

Christine A. Swanson, PhD, MPH, RD

*Director, Botanical Research Center Program
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Dr. Swanson started working in the Office of Dietary Supplements (ODS) at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in 1998. She transferred to the ODS from the Division of Cancer Epidemiology and Genetics within NCI where she worked as a senior staff fellow in nutritional epidemiology. Prior to joining NCI she was a visiting senior scientist at the Nestle Human Nutrition Research Center in Switzerland. Previously she worked as a postdoctoral fellow at the USDA Human Nutrition Research Center in Beltsville, Maryland.

Dr. Swanson's research efforts have been focused on various aspects of human nutrition with public health applications. As part of her doctoral and post-doctoral work she studied zinc and selenium requirements of pregnant and non-pregnant women, conducting some of the earliest human studies using stable isotope methodology. Data from these studies were used in formulating early Recommended Dietary Allowances for zinc and selenium. After her postdoctoral work she conducted several epidemiological studies to evaluate the relation of diet and nutritional status to cancer risk. Much of her work at NCI focused on alcohol consumption and body size as risk factors for a variety of cancers. In 1994 and 1995, Dr. Swanson joined a group of US scientists organized to teach a course in epidemiology for graduate students and clinicians at the University of Indonesia, Jakarta.

At the ODS Dr. Swanson works with a team of scientists and program administrators to facilitate research to explore the potential role of dietary supplements in maintaining health and preventing chronic disease. In response to a Congressional mandate to develop a botanical research initiative in 1999, Dr. Swanson directed activities to establish the first NIH-funded Dietary Supplement Research Centers focused on botanicals. She is currently the Director of the Botanical Research Center Program which is jointly funded by ODS and the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine. The overall focus of the Botanical Research Center Program is to foster interdisciplinary collaborations in order to develop systematic approaches to evaluate the safety and efficacy of botanicals used in dietary supplements. Dr. Swanson also led an effort to respond to a Congressional mandate to compile a public database known as CARDS (Computer Access to Research on Dietary Supplements) to identify and track federally funded research on dietary supplements.

Dr. Swanson is a member of several professional organizations, including the American Society for Nutrition and the American Society for Pharmacognosy. She served on the Editorial Board of the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition from 2002-2007 and is an ad-hoc reviewer for a number of other professional journals.

Dr. Swanson received two graduate degrees from the University of California at Berkeley. She obtained her doctorate in nutritional sciences in 1980 and earned a Masters of Public Health degree in 1984. She received her B.S. degree in dietetics at Montana State University in Bozeman in 1974.