

Health Promotion Research Branch

Health Promotion provides scientific leadership and supports research into effective psychosocial and environmental community-based intervention strategies associated with behavioral and genetic factors in cancer prevention and health promotion. These factors include diet, physical activity, energy balance, obesity and genetics, virus exposure and sun exposure.

The Branch plans, develops and coordinates research focused on effective strategies to reach populations at high risk for cancer. Scientists synthesize and disseminate the findings, recommendations and priorities of successful strategies in behavioral change prevention interventions to target individuals, groups and organizations. Health Promotion solicits input and communicates regularly with the scientific community to refine methodology and evaluate effectiveness.

Advances

Health Promotion-funded research seeks to identify the mechanisms and principles of cancer-related behavior change. Recent advances include the following:

Food Attitudes and Behavior (FAB) Survey

The purpose of this survey is to develop and evaluate short dietary assessment methods for measuring fruit and vegetable consumption and potential predictors (e.g., psychosocial, environmental factors) related to fruit and vegetable consumption. Development and cognitive testing and small pilot studies testing the survey's validity and reliability are complete. The final phase, scheduled for fall 2007, will be full implementation, and includes a planned methodology to increase the response rate and access to a larger African-American population.

Behavior Change Consortium (BCC)

The Art of Collaboration. The Science of Change.



Established in 1999, the BCC was the first trans-NIH funded behavioral initiative. The partnership between 17 NIH Offices and Institutes and funded investigators and the American Heart Association supports randomized, controlled intervention trials examining theory-based approaches to sustainable lifestyle change.

Nutrition Workgroup's Diet Validation Study

BCC partner-representatives are working to improve measurement of dietary variables, to validate common measures for self-reported dietary intake and to describe the relationships among and factors mediating change in diet and vitamin/mineral supplement use. The application of data sets provides another example of the value of trans-NIH research and what the BCC initiative is contributing to the field. <http://www1.od.nih.gov/behaviorchange/>

Developing improved methodology and measurement tools

Health Promotion headed up a unique journal supplement that showcases the BCC's commitment to increasing the development of better methodology and measurement tools in the behavioral sciences. Data sets from several NIH-funded initiatives were used to show the application of Item Response Modeling, including participants from "Innovative Approaches to Disease Prevention Through Behavior Change." <http://outcomes.cancer.gov/conference/irt/>

Item Response Modeling in Health Research Education and Health Behavior Research. *Health Education Research* 21 (suppl. 1), Dec 2006 (http://her.oxfordjournals.org/content/vol21/suppl_1/)

Body&Soul

Health Promotion has provided scientific support for program development, including a review of literature and portfolio analysis, and has convened experts in faith-based, community-based research to review the state-of-the-science. Evidence-based research has been used to support dissemination projects in diet and behavior modification and to improve fruit and vegetable consumption in African-American communities. This research has identified feasible nutrition and physical activity interventions, which have successfully been incorporated into the national Body&Soul program. Ongoing efforts through a public-private partnership support the dissemination of Body&Soul nationally. <http://www.bodyandsoul.nih.gov>

School Physical Education and Nutrition State Policy Database

This NCI-led initiative establishes a framework and tools to classify school physical education and nutrition policies. The database tracks related policies enacted at the state level during 2003, including PE time requirements, curriculum standards, competitive foods, food service director qualifications, nutrition education, marketing and more. Policies enacted in 2004 and 2005 are currently being analyzed, and plans are underway to track state policies through 2007. A pilot study comparing state and local district policies was conducted using the same classification system.

Minority Investigators Workshop on Behavioral Methodologies

Health Promotion provides intensive training in behavioral research methodology to investigators from a wide array of ethnic/racial groups or from disadvantaged backgrounds. The annual workshop's goal is to support the diversity of the research workforce by expanding the scientific skills of participants with interests in behavioral science and cancer research.

Real-Time Research Methods and eHealth Research

Health Promotion has spearheaded efforts to examine the state-of-the-science at the intersection of information technology, real-time data capture, behavioral science and cancer prevention and control research. Through a series of annual conferences and workshops, distinguished scientists provide interdisciplinary forums to identify key research issues, questions and future priorities. Ideas from these meetings have been summarized through scientific publications, including a special journal supplement, book and NIH research initiatives.

Priorities

The Health Promotion Research Branch's portfolio includes the major Transdisciplinary Research on Energetics and Cancer Centers initiative and 70 individual research projects.

Transdisciplinary Research on Energetics and Cancer Centers (TREC)

TREC is finding answers to the complex issues of obesity and cancer. Scientists from diverse fields are integrating knowledge and investigating how the combined effects of obesity, poor diet and low levels of physical activity increase cancer risk, as well as searching for effective ways to prevent obesity. The complex and diverse research projects conducted across the centers involve scientists from disciplines including molecular biology, genetics, proteomics, nutrition, physical activity, psychology, sociology, environment, public policy and statistics. TREC trains new and established scientists to carry out transdisciplinary research. <http://www.compass.fhrc.org/trec>

For More Information

<http://cancercontrol.cancer.gov/hprb/>

DCCPS research opportunities

<http://dccps.nci.nih.gov/>

Cancer Research Portfolio (CRP)

<http://researchportfolio.cancer.gov/>

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Behavioral Research Program



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