

**National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases:
Increase with Age: Women Interagency HIV Study (WIHS)**

This is the largest and longest ongoing NIH-supported study of HIV-infected women in the United States and one of few studies that follows minority women. The WIHS aims to understand how HIV/AIDS and its treatment affects women, the relationship between HIV/AIDS and other diseases, and the impact of hormonal factors on HIV disease.

Lead Agency:

National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID)

National Institutes of Health (NIH)

Agency Mission:

The mission of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases is to conduct and support basic and applied research to better understand, identify, treat, and prevent infectious and immune-related diseases.

Principal Investigators:

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Partner Agency:

National Cancer Institute
National Center for Research Studies
National Institute of Child Health and Human Development
National Institute of Deafness and other Communication Disorders
National Institute on Drug Abuse

General Description:**Women Interagency HIV Study (WIHS)**

The Women's Interagency HIV Study (WIHS) was established in August 1993 to investigate the impact of HIV infection on women in the United States. Approximately 3,700 women have been enrolled, of which 2,400 are still attending visits every six months (the remaining have either died or lost to follow-up). The core portion of this NIH-supported study includes a detailed and structured interview, physical and gynecologic examinations, and laboratory testing. The WIHS participants are also asked to enroll in various sub-studies, including cardiovascular, metabolic, and physical functioning.

Excellence: What makes this project exceptional?

WIHS is the largest and longest running NIH-supported study of HIV in minority women in the United States and closely reflects the population of American women infected with HIV.

Significance: How is this research relevant to older persons, populations and/or an aging society?

Many subjects followed through the WIHS have gone, or are going, through menopause. The study allows the investigation of the interplay between hormonal changes in women, HIV therapy, and aging.

Effectiveness: What is the impact and/or application of this research to older persons?

The study allows investigators to sort out the effects of HIV infection and its therapy from the effects of aging on chronic disease outcomes.

Innovativeness: Why is this exciting or newsworthy?

The results of WIHS studies are important in guiding research into the effects of HIV and clinical research into effective therapy or their adverse effects. The longitudinal WIHS study now has 15 years of data and more than 2 million biological specimens in frozen storage, permitting comprehensive studies of the natural history of HIV and its therapy.