



A National Center of Excellence

Women's Health E-News
Winter 2008

WOMEN'S HEALTH NEWS AT VCU

Resolution recognizes IWH

A General Assembly Joint Resolution was introduced in January and moved through both the House & Senate recognizing the VCU Institute for Women's Health. The sponsor of this bill is Delegate Jennifer McClellan - House District 71. To track the status of the bill, visit: <http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?081+sum+HJ78>

Commending Virginia Commonwealth University Institute for Women's Health.

Patron-- McClellan

WHEREAS, Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) Institute for Women's Health is commended on its continuing commitment to provide quality health care for the citizens of the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, VCU Institute for Women's Health was designated a National Center of Excellence in Women's Health in November 2003 by the United States Department of Health and Human Services; and

WHEREAS, VCU Institute for Women's Health is one of only 20 National Centers of Excellence across the country; and

WHEREAS, the National Centers of Excellence in Women's Health designees serve as models for the nation in providing innovative, comprehensive, multidisciplinary, and integrated health care systems for women across their lifespans; and

WHEREAS, the mission of the VCU Institute for Women's Health is to improve the health of women through clinical care, research, health education, community outreach, and leadership development; and

WHEREAS, VCU's community-campus partnerships afford an opportunity to develop effective community models for improving the health of women in Virginia; and

WHEREAS, the VCU Institute for Women's Health was awarded Certificates of Excellence from the Department of Health and Human Services for the establishment of a comprehensive multidisciplinary clinical care center for women, interdisciplinary women's health and gender-based research, training and professional education activities, community outreach activities, and for its designation as a National Center of Leadership in Academic Medicine; now therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, that the General Assembly hereby commend and congratulate Virginia Commonwealth University Institute for Women's Health on its designation as a National Center of Excellence in Women's Health; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the leadership of Virginia Commonwealth University Institute for Women's Health as an expression of the General Assembly's gratitude for the organization's many outstanding accomplishments and its mission to improve the health of all Virginians through improving the health of women.

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Article Featuring IWH in V- Magazine – the Voice of Women –
“Health Matters: Putting Women First at the VCU Institute for Women's Health” in **February issue of V- Magazine**. Pick up a free copy at over 400 Richmond locations including Ukrops and Walgreens or visit <http://www.vmagazineforwomen.com/>

NEW WOMEN'S HEALTH GRANTS @ VCU

“VCU researchers work to improve pregnancy outcomes, reduce infant mortality and increase prenatal awareness among African American women.” Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine researchers are working toward changing some rather alarming statistics. Despite improvements to the nation's general health, African-Americans experience adverse pregnancy outcomes much more frequently than whites, resulting in infant death rates that are more than twice those of the white population. Making strides toward eliminating health disparities among racial and ethnic populations through research in the field of maternal, infant and child health has become the key focus of several VCU School of Medicine researchers. Nearly \$10 million in federal grants awarded recently will go a long way in furthering those goals.

<http://www.vcu.edu/insidevcu/0801healthdisparities/index.html>

“VCU infectious diseases expert is principal investigator of grant to support women health care professionals from developing countries.” Richard Wenzel, M.D., chair of internal medicine at the Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine and president of the International Society for Infectious Diseases, is the principal investigator of a new project grant to support women health care workers from Africa, Asia and the Asian sub-continent. Wenzel, an internationally recognized expert in infectious diseases, has helped implement a professional development program for these women to provide an opportunity for networking with leaders and experts of the International Society for Infectious Diseases, ISID, gathering information and applying the new knowledge to improve the standard of care for women with infectious diseases in their home countries. Through the grant to the ISID, approximately 70 women with careers in medicine, nursing, public health and infectious diseases, will be selected to attend the 13th International Congress on Infectious Diseases that will take place in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, June 19-22, 2008.

http://www.news.vcu.edu/vcu_view/pages.aspx?nid=2308

WOMEN'S HEALTH NEWS

February is Heart Health Month

Heart disease is the No. 1 killer of both men and women in the United States. Every year, 652,000 people in the United States die from heart disease, about half of them women.

For More Information Visit:

www.goredforwomen.org

or

The HEART TRUTH CAMPAIGN

<http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/hearttruth/index.htm>

10 ways to love your heart

- ♥ Get regular checkups.
- ♥ Know your blood pressure and cholesterol numbers.
- ♥ Follow your doctor's recommendations for diet and exercise.
- ♥ Take prescribed medications as directed.
- ♥ If you smoke, quit now.
- ♥ Get at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity each day. Join our 12-week physical fitness program at goredforwomen.org.
- ♥ Eat a heart-healthy diet, including fruits & vegetables, whole-grain foods and fish.
- ♥ Limit food high in saturated fats and dietary cholesterol.
- ♥ Limit your salt intake to 2300 mg of sodium a day.
- ♥ If you drink alcoholic beverages, drink in moderation -an average of no more than one drink a day for non pregnant women.

High Blood Sugar Boosts Women's Heart Disease Risk

Increased blood sugar levels signal a heightened risk of heart disease, especially among women, a new study finds. In fact, women may face a greater risk for heart disease at lower blood sugar levels than men, according to the report in the Jan. 22 issue of the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology*. **To view full article from the Health Day News, please view** <http://www.4women.gov/news/English/611770.htm>

Oral Contraceptives Cut Ovarian Cancer Risk

Woman who take oral contraceptives greatly reduce their risk of developing ovarian cancer, and the longer they take them the greater the protection, a new study in the Jan.26 issue of *The Lancet* confirms. According to the American Cancer Society, ovarian cancer is the eighth most common cancer in women, skin cancer excluded. It's the fifth-leading cause of cancer death in women. An estimated 22,430 new cases of ovarian cancer are diagnosed in the United States each year, and about 15,280 women die from the disease. Two-thirds of women with ovarian cancer are 55 or older. **To view full article from the Health Day News, please view** <http://www.4women.gov/news/English/612042.htm>

U.S. Abortion Rate Falls to Lowest Level in Decades

The U.S. abortion rate has reached its lowest level in three decades, according to a new report released Thursday. "We don't know why," said study author Rachel Jones, senior research associate at the Guttmacher Institute, a nonprofit group that focuses on reproductive issues. The findings will be published in the March issue of the institute's journal, *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*. The actual number of abortions dropped to a new low, with 1.2 million abortions in 2005, compared to a high of 1.6 million abortions in 1990. **To view full article from the Health Day News, please view** <http://www.4women.gov/news/english/611813.htm>

UPCOMING EVENTS

How to Treat a Women: Strategies for Healthcare & Self-Care

The Institute for Women's Health continues its series of brown-bag seminars focused on women's health for all health care professionals. Linda Hancock, MD will speak on "Tobacco Cessation: Old Myths, New Methods" on Wednesday, March 12, 2008 from 12:00 to 1:00 in the Learning Center at the MCV Main Hospital.

Women's Health Research Day

Wednesday, April 16, 2008 from 12:30 – 4:30 pm at the Medical Sciences Building – MCV Campus - Room 104-105 and auditorium. A unique networking opportunity celebrating and promoting excellence in interdisciplinary women's health research.

All VCU faculty, students, staff, and community members with an interest in innovative research in women's health are welcome and encouraged to attend. **Keynote Address** "*Knocking Down Silos: Fostering Women's Health & Gender-Based Research*" Kathleen T. Brady, M.D., Ph.D. Professor, Department of Psychiatry, Medical University of South Carolina; Principal Investigator on BIRCWH, SCOR & CTSA grants. **Women's Health Research Panel:** *Translational Research in Women's Health: Opportunities to Integrate Basic & Clinical Research with Patient Care.* **Research Poster Session.** For more information, visit: http://www.womenshealth.vcu.edu/research/research_day_2008.html

Women's Leadership Conference

WISDM Pathways to Leadership Conference, "**Every Day, A New Discovery: Discover Resources for You**" Friday, March 21st, 7:30am - 2:15pm
Keynote speaker: **Dr. PonJola Coney**, Senior Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs, VCU SOM. Dr. Coney will speak on "**Learning to Lead.**"
Online registration and brochure are available at <https://www.apps.som.vcu.edu/cme/calendar/>

Women's Health 2008: The 16th Annual Congress

March 28 - 30, 2008 Williamsburg Lodge and Conference Center. **The most important clinical women's health conference of the year !** Carrying 24.25 CME and CNE credits and 21.25 AAFP credits. *Presented by Journal of Women's Health and VCU Institute for Women's Health* All details can be viewed at www.bioconferences.com/wh

3rd International Congress on Women's Mental Health

Susan Kornstein, MD will chair the 3rd International Congress on Women's Mental Health. March 17-20, 2008 in Melbourne, Australia. Sponsored by the International Association for Women's Mental Health. For more information, visit <http://www.iawmhcongress2008.com.au/>

Women's Health Virginia

Spring Juried Art Show Features work by women or about women and girls – *Reflecting Women's Wellness* was created as part of Women & Girls Wellness Month in April to demonstrate the importance of art to women's well-being, for the artist and the observer. The 2008 show will be at the atrium of the James Center in Richmond from April 5- 26. For more information, call 434-220-4500 or visit <http://www.womenshealthvirginia.org/pages/reflectingwomenswellness.htm>

UPCOMING CLASSES

Nutrition – Weight Loss – Walking – Diabetic Dining

- Diabetic Dining Made Easy – Call 560-8950 to register. The class repeats the first Wednesday morning of each month
- Choose to Lose® - 8-Week Weight Loss Program (offered fall & winter)
- First Step Program- (4-week walking program offered in mornings & evenings, fall & winter)
- Food & Fitness- 2 hour programs offered in spring
- DASH- Diet to lower blood pressure
- Cholesterol Lowering Class

Sign up to receive the “Your Nutrition News” electronic newsletter. To subscribe, please email Mary-Jo Sawyer, Registered Dietician at msawyer@mcvh-vcu.edu. For class information and registration, call 804-327-8830.

Family Life Education

Classes include Maternity Tour/Healthy Beginnings, Breastfeeding Class, Car Seat Safety, Childbirth Preparation, Infant CPR, Newborn Parenting, and Sibling Class. All classes except for the Sibling Class are for adults only.

To register or for more information, call **828-7929**

Centering Pregnancy Program: A Model for Prenatal Care

Centering Pregnancy groups are made up of 10 to 12 women who will all deliver their babies around the same time. The groups include discussion about pregnancy and how to care for the new baby, and in each session, moms will have some private time with a midwife, nurse, or doctor. Groups are available at the Stony Point Women’s Health Center. Contact Ellen Coffin at **628-3042** for more information.

CURRENT WOMEN’S HEALTH CLINICAL TRIALS @ VCU

Clinical trials offer individuals the opportunity to participate in research studies that are used to answer specific questions about the safety and efficacy of new medications, new therapies, or new ways of using known treatments. Individuals participate in clinical trials in order to play a more active role in their own health care, gain access to new research treatments before they are widely available, and help others by contributing to medical research in women’s health.

VCU Mood Disorders Institute

Dr. Susan Kornstein is currently seeking participants for the following research studies:

Depression Study

Symptoms of Depression include:

- Feeling sad or depressed
- Loss of interest in activities you used to enjoy
- Feelings of hopelessness, worthlessness, or guilt
- Sleeplessness or lack of energy

If you're experiencing these symptoms, are between the ages of 18 and 70 and medically stable, you may qualify to participate. This study is testing the effectiveness of an investigational medication for depression. Study-related research care is provided at no charge to you at our convenient off-campus location.

Participants Recruited for Study on Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder

The Virginia Commonwealth University Mood Disorders Institute is recruiting participants for a national study of a new treatment method for premenstrual dysphoric disorder, a severe and debilitating form of premenstrual syndrome, or PMS. Premenstrual dysphoric disorder, or PMDD, affects between 3 percent and 8 percent of women. Many women with PMDD experience mood swings, depression, irritability, anxiety and feelings that life is not worth living, with 15 percent attempting suicide. These symptoms, which occur only premenstrually, are often accompanied by changes in sleep and appetite, changes in energy, breast pain, and bloating — all of which can be severe and lead to disturbances in functioning at home or at work.

The principal investigator, Susan G. Kornstein, M.D., a professor of psychiatry and obstetrics and gynecology at VCU, said subjects will take the antidepressant sertraline for six months at the onset of symptoms, or will receive a placebo. The goal is to enroll 300 women among three sites — at Cornell, Yale and Virginia Commonwealth universities.

The study is supported by grants from the National Institute of Mental Health. For more information, please call 804-828-5639, or email mdi@vcu.edu.

VCU News: <http://www.news.vcu.edu/news.aspx?v=detail&nid=2362>

Studies at VCU Massey Cancer Center

A number of physician-supervised studies of treatments for cancer of the ovary, uterus or cervix are ongoing at VCU Massey Cancer Center:

For more information, contact Meena Lenn, BS, CRA, at 804-628-1953 or Mary Beth Tombes, RN, at 804-628-1357

VCU Program for Osteoporosis and Bone Health

For information on current studies and recruitment contact:

Marian L. Sheppard, BSN,CCRC Research Nurse, Division of Endocrinology and Metabolism VCU Medical Center. Stony Point Office: Phone: 804-237-6620 or call (804) 828-8932 or visit

<http://www.pubinfo.vcu.edu/osteoporosis/index.html>.

Physician Supervised Study Recruiting Women

You may qualify for this study if you:

Have eight (8) or fewer menstrual cycles per year

Are willing to take birth control pills for three (3) months and either Metformin or placebo

Between 18 and 45 years of age, in good health and non-diabetic

Four mornings of testing (over 3 months) are required and monetary compensation provided. For more information, call Terre Williams at (804) 828-2663 or Manar Nazmy at (804) 827-0171

ABOUT US

VCU Institute for Women's Health is one of 20 National Centers of Excellence in Women's Health designated in 2003 by the Office on Women's Health in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The CoE's and serve as models for the Nation in providing innovative, comprehensive, multidisciplinary, and integrated health care systems for women across the lifespan.

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www.womenshealth.vcu.edu

Charlotte K. Roberts Women's Health Resource Center (WHRC) provides quality information on health and wellness including prevention, conditions, diseases, and treatments. Information and services are available to anyone at no cost. Contact us during your visit, by phone or e-mail. We are located next to Women's Health Center at Stony Point. A Community Health Information Specialist is available from 9:30am – 2:30pm Monday through Friday. Contact: Elaine Minor

Phone: 804-327-8857

Email: whrc@vcu.edu

http://www.womenshealth.vcu.edu/community/resource_center.html

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