



CORE_{news}

FRED HUTCHINSON
CANCER
RESEARCH
CENTER
Advancing Knowledge, Saving Lives

Colorectal Research in Epidemiology

Summer/Fall 2003

CORE Family Studies

1100 Fairview
Avenue North

MP-900

PO Box 19024

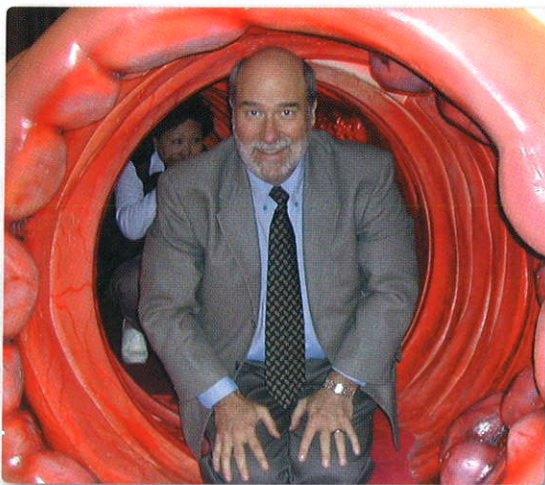
Seattle, WA

98109-1024

Study telephone:
1-800-276-0127

The Tour of Hope

Five-time Tour de France winner Lance Armstrong will be joined by 26 people from the cancer community at different points along the Tour of Hope—a journey from Los Angeles, CA to Washington, DC to raise public awareness around cancer research and clinical trials. The Tour co-sponsors are the Lance Armstrong Foundation and the Bristol-Myers Squibb Company. The Tour kicks off on October 11th in Los Angeles and concludes on October 18th in Washington, DC. For more information, go to www.tourofhope.org.



Dr. John Potter exits the Colossal Colon during its stop in Seattle. See page 3 for more information on the Colossal Colon Tour.

Topics in this Issue:

Feature: Information on the Colossal Colon Tour's visit to Seattle

Specialist's Corner: Examining colorectal cancer screening guidelines

Epidemiology 101: Findings regarding postmenopausal hormones

Greetings!

We are pleased to bring you our seventh edition of **CORE News** (COlorectal Research in EPidemiology). We hope that this newsletter finds you and your family well. As always, we welcome your comments and suggestions for ways to improve our newsletters.

In January, we officially kicked off Phase II of our family study. During this phase, we will be conducting a short telephone follow-up interview with participants enrolled during Phase I (1998-2003), and we will continue to recruit western Washington residents newly diagnosed with colorectal cancer and their interested family members. Follow-up interviews will take place approximately five years after the initial interview. Thus, the first participants enrolled in the family study (October 1998) will be contacted for follow-up at the end of this year. Like the first interview, this interview will be conducted over the telephone, but will be much shorter than the previous interview, collecting information on any changes in your health history and family history.

We are also in the process of writing a grant to continue our Hormones and Health Study. This grant, due November 1, will allow us to continue our crucial research on the influence of postmenopausal hormones on colorectal cancer in women.

We would not be able to conduct this vital research without your support. Thank you once again for your contributions to CORE Studies!

Warmest regards,



John D. Potter
MD, PhD



Polly Newcomb
PhD, MPH



Deborah Bowen
PhD

Epidemiology 101: New Study Sheds Light on Postmenopausal Hormone Therapy

Women who are undecided about whether to use postmenopausal hormones now have another health risk to ponder. Research published by the Women's Health Initiative shows that combined estrogen-plus-progestin therapy can increase the risk of cognitive impairment from mild, such as having trouble thinking, to more severe, such as Alzheimer's disease, in women age 65 and older.

Study results were published in the May 28, 2003 issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*. Dr. Deborah Bowen, a CORE Study investigator and one of the co-authors, said that this study was initiated to examine earlier reports suggesting hormone therapy could reduce the risk of cognitive impairment and memory loss.

Contrary to previous findings, WHI researchers found that the risk of cognitive impairment among women taking estrogen and progestin was about twice that of women taking placebo (pills with no hormones in them). Of the 61 cases of dementia diagnosed among the 4,500 women who participated in the study, 40 of those cases occurred among women on combined estrogen-plus-progestin therapy while 21 occurred in women taking placebo.



While the overall risk of severe dementia is low in the general population and remains so even for those taking hormones, Bowen cautions that the study findings for women 65 years of age or older are significant enough to impact the decisions of women who are still weighing the risks and benefits of hormone therapy. Future research will determine the cognitive risks of this combination therapy for younger women.

Public Health Sciences is Moving!

The Public Health Sciences division of Fred Hutchinson (which includes CORE Studies) is finally moving! We will be moving this spring from our current location near downtown Seattle to the main southeast Lake Union campus where the basic laboratory and clinical facilities are located. The consolidation of the Fred Hutchinson campus has been 15 years in the making! The new Public Health Sciences building is currently under construction and is slated to open in March 2004. Our study telephone number will remain the same, and our new address will appear in the next edition of **CORE News**.



Dr. Polly Newcomb Named Head of Cancer Prevention Program

CORE Studies' Dr. Polly Newcomb has been named the new Head of the Cancer Prevention Program at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center. Dr. Newcomb received her Ph.D. in Epidemiology from the University of Washington and has been with Fred Hutchinson since 1996. She was formerly Head of the Cancer Control Program at the University of Wisconsin, where she still maintains a research program on cancer and women. The Cancer Prevention Program is the largest research department in the largest division at Fred Hutchinson. It is a multidisciplinary program of nutritionists, statisticians, epidemiologists, health psychologists, physicians, economists, laboratory scientists and other research professionals. Congratulations Dr. Newcomb!



Specialist's Corner: Screening Guidelines Examined

In a recently published study *using CORE Family Studies data*, Dr. Polly Newcomb determined that using a sigmoidoscopy for colorectal cancer screening significantly reduced the risk of developing colorectal cancer. The study was published in the April 16, 2003 issue of the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute* and received nationwide coverage.

A sigmoidoscopy is an exam that looks inside the lower part of the colon. It can be performed in a doctor's office without anesthesia. During the exam, the doctor passes a thin, flexible tube equipped with a camera through the lower colon, where approximately 60% of all colorectal cancers occur (**Figure 1**). This year, about 147,000 Americans will be diagnosed with colorectal cancer. Most of such cancers, but not all, develop from precancerous growths called adenomas that can take up to 15 years to grow into colorectal cancer.

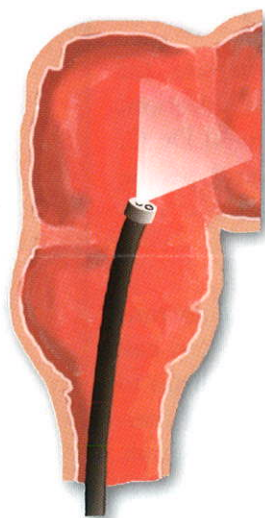


Figure 1: An endoscope is a flexible, slender, lighted tube that transmits an image of the lining of the colon. The doctor views the image on a nearby screen during the exam.

Dr. Newcomb and colleagues at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center found that people who had had a screening sigmoidoscopy were four times less likely to be diagnosed with colorectal cancer later in life than people of similar age and background who had not had a screening sigmoidoscopy. This reduction in risk was observed for up to 15 years following the test. Thus, a sigmoidoscopy (as with a colonoscopy) can effectively prevent colorectal cancer by finding precancerous growths before they develop into cancer.

The current clinical colorectal cancer screening guidelines recommend screening beginning at the age of 50 with either a sigmoidoscopy every

5 years or a colonoscopy every 10 years. Dr. Newcomb's results suggest that screening sigmoidoscopies may only need to be repeated every 10 years rather than every 5

years. Currently, only 34% of all adults over 50 years in the U.S. have had a sigmoidoscopy or colonoscopy (**Figure 2**). If this could be doubled to 68% adherence to a 10-year screening schedule, Dr. Newcomb estimates that 19,000 colorectal cancer cases could be prevented each year. She hopes that this finding will encourage more people to be screened.

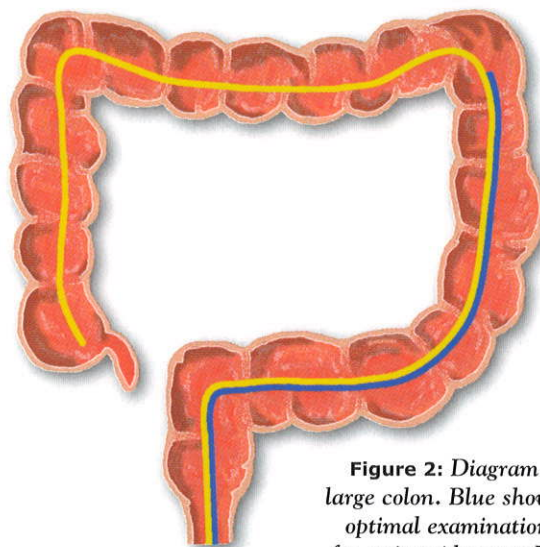


Figure 2: Diagram of the large colon. Blue shows the optimal examination area for a sigmoidoscopy. Yellow shows the optimal area of examination for a colonoscopy.

CORE Studies investigators caution that this recommendation does not apply to people at higher than average risk for colorectal cancer, either due to family history or other conditions, or for people who are having possible colorectal cancer symptoms. People who may be at higher risk for colorectal cancer should speak with their doctors about appropriate screening intervals.

Where Can I Get More Information About Cancer?



The Cancer Information Service at **1-800-4-CANCER** (1-800-422-6237) will answer your questions about cancer prevention, diagnosis, and treatment, and send you information at your request.



Some of you may have encountered problems calling our project line this past July. Our project line was temporarily disabled while Fred Hutchinson switched long-distance carriers. We apologize for this problem, and we assure you that this problem has been fixed. Thank you to those of you who alerted us to this problem, and thank you for your patience while we resolved it!

Dr. Gourmet Presents: Pumpkin-Clove Soup



Fall is fast approaching, and pumpkin soup is a great way to celebrate the season, warm up, and get some great nutrients! This recipe combines pumpkin for a healthy serving of vitamins and fiber, but with fewer calories and less fat than other recipes.

- 1 tsp. unsalted butter
- 1 large carrot (peeled and diced)
- 1 small onion (diced)
- 1 29-ounce can of pumpkin
- 4 cups chicken stock
- 1 cup water
- 5 whole cloves
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 3 Tbsp. honey
- 1/2 cup non-fat sour cream
- 1/4 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp. ground cloves
- 1/4 tsp. ground nutmeg
- 1/2 cup raw pumpkin seeds

Directions

- 1) Melt the butter over medium heat in a large stockpot. Add the onions and carrots and cook very slowly until the onions are translucent. Add the pumpkin, chicken stock, water and whole cloves. Simmer over low to low-medium heat for about one hour until the carrots are soft. Stir frequently.
- 2) While the soup is simmering, preheat the oven to 400°F. Place the pumpkin seeds in a large non-stick skillet and roast for about 3 minutes in the oven. Remove the pan from the oven and stir the seeds. Return them to the oven and stir every three minutes until they are golden brown. Remove and let the seeds cool.
- 3) Meanwhile, place the sour cream, ground cinnamon, ground cloves and ground nutmeg in a bowl and stir until well blended. When the carrots in the soup are soft, add the honey and stir well. Remove the pot from the burner and let the soup cool for at least 20 minutes. Purée in a blender until smooth in two or three batches. Serve soup hot with a tablespoon of spiced sour cream and a tablespoon of pumpkin seeds.

Nutrition Facts for Pumpkin-Clove Soup

Amount Per Serving
(makes eight 1-cup servings)

Calories	123
Calories from Fat	18
Total Fat	2 g
Saturated Fat	<1 g
Cholesterol	4 mg
Sodium	291 mg
Total Carbohydrate	22 g
Dietary Fiber	4 g
Protein	3 g
Vitamin A	535% DV
Vitamin C	10% DV
Calcium	6% DV
Iron	9% DV

Ways to Cut Fat and Calories

(courtesy of the American Cancer Society)

Are you looking for ways to cut fat and calories from some of your favorite foods without sacrificing flavor? Try these tips to trim down some of your favorite recipes!

Instead of...	Try this...
Whole milk	1% (low-fat)
2% milk	Skim milk (non-fat)
Cheddar	Reduced-fat cheddar
Ice cream	Ice milk or frozen yogurt
Sour cream	Non-fat sour cream

On the Web:



Want to learn more about exercise?

Check out www.shapeup.org, the website for Shape Up America! This non-profit organization, founded by former U.S. Surgeon General Dr. C. Everett Koop, is dedicated to helping people maintain a healthy body weight for life.

For more information on cancer...

The American Society of Clinical Oncology runs a patient information network online. You can find a medical dictionary, drug database, links to patient support organizations, nutrition and exercise information, and more at www.oncology.com.

News Flash: "The Couric Effect"

A study published in the July 14, 2003 issue of the *Archives of Internal Medicine* found that colorectal cancer screening rates increased significantly following Katie Couric's broadcasted colonoscopy on March 7, 2000, coining the phrase "the Couric effect." "I was very pleased to see that it's having a positive impact," said Couric. Her husband Jay Monahan died of colon cancer in 1998 at the age of 42. She has since worked to raise awareness about colorectal cancer, in part by co-founding the National Colorectal Cancer Research Alliance. For more information, see www.nccra.org.



The Colossal Colon Tour Comes to Seattle

Ever wondered what a 40-foot long colon would look like up-close? The CORE Study staff found out when they volunteered at the Colossal Colon Tour! According to the Cancer Research and Prevention Foundation, approximately 3,000 people visited the Colossal Colon while it was in Seattle. For more information, see www.checkyourinsidesout.org.



Above: Cara McDermott and Beth Nolan at the screening station.

Center: Jackie Christel highlights the new advances in colorectal cancer prevention and treatment.

Right: Amy Cory and Laurie Lydum greet visitors to the Colossal Colon.

From Left to Right: Laurie Lydum, Dr. Polly Newcomb, Dr. John Potter, Cara McDermott, Jackie Christel, Allyson Templeton, Amy Cory, Beth Nolan.

CORE Staff Update

CORE is pleased to announce that Cara McDermott has accepted the position of Data Coordinator Lead. Cara is also known as the "study ambassador" since she will be working closely with study participants. Cara replaces Amy Cory, who relocated to California for her husband's post-doctoral fellowship. Cara began her career at Fred Hutchinson as an interviewer with CORE Studies. Cara brings experience with data collection and research to the Data Coordinator Lead position. We look forward to working with her in her new role.



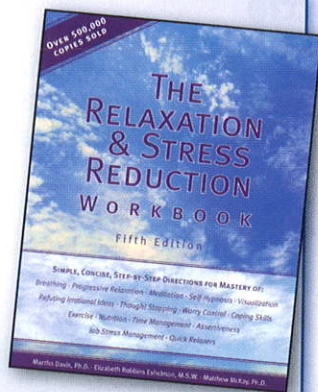
October 18 & 19, 2003: The Two-Day Colon Cancer March

The Colon Cancer Alliance is staging a 2-day, 40-mile march this October from Leesburg, Virginia to Washington, DC. The goals of the march are to generate funds for colon cancer research and to raise public awareness of colorectal cancer. For more information, log onto www.twodaymarch.org or call **1-866-4TWO-DAY**.



The Relaxation & Stress Reduction Workbook

(New Harbinger Publications, 5th edition, paperback, \$19.95) by Martha Davis, Elizabeth Robbins Eshelman, and Matthew McKay. This book is highly recommended for anyone looking to find ways to reduce stress and anxiety in their life. The authors provide practical stress management and relaxation techniques for reducing worry, depression, chronic anxiety, and fear. The workbook begins with a self-administered quiz to help determine anxiety-reduction strategies that would best meet your individual needs. Subsequent chapters detail specific anxiety reduction strategies and exercises. The strategies provided can be used to reduce stress and anxiety from many sources, including physical tension, worry, interpersonal issues, and job-related issues. This is an essential guide for bringing more peace and tranquility to your life.



Study Staff

Investigators: John D. Potter, MD, PhD
Polly A. Newcomb, PhD, MPH
Deborah J. Bowen, PhD

Project Manager: Allyson S. Templeton, MS

Project Lead: Cara McDermott

Genetic Counselor: Ksenia P. Koon, MS

Biospecimen Coordinator: Beth Nolan

Clinical Data Coordinator: Jackie Christel, CCRP

Administrative Coordinator: Laurie Lydum, MEd

Contact us:

Cara McDermott
Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center
P.O. Box 19024, MP-900
Seattle, WA 98109-1024
1-800-276-0127 • cmcdermo@fhcrc.org

Contact us! Have you moved? Are you planning to move? Do you have comments or suggestions for a future newsletter? Please call the study line at **1-800-276-0127** to keep us updated or to request information at any time.



CORE Family Studies

1100 Fairview Ave. N. • MP-900
P.O. Box 19024
Seattle, WA 98109-1024

Address Service Requested