged use of the drug. Physicians treating patients with COPD should weigh the benefits of inhaled corticosteroids against the potential risks."

Reduced Fat Intake To Lower Cholesterol Is Safe and Beneficial for Children: Children with high blood cholesterol levels can benefit from reducing the amounts of fat and cholesterol in their diets without adversely affecting their development, according to results published in the journal *Pediatrics*. The Dietary Intervention Study in Children (DISC) revealed that a low-fat, low-cholesterol diet does not affect children's growth, nutritional status, or sexual maturation. Furthermore, the diet helps children decrease their low-density lipoprotein, or "bad" cholesterol, levels. "This is the first study of this size to examine long-term effects of reduced dietary saturated fat and cholesterol intake among children," said Dr. Lenfant. "DISC confirms that dietary changes in children with high levels of LDL cholesterol may thwart development of atherosclerosis without adverse effects."



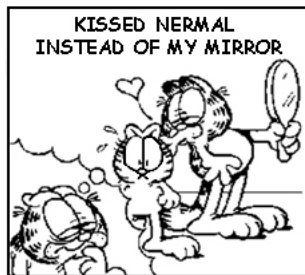
And the Winners Are . . .

All of us are winners when we get enough sleep, and no one knows that more than the three lucky children and their families who won a trip to Washington, DC, to kick off the National Center for Sleep Disorders Research "Star Sleeper Campaign" with Garfield the cat. Children across the United States submitted their suggestions for a comic strip depicting Garfield doing something silly because he didn't get enough sleep the night before. Cartoonist Jim Davis then drew the endings suggested by the children. The entries with the best endings to Garfield's statement that "I was so tired today that I..." were:

I WAS SO TIRED TODAY THAT I ...



Katie Seamon,
age 10, from Pittsburgh, PA



Xavier Powers,
age 9, from Alliance, OH



Danny Strohman,
age 8, from Duluth, MN



Constituents' Corner

We are reserving space for you, our readers, to share ideas and broadcast opinions. We invite you to submit your comments, thoughts, and suggestions via **email** (NHLBI.Listens@nih.gov) or **snail mail** (Public Interest News, c/o Office of Science and Technology, Building 31, Room 5A03, 31 Center Drive, MSC-2482 Bethesda, MD 20892-2482).

Representatives Emphasize Public Interest Organizations' Similarities

On January 31, 2001, representatives from approximately 50 public interest organizations (PIOs) met in Rockville, MD, to discuss how the groups could work together and with the NHLBI to meet common goals. Despite varied backgrounds, experiences, and disease interests, representatives quickly identified many common opportunities and activities that could be addressed in the context of the PIO meetings. The representatives emphasized the need for PIOs to work together while maintaining separate identities – reports from breakout sessions on *supporting research*, *participating in clinical research*, and *getting the message out* each emphasized that there is a "strength in numbers" that groups need to utilize to be more effective. Many suggestions regarding ways that the NHLBI could help the PIOs focused on communication. The other recurring theme was collaboration, both in the form of NHLBI support for activities such as meetings and conferences (see article on page 3) and through organizations' support of researchers. The NHLBI has already incorporated many of the suggestions regarding the *NHLBI Express* Web site and plans are under way for next year's meeting.

Internet Searches are Affecting Health Care Decisions and Concerns

According to a report supported by the Pew Charitable Trusts: 55% of American adults who have access to the internet have used the Web to get health or medical information.

Of these 52 million "health seekers" . . .

- . . . 70% looked for information about a specific condition.
- . . . 81% learned something during their last online visit.
- . . . 13% sought information about fitness and nutrition.
- . . . 48% followed advice from the Web to improve the way they take care of themselves.
- . . . 16% used the internet to get information on a health subject that is hard to talk about.
- . . . 89% worry that companies will collect and share data about sites they visited.
- . . . 9% exchanged emails with the doctor.
- . . . 63% oppose the idea of keeping medical records online.
- . . . 81% think people should be able to sue a health or medical site if it gives away information about its customers after saying it would not.

Source: Pew Internet and American Life. "The online health care revolution: How the Web helps Americans take better care of themselves."
www.pewinternet.org/reports/toc.asp?Report=26