

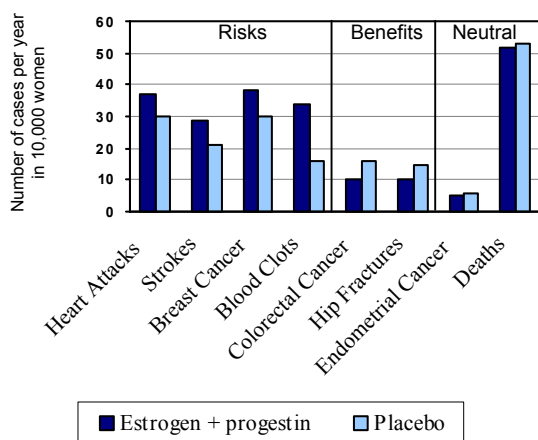


Estrogen Plus Progestin Trial Stopped Due to Increased Risk, Lack of Overall Benefit

On July 9, 2002, the NHLBI stopped the Women's Health Initiative (WHI) estrogen plus progestin trial because researchers found that the risks of long-term estrogen plus progestin therapy outweigh its protective benefits. Specifically, the researchers found increased risks of heart attacks, stroke, invasive breast cancer, and blood clots in study participants taking estrogen plus progestin compared with women taking placebo pills. There were noteworthy benefits of estrogen plus progestin, including fewer cases of colon cancer and hip fractures, but on balance, the harm was greater than the benefit.

According to the trial findings, the increased risk of breast cancer, cardiovascular disease, or stroke for each woman taking the estrogen plus progestin therapy was actually very small. For example, each woman who took the estrogen plus progestin therapy had an increased risk of breast cancer of less than a tenth of 1 percent per year. However, the small increases in risk apply to the entire population of women on the therapy and over several years, so the potential public health impact is considerable.

Disease Rates for Women on Estrogen Plus Progestin or Placebo



Choosing whether to use postmenopausal hormone therapy is one of the most important health decisions women face as they age, and the WHI study provides important new information. Based on the findings, the WHI investigators' recommendations for estrogen plus progestin use are:

- The therapy should not be continued or started to prevent heart disease. Women should consult their doctor about other methods of prevention, such as lifestyle changes and cholesterol- and blood pressure-lowering drugs.
- For osteoporosis prevention, women should consult their doctor and weigh the benefits against their personal risks for heart attack, stroke, blood clots, and breast cancer. Alternative treatments also are available to prevent osteoporosis and fractures.
- Women should keep up with their regular schedule of mammograms and breast self-examinations.
- Although short-term use was not studied, women taking the therapy for relief of menopausal symptoms may find that the benefits justify the risks. Women should talk with their doctor about their personal risks and benefits.

For more information on the estrogen plus progestin trial results and the WHI, visit www.nhlbi.nih.gov/whi/hrtupd.

NIH Seeks Applicants for the Director's Council of Public Representatives

Looking to get more involved with the NIH? The NIH Director's Council of Public Representatives (COPR -- pronounced "copper") currently is seeking applicants. The COPR serves as an important forum for information exchange between the public and the NIH. It consists of up to 21 individuals who are selected from among the many diverse communities that benefit from, and have an interest in, NIH research, programs, and activities. They are patients, family members of patients, health care professionals, members of patient or not-for-profit groups, scientists, health and science educators, and they could include you. View the COPR Application Package online at public-council.nih.gov/COPRapplication.asp for details on how to apply. The deadline for applications is September 16, 2002, with final selections to be announced in spring 2003.

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Sickle Cell Disease Resource Revised

The NHLBI recently released the fourth edition of *The Management of Sickle Cell Disease*, a reference for health care providers who treat patients who have sickle cell disease. The revised book incorporates information gathered since publication of the third edition in 1995,

particularly in the areas of stroke prevention, stem cell transplantation, and fetal hemoglobin induction in school-age children. Developed by physicians, nurses, psychologists, and social workers who specialize in the care of children and adults with sickle cell disease, it describes current approaches to counseling and to management of many disease complications. Health professionals, as well as families and patients who cope with the complexities of sickle cell disease on a daily basis, are encouraged to download a free copy of the publication at www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/prof/blood/sickle.

PIO Meeting Scheduled for February 2003

The NHLBI will sponsor the fourth annual public interest organization meeting on February 5, 2003. As in the past, the meeting is scheduled for the day immediately preceding the winter meeting of our National Heart, Lung, and Blood Advisory Council to foster increased interactions among Council members and organization representatives. "Save the Date" letters announcing the event have been mailed to organization leaders; we hope each of your groups will be represented.

News from Capitol Hill

On June 6, NHLBI Director Dr. Claude Lenfant and Dr. Audrey Penn, Acting Director of the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke, participated in a hearing before the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Health (the authorizing committee for the NIH). The hearing, titled *The National Institutes of Health: Investing in Research to Prevent and Cure Disease*, was the first of a series to examine how the NIH is managing the large annual increases it received as part of the effort to double the NIH budget.



Representatives Ralph Regula (R-OH), chairman, and David R. Obey (D-WI), ranking member, of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education invited the NIH to participate in health forums in their districts. Dr. Gregory Morosco, Associate Director for Prevention, Education, and Control, represented the NHLBI. He led roundtable discussions about NHLBI activities and distributed materials from the Act in Time to Heart Attack Signs program.

At the request of Representative Patrick Kennedy (D-RI), Dr. Jacques Rossouw, Acting Director of the Women's Health Initiative (WHI), and other NIH colleagues participated in a health forum in Providence, Rhode Island. Dr. Rossouw discussed the results of the WHI hormone trial.

The Senate Appropriations Committee voted in favor of the fiscal year (FY) 2003 Labor-Health and Human Services-Education Appropriations bill on July 18, clearing the way for action by the full Senate. The Senate bill completes the doubling of the NIH budget over five years with a FY 2003 increase of \$3.7 billion, bringing total funding for the NIH to \$27.2 billion. The House version of the FY 2003 Labor-Health and Human Services-Education appropriations bill is scheduled to be marked up on September 5.

Update on National Asthma Guidelines Released

The National Asthma Education and Prevention Program (NAEPP) has issued an update on selected topics in the *Guidelines for the Diagnosis and Management of Asthma*. The guidelines now recommend inhaled corticosteroids as a safe, effective, and preferred first-line therapy for both children and adults with persistent asthma.

The updated recommendations reflect recent research advances. "We have learned a lot about the effectiveness and safety of inhaled steroids in the past few years," said Dr. William Busse, professor at the University of Wisconsin Medical School and chair of the NAEPP Expert Panel. "We have also found that inhaled steroids alone may not be sufficient in all cases."

"NHLBI is committed to ensuring that asthma patients benefit from the latest research findings," said NHLBI Director Dr. Claude Lenfant. "Asthma is one of the most common chronic health conditions in the United States, and the

number of Americans who suffer from asthma continues to rise. It is essential that they are treated according to the best available scientific evidence, and this update brings such evidence to clinical practice."

Coordinated by the NHLBI, the NAEPP Coordinating Committee is composed of 40 major medical associations and voluntary health organizations, plus numerous federal agencies.

The NAEPP *Expert Panel Report: Update on Select Topics 2002* is available at www.nhlbi.nih.gov/guidelines/asthma. Other professional and patient education materials are available at the NAEPP Asthma Coalition Exchange at www.nhlbisupport.com/asthma/coalitioncorner/coalition.htm; the site also contains information about NAEPP activities with community groups.



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 mentioned, applications are accepted for February 1, June 1, and October 1 deadlines each year. For full descriptions of these and other research initiatives, visit www.nhlbi.nih.gov/funding/inits/index.htm.

Animal Models of Organ-specific Tolerance for Heart and Lung Transplantation (PA-02-044)

- Objectives: To encourage development of organ-specific tolerance protocols using large animal models for heart transplantation and both large and small animal models for lung transplantation.

Asthma Clinical Research Network (RFA-HL-02-029)

- Applications Due: 10/24/02
- Objectives: To invite applications for participation in a cooperative research network to evaluate current and novel therapies and management strategies for adult asthma.

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

- Objectives: To promote research to elucidate cellular and molecular mechanisms involved in the unique vascular remodeling that characterizes PPH and in the regulation of vascular tone during its development.

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

- Applications Due: 3/13/03, 3/12/04
- Objectives: To stimulate development of biological substitutes for damaged tissues and organs and exploration of novel approaches to tissue remodeling.

Highly Active Antiretroviral Therapy (HAART) Cardiovascular Toxicities (RFA-HL-02-028)

- Applications Due: 2/19/03
- Objectives: To support basic research to elucidate how nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors, non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors, and protease inhibitors affect the development of cardiovascular disease.

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

- Objectives: To stimulate research on the biology of the lymphatic system; the underlying developmental, cellular, and molecular mechanisms that cause lymphedema; and new therapeutic interventions for patients with primary and secondary lymphedema.

Pathophysiology and Treatment of Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS) (PA-02-034)

- Objectives: To provide a better understanding of CFS pathogenesis and pathophysiology with the goal of improving diagnostic and intervention strategies.

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

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

Restless Legs Syndrome and Periodic Limb Movement Disorder (PA-01-086)

- Objectives: To enhance understanding of and develop treatments for restless legs syndrome and periodic limb movement disorder.

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

- Objectives: To improve monitoring of molecular or physical derangements associated with circulatory, hypoxemic, or traumatic arrest and to elucidate the unique pathophysiology of irreversible injury following multiple organ ischemia and reperfusion.

Specialized Centers of Clinically Oriented Research (SCCOR) in Pediatric Heart Development and Disease (RFA-HL-02-027)

- Applications Due: 1/16/03
- Objectives: To stimulate research that will aid in the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of congenital cardiovascular malformations, pediatric arrhythmias, conduction disturbances, disorders of myocardial function, and acquired pediatric cardiac diseases.

Specialized Centers of Clinically Oriented Research (SCCOR) in Translational Research in Acute Lung Injury (RFA-HL-02-014)

- Applications Due: 10/11/02
- Objectives: To support clinical and basic research that will have a positive impact on the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of acute lung injury and acute respiratory distress syndrome.

Specialized Centers of Research (SCOR) in Neurobiology of Sleep and Sleep Apnea and Airway Biology and Pathogenesis of Cystic Fibrosis (RFA-HL-02-013)

- Applications Due: 10/11/02
- Objectives: To support basic and clinical research that will aid in the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of disorders of sleep and cystic fibrosis.

Structural Biology of Membrane Proteins SBIR/STTR (PA-02-108)

- Applications Due: April 1, August 1, and December 1
- Objectives: To stimulate development of tools needed to determine the structures of membrane proteins at atomic resolution.



Spotlight on Our Web Site

Soon you can prevent aliens from depriving the Earth of restful sleep by joining the Star Sleeper squad. This is the challenge of Mission Z, an exciting

section of the revamped Garfield Star Sleeper Web site (starsleep.nhlbi.nih.gov) to be released this fall.

Sponsored by the NHLBI's National Center on Sleep Disorders Research, the site is part of the "Star Sleeper Campaign" that is educating children ages 7-11 and their parents, teachers, and health care providers about the importance of at least 9 hours of sleep each night.

The new Garfield Star Sleeper Web pages will include special sections for parents, educators, and health care professionals, as well as for young children. In addition to interactive games, it includes Garfield Star Sleeper screen savers, tips for parents on how to help their children get a good night's sleep, materials for teachers to use in the classroom or give to parents, and even handouts that pediatricians can give to patients.

Elsewhere at NIH.gov . . . Check out the newly redesigned National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM) Web site at www.nccam.nih.gov for an array of information on complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) practices and research. With growing attention being paid to the field of CAM, the NCCAM Web site provides consumers and professionals with up-to-date and reliable information along with easy-to-use resources.

National Cholesterol Education Month

Now Playing on

Radio Stations Everywhere

This month, the Healthbeat Radio Network is broadcasting twenty new programs to celebrate National Cholesterol Education Month. Listeners will learn how controlling their blood cholesterol levels can lower their risk for heart disease and why it is critical for all Americans — including healthy young adults — to have their cholesterol levels tested. To learn more about the Healthbeat Radio Network, find a participating radio station near you, or download and listen to the 60-second health news and information radio programs through your own computer, visit www.healthbeatradio.net.



Additional information about the National Cholesterol Education Program recommendations and therapeutic

lifestyle changes that you can make to improve your cardiovascular health is available through

www.nhlbi.nih.gov/chd.



National Heart, Lung, and Blood Advisory Council's May Meeting

Dr. Lenfant began the 206th meeting by announcing that May is National High Blood Pressure Education Month. He encouraged community groups and public outreach programs to renew their commitment to health education activities. Five new Council members were introduced, and Dr. Lenfant also announced the appointment of Dr. Elias Zerhouni as the new NIH director.

Dr. Edward Clark from the Department of Pediatrics at the University of Utah School of Medicine served as the Chair of the Task Force on Research in Pediatric Cardiovascular Disease. Dr. Clark presented a summary of the Task Force report, which identified research priorities in basic science, clinical medicine, and population science. Visit www.nhlbi.nih.gov/resources/docs/pediatric_cvd.htm for details on the Task Force's recommendations and copies of the report.

Council members enthusiastically supported the efforts of the Task Force and noted that significant advances have been made in cardiac surgery. Drs. Paul Douglass and Roberta Williams provided examples of how improved understanding about pediatric cardiovascular conditions has helped them in their clinical practices. Dr. Jane Newburger, who was also on the Task Force, spoke briefly about the lack of mentors for pediatric cardiologists who are interested in research careers.

In response to the Public Health Improvement Act of November 2000 (Public Law 106-505), the NIH developed extramural loan repayment programs for pediatric and clinical researchers. The Institute received a large number of applications and anticipates funding more than 50 percent of them.

During the closed portion of the meeting, the Council concurred on the award of 305 grants for a total cost of \$137,900,000.

The next National Heart, Lung, and Blood Advisory Council (NHLBAC) meeting is scheduled for 8:00 a.m. on September 5, 2002. It is open to the public and will be in NIH Building 31C, Conference Room 10.

The *FYI from the NHLBI* staff thanks Ms. Sue Byrnes, member of the NHLBAC and Director of the LAM Foundation, for her efforts in preparing this summary. Full minutes of Council meeting are available at www.nhlbi.nih.gov/meetings/nhlbac.

September also is National Sickle Cell Awareness Month, and the Sickle Cell Disease Association of America wants to help you

BREAK the SICKLE CYCLE

For information about living with sickle cell disease, visit their Web site at www.sicklecelldisease.org.

Upcoming Events			
Date	Activity	Details	For Additional Information
9/5, 10/24	National Heart, Lung, and Blood Advisory Council	8:00am – 2:00pm NIH Main Campus Building 31C, Conference Room 10, Bethesda, MD. Open to the public.	www.nhlbi.nih.gov/meetings/nhlbac
9/17-9/21	52nd Annual Obesity and Associated Conditions Symposium	Boston, MA. Physicians who offer specialized programs in the treatment of obesity will learn about recent developments in bariatric medicine and the future of patient care.	www.asbp.org
9/17-9/21	Sickle Cell Disease Association of America 30th Anniversary National Convention	Washington, DC. Health care professionals, researchers, and patients and their families will interact at "Medicine, Science and Community: Working Together for a Cure," an educational conference cosponsored by the NHLBI.	www.sicklecell-disease.org/conference.htm
9/24	National Sarcoidosis Awareness Day	Washington, DC. Rep. Kilpatrick (D-MI), sarcoidosis patients, and researchers will host activities to raise awareness of sarcoidosis. On June 26, Rep. Kilpatrick introduced a resolution to express the sense of the Congress that there should be established a National Sarcoidosis Awareness Day.	Thomas.loc.gov (enter "H. CON. RES. 429" in the space for "Bill Number")
9/26-9/29	17th Annual Meeting – The American Association of Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Rehabilitation	Charlotte, NC. Targeted toward physicians and other health care professionals, this meeting focuses on advances in the cardiovascular and pulmonary rehabilitation field.	www.aacvpr.org
9/27-9/28	1st National Restless Legs Syndrome Meeting	St. Louis, MO. Patients, family members, and healthcare providers will learn about the most current information on RLS research, diagnosis, and treatment.	www.rls.org
10/11-10/12	10th Annual Conference on Sarcoidosis	Seattle, WA. This patient-oriented conference features roundtable discussions and talks by physicians, researchers, and counselors.	www.sarcoidosisnet-work.org/events.htm
10/15-10/17	2002 NIH Research Festival	NIH Main Campus Natcher Conference Center Auditorium, Bethesda, MD. Researchers and the public will have the opportunity to learn more about the NIH's recent success stories and current research missions.	festival02.nih.gov
11/2-11/7	2002 Annual Meeting of the American College of Chest Physicians	San Diego, CA. The CHEST 2002 program provides educational opportunities in critical care, sleep, thoracic, and cardiovascular medicine to physicians and health professionals.	www.chestnet.org
11/9-11/13	American Public Health Association 130th Annual Meeting	Philadelphia, PA. "Putting the Public Back into Public Health" is the theme of this year's meeting, which is targeted toward public health professionals.	www.apha.org/meetings
11/17-11/20	American Heart Association's Scientific Sessions	Chicago, IL. The sessions present recent advances in the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of cardiovascular disease and stroke to scientists and healthcare professionals.	www.americanheart.org
11/21	Great American Smokeout	This unique event was established to spread the word about how people can actively protect their health from the dangers of tobacco use. It motivates smokers to quit for a day, which hopefully will lead them to quitting for a lifetime.	www.cancer.org
12/1-12/7	National Aplastic Anemia Awareness Week	The Aplastic Anemia and MDS International Foundation, Inc., invites everyone to learn more about aplastic anemia during the first week in December.	www.aplastic.org
12/6-12/10	44th Annual Meeting and Exposition – The American Society of Hematology	Philadelphia, PA. This meeting, which is directed toward the research community, promotes the exchange of information and ideas related to blood, blood-forming tissues, and blood diseases.	www.hematology.org/meeting

Need More Information?

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

Recent Advances from the NHLBI

Continued Follow-up Needed for Children Born to Women with HIV

New results from a five-year, pediatric AIDS study supported by the NHLBI and the National Center for Research Resources demonstrate that infants whose mothers are infected with HIV have significantly worse cardiac function than infants whose mothers are not infected with HIV. Cardiac abnormalities were noted irrespective of the infants' HIV status, although the hearts of HIV-positive infants tended to be larger and less efficient.

"We believe that the intrauterine environment may play an important role in the development of these heart abnormalities, perhaps through factors such as maternal nutrition and the inflammatory process triggered by HIV," stated Dr. Steven Lipshultz of Golisano Children's Hospital, University of Rochester Medical Center. "This research offers additional clues to how influences during fetal life might affect cardiovascular disease."

"These results reinforce the importance of careful follow-up and the need to be alert to the possibility of cardiac complications when caring for children born to HIV-infected mothers," said NHLBI Director Dr. Claude Lenfant.

Steeped in Research: Tea Linked to Survival After Heart Attack



Drinking lots of tea may reduce a person's risk of dying after a heart attack, according to a study funded in part by the NHLBI. In the Determinants of Myocardial Infarction Onset Study, participants who drank more than 14 cups per week were the least likely to die during the three or four years after a heart attack. The researchers suspect that this may be because tea contains flavonoids and other antioxidants. Flavonoids are found naturally in various foods derived from plants, especially black and green tea. In previous studies, consumption of flavonoids was linked to a lower risk of coronary heart disease.

"We found that tea drinkers generally had lower death rates regardless of age, gender, smoking status, obesity, hypertension, diabetes or previous heart attack," stated lead author, Dr. Kenneth Mukamal with the Harvard Medical School. He adds that controlled studies are needed to further test the association between tea consumption and the reduction in risk of death after a heart attack.

Sleep Too much of a good thing?

People who sleep for more than 9 hours a night may not be as lucky as they seem. NHLBI-supported researchers reported at the American Academy of Sleep Medicine's annual meeting that routinely sleeping for more than 9 hours a night may be just as bad as being sleep-deprived. Even after considering various cardiovascular risk factors, one group found that women who did not have heart disease were more likely to have a heart attack within 10 years if, on average, they got more than 9 or less than 5 hours of sleep (rather than the standard eight). Other researchers found an approximately 1.5-fold increase in mortality in men and women who regularly slept less than 6 or more than 9 hours a night, compared with those who slept between 7 and 8 hours a night.

To learn more about sleep and to "Test Your Sleep IQ," visit the National Center on Sleep Disorders Research (NCSDR) Web page at www.nhlbi.nih.gov/about/ncsdr. The National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke, which also is involved in sleep research, has an outstanding Web page (www.ninds.nih.gov/health_and_medical/pubs/understanding_sleep_brain_basic_.htm) called "Brain Basics: Understanding Sleep."

Constituent's 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).