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Women's Health E-Newsletter
SUMMER 2007

WOMEN'S HEALTH NEWS AT VCU

Institute for Women's Health 2006 Annual Report is available online. We are pleased to present the 2006 Annual Report, which highlights some of our recent activities and accomplishments. To View a pdf version:

<http://www.womenshealth.vcu.edu/VCU-IWH2006AnnualReport.pdf>

New Women's Health Course at VCU

Women's Health Across the Lifespan" (WMNS 392), taught by Patricia Selig, PhD, FNP is a new elective course for undergraduate students that was offered through the College of Humanities and Science in the spring of 2007. This exciting new course was the collective brainchild of the Women's Studies Program and the Institute for Women's Health and is an important component in the new Women, Health and Science track of the Bachelor of Arts in Women's Studies. The purpose of the course is to introduce students to health issues affecting women across the lifespan, using a multidisciplinary approach. Topics include women's health research, minority women's health, intimate partner violence, menstrual disorders, mental health and common health conditions such as breast cancer, diabetes, and heart disease. Women's Health Across the Lifespan will be offered each spring.

VCU Approves Department Status for Women's Studies Program

The VCU Board of Visitors approved department status for the Women's Studies Program. Status was also approved in June 2007 for the Department of Women's Studies by proclamation of the State Council of Higher Education. Visit the website for more information <http://www.has.vcu.edu/wst/>

Women's Health Conference 2007: Clinical Insights and Best Practices-

A broad array of topics and speakers from around the country were presented at Women's Health 2007, held March 30-April 1, 2007 at The Williamsburg Lodge in Williamsburg, Virginia. The main objective of this annual continuing education conference is to provide physicians, nurse practitioners, pharmacists, and other front-line healthcare providers with state-of-the-art, evidenced-based knowledge on a broad range of issues relevant to women's health across the lifespan. The conference this year was completely sold out, with 520 registrants representing a total of 29 states.

Mark your calendar for the 2008 Annual Women's Health Conference, which will be held March 28- 30, 2008 at the Williamsburg Lodge and Conference Center. Look to the [womenshealth.vcu.edu](http://www.womenshealth.vcu.edu) website for new details. For more information, visit <http://www.womenshealth.vcu.edu/wh2008.html>

Urogynecology Clinic Expands at Stony Point

This comprehensive clinic is part of the Women's Health Center at Stony Point and offers access to advance technology, state of the art services, and compassionate, confidential care from a dedicated team of specialists focused solely on the specific health issues some women face, such as incontinence, pelvic prolapse and urinary leakage. Dr Catherine Matthews (CoE Clinical Services Director) is offering expanded services at Stony Point along with Dr. Edward Gill. <http://www.womenshealth.vcu.edu/UrogynecologyFlyer2007.pdf>

"Changing the Face of Medicine: Celebrating America's Women Physicians" Traveling Exhibit VCU was chosen to be one of sixty-one Universities to host this exhibit in 2007. Tompkins-McCaw Library (TML) hosts the exhibit

This exhibit tells the extraordinary story of American women's two-century struggle to gain access to medical education and to work in the specialty of their choice. It describes women's successful quests to become doctors. The exhibit introduces audiences to outstanding physicians from across the United States and also highlights local healthcare professionals from the Richmond area. Dr. Sarah Garland Jones was not the first woman to pass the exam to get a medical license in Virginia. Nor was she the first woman to practice medicine in Virginia. But Jones left a legacy that makes her work worth more than a few historical footnotes, said Belsches, an author and pharmacist who presented a talk on Jones on July 12 as part of a series on women in health and medicine at the VCU Tompkins-McCaw Library, writes Tammie Smith of the Richmond Times-Dispatch. To view the full article, please visit <http://www.inrich.com/cva/ric/news.apx.-content-articles-RTD-2007-07-06-0133.html> The website, which is a complement to the exhibit, can be viewed at <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/changingthefaceofmedicine/>.

The exhibit also features the "Local Legends" project that highlights outstanding women physicians from every state. www.nlm.nih.gov/locallegends

NEWS AT VCU

VCU Health System ranks among "America's Best Hospitals" The only medical center in Central Virginia to be ranked by U.S. News & World Report. The Virginia Commonwealth University Health System is one of 173 medical centers nationwide to be named in U.S. News & World Report's 2007 rankings of America's Best Hospitals. The U.S. News & World Report annual survey evaluated nearly 5,500 hospitals, with fewer than 200 meeting the standard in one or more area. In particular, the VCU Health System was noted for excellence treating patients in kidney disease, ranking 42nd in the country. For more information about the ranking, please visit <http://www.news.vcu.edu/news.aspx?v=detail&nid=2135>

VCU Health System named Greater Richmond Area Employer of Choice -

For the second consecutive year, the Virginia Commonwealth University Health System has been named the Greater Richmond Area Employer of Choice. The VCU Health System also received the national Alfred P. Sloan Award for Business Excellence in Workplace Flexibility. The award presentations were made Wednesday at the annual All Star Awards presented by the Richmond Human Resources Management Association and the Greater Richmond Chamber of Commerce. For more information: <http://www.news.vcu.edu/news.aspx?v=detail&nid=2063>

WOMEN'S HEALTH NEWS

Another Study Sees Heart Risks in Hormone Replacement Therapy

Yet another study confirms that hormone replacement therapy should not be used in older women to help prevent heart disease, although it appears to be safe and effective in relieving menopausal symptoms in younger women. To view full article from Health Day News, please visit

<http://www.4women.gov/news/english/606314.htm>

Breast Cancer More Aggressive in Black Women

Black women diagnosed with breast cancer have more advanced and more aggressive disease than do white women, a new study found. To view more study details and full article from Health Day News, please visit

<http://www.4women.gov/news/english/606279.htm>

Breast Cancer Survival May Run in Families

Women can look to their mothers and sisters to help determine their chances of survival from breast cancer, new research suggests. This Swedish study, published in the online issue of *Breast Cancer Research*, found that if a woman succumbs to breast cancer, her daughters or sisters have a 60 percent increased risk of dying from the disease if they develop it. To view full article from HealthDay News, please visit <http://www.4women.gov/news/english/605928.htm>

Baby Boom Women Confronting Pelvic Health Conditions

Baby boomer women still have hysterectomies at nearly the same rate that women did 25 years ago, despite the development of less drastic medical and surgical alternatives, a new report finds. In 2005, more than 181,000 hysterectomies done in the United States were on Baby Boomers with two common uterine problems -- fibroid tumors and heavy bleeding. But both conditions can often be treated with newer, less-invasive approaches, according to the report commissioned by the National Women's Health Resource Center. The center describes the report as a first-of-its kind study on the prevalence of pelvic health disorders among American women. To view full article from the Health Day News, please view

<http://www.4women.gov/news/english/605723.htm>

U.S. Women Lagging in Diabetes Care, Study Suggests

In a finding that partly challenges the conventional wisdom that women live longer than men, a new study suggests that the medical advances of the last few decades against diabetes haven't benefited women. Researchers found that the death rates of diabetic men dropped in recent decades, while those of diabetic women increased. It's not clear why the discrepancy exists. To view full article from the Health Day News, please view <http://www.4women.gov/news/english/605638.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.

Karen Reynolds Gill will speak on "Coping With Loss: Finding our Way Through Grief" on Wednesday, September 19, 2007 from 12:00-1:00 in the Learning Center of the Main Hospital.

Jim Levy, MD will speak on "Strategies for Obesity and Weight Loss" on Wednesday, October 31, 2007 from 12-1 in the Learning Center.

For more information, contact the Institute for Women's Health at (804) 827-0222 or view the *How To treat A Woman* flyer:

www.womenshealth.vcu.edu/announcements/HTTW2007RollingDatesFlier.pdf.

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 AT 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.

Depression and Post-Menopausal Women Study

If you are experiencing symptoms of depression and symptoms of menopause with no menstrual period for at least 3 months and are between the ages of 40 and 70 and medically stable you may qualify to participate.

Upcoming Studies at VCU Mood Disorders Institute Include:

- *Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD) in women*
- *Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder (PMDD)*
- *Depression study for men and women.*

All of the above studies are being conducted at the VCU Mood Disorders Clinic. For more information, contact: Maggie Britton, RN, BSN, Clinical Research Coordinator, at **828-5639**.

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

Weight Loss Study

You may qualify for this study if you:

Have a full-figured, or plus-size body

Are willing to follow dietary weight loss guidelines with the help of dieticians

Are in general good health and no history of diabetes

Have regular menstrual periods

Are not taking birth control pills

This study will involve 5 mornings at the MCV hospital over 8 weeks. There will also be weekly weight checks. You will not be taking a study drug.

This study could earn you up to \$250! For information on this study, call Terre Williams at 828-2663 or Manar Nazmy at 827-0171

Irregular or Infrequent Menstrual Periods Study

You may qualify for this study if you: Have irregular or infrequent menstrual periods, or have polycystic ovary syndrome

Are 18 – 40 years old

Have a full-figured, or plus-size body

Are willing to follow dietary weight loss guidelines with the help of dieticians

Do not have diabetes

Are not taking birth control pills

Are not taking metformin

This study will involve 5 mornings at the MCV hospital over 8 weeks. There will also be weekly weight checks. You will not be taking a study drug.

This study could earn you up to \$250! For information on this study, call Terre Williams at 828-2663 or Manar Nazmy at 827-0171

ABOUT US

VCU Institute for Women's Health National Center of Excellence (CoE) 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 National Centers of Excellence 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.

Elaine Minor, Community Health Information Specialist - Student Intern

Phone: 804-327-8857

Email: whrc@vcu.edu

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

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