



NIH NEWS RELEASE

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH

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Women's Health Study Reaches Recruitment Goal More Than 160,000 Women Take the Initiative

Do hormones prevent heart disease? Will a low-fat diet protect you from cancers of the breast and colon? Can vitamin D prevent the bone fractures of osteoporosis? These questions face 37.5 million women in the country. Now, more than 160,000 of them have decided to be part of the answer.

They have joined the Women's Health Initiative (WHI), a 15-year study supported by the National Institutes of Health and administered by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI). Since 1991, the WHI has examined the leading causes of death, disability and frailty in post-menopausal women including heart disease, breast and colorectal cancers, and osteoporosis. The initiative involves a clinical trial, an observational study, and a community prevention study.

"We have reached our recruitment goals for the clinical part of the study, and these volunteers are helping to provide the hard evidence for some of the toughest questions facing post-menopausal women," said Dr. Claude Lenfant, NHLBI Director. Dr. Lenfant praised the dedication of the women and investigators in 40 centers across the country at a ceremony today in Seattle, Washington.

The Clinical Trial - More than 68,000 women volunteered. The study explores the long-term effects of estrogen and progestin on coronary heart disease, osteoporosis and breast cancer. It examines the effect of a diet low in fat and high in fruit, vegetables, and grains in preventing breast and colorectal cancers and heart disease. It tests the ability of calcium and vitamin D supplements to prevent fractures and reduce the risk of colorectal cancer.

Observational Study - More than 93,000 women volunteered to help answer questions such as how blood cholesterol levels and changes in body weight predict health status. Researchers will also compare the health of women who use hormones to those who don't to determine if hormone users have less heart disease, and they will analyze blood samples for genetic markers that may predict health and disease. The study is open to minority women through December 1998.

Community Prevention Study - The community prevention study is exploring how to best encourage women to choose healthy behaviors and will develop model programs that can be implemented nationwide.

"This is one of the largest studies of its kind ever done in the United States," said Dr. Suzanne Hurd, Acting Director of the Women's Health Initiative. "About 30,000 of the volunteers are minorities and the most common reason women say they volunteer is to help their daughters and grand-daughters live healthier lives."

Dr. Suzanne Hurd, the WHI Acting Director, or Dr. Jacques Rossouw, the WHI lead project officer, are available to comment. To arrange an interview call the NHLBI Communications Office at (301) 496-4236.

Minority women interested in participating in the observational study may contact the nearest center on the attached list. For more information on the WHI, visit the web site at: <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/whi>.

Women's Health Initiative Centers Recruiting Minority Women

Minority women interested in joining the Observational Study have to be post-menopausal, aged 50-79, and living near one of the WHI Clinical Centers. The study is looking at the relation between lifestyle factors and health. Participants do not have to take any study pills or treatment, but will be asked to come in for one clinic visit initially, and a repeat visit 3 years later. They will also be asked to complete a health status update every year, and will receive regular WHI newsletters. To participate, contact a WHI Clinical Center near you.

Center	Telephone number
Tucson, AZ	1-800-341-7672
Phoenix, AZ	602-241-9216
Torrance, CA	310-222-8171
Honolulu, HI	808-547-9823
Reno, NV	702-784-4906

Detroit, MI	313-966-8000
Washington, DC	202-675-4770
Stony Brook, NY	516-444-3905
Cincinnati, OH	513-584-6062
Atlanta, GA	404-377-8300
San Antonio, TX	210-567-1850
NYC (NE Bronx, Hartsdale, Manhattan), NY	718-931-1010
San Jose, CA	408-944-4444
