



CIRWH NEWS FLASH

Center for Interdisciplinary Research in Women's Health

SPRING 2004

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS MEDICAL BRANCH

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From the Director's Desk



One of our most rewarding activities is making seed grants to support innovative pilot studies for new researchers in women's health.

In February, we announced that Dr. Monica Longo, a research investigator in the Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology, received the latest CIRWH seed grant. Her proposal, "Fetal Programming of Cardiovascular Diseases," will use animal models to examine how genetics and the uterine environment affect cardiovascular development, which could create problems in adulthood.

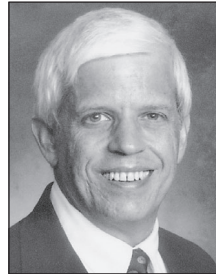
We also are excited about our most senior seed grant recipients, Drs. Shilla Chakrabarty of Ob/Gyn, and Gayle Weaver of the Division of Rehabilitation Sciences. These two faculty members received their grants in January and February of 2003.

Shilla has been studying the consequences of long-term use of enhancement drugs on the growth and functions of young women's reproductive systems. Gayle has been comparing the differences in the way African-American women in Boston with systemic lupus erythematosus use health resources versus how SLE patients in Pearland use them. Both will present their findings at our May 7 seminar.

Continued on Page 4



Dr. Jennifer Hays



Dr. Dan G. Blazer



National Women's Health Week set May 8–15 in Galveston County

"When mama ain't healthy, ain't nobody happy"—to paraphrase that old country song.

If you are a woman, the state of your health is of primary importance in order to maintain your busy, involved schedule. If you are a man, one of the key figures in your life is likely to be a mother, wife, sister, daughter or other significant female whose health needs to be of major concern to you.

National Women's Health Week (NWHW), being celebrated May 8–15 at the University of Texas Medical Branch and across the country, draws attention to many health issues related to females. Topics in the news most recently include heart health, estrogen and hormone replacement therapy, depression and osteoporosis.

"Women set the pace for the people in their households," said Dr. Abbey Berenson, director of the Center for Interdisciplinary Research in Women's Health, a moving force behind the week of events in

Galveston. "So when they are not healthy, the families around them get out of synch, as well."

The UTMB Mother's Day Health Fair Saturday, May 8, 10 a.m.–2 p.m., at Mall of the Mainland in Texas City, will feature education, information and screenings designed to help women and their families stay healthy. Mall of the Mainland is co-sponsoring the event with UTMB.

"Menopause, Hormones and Health: Lessons from the Women's Health Initiative (WHI)" is the topic for keynote speaker Dr. Jennifer Hays, associate professor of medicine and director of the Center for Women's Health at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston. Hays addresses the NWHW kick off lunch at UTMB on May 10. Principal investigator for the Baylor Clinical Center of the WHI, Hays has, for 20 years, studied how attitudes and behavior influence health, particularly in women and children.

Dr. Dan German Blazer, J.P. Gibbons Professor of Psychiatry and

Continued on Page 2

NWHW 2004 Activities



Mall Of The Mainland

Where Shopping's A Vacation!

Saturday, May 8, 2004

UTMB Mother's Day Health Fair

10 a.m.–2 p.m., free

Mall of the Mainland, Texas City

Health screenings, children's immunizations (immunization record required), wellness advice, free gifts

Monday, May 10, 2004

National Women's Health Week Kick off Luncheon
"Menopause, Hormones and Health: Lessons from the WHI"

Dr. Jennifer Hays, Baylor College of Medicine, associate professor of medicine and director of the Center for Women's Health at Baylor

Monday, May 10, 2004

National Women's Check-Up Day (All day)

Make an appointment with your physician, link to the Women's Health Care Group (<http://www.utmb.edu/wbcg/>) or call (281) 534-6414 or the Regional Maternal and Child Health Program (409) 643-8359 to schedule an exam.

Tuesday, May 11, 2004

NWHW Kerr Lecture in Obstetrics & Gynecology

4–5 p.m., free, reception following, sponsored by

Faculty Women's Caucus

UTMB Levin Hall North

"Depression and the Older Woman"

Dr. Dan German Blazer, Duke University School of Medicine, J.P. Gibbons, Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences and professor of community and family medicine; CME offered

Wednesday, May 12, 2004

NWHW Scientific Poster Session

3–5 p.m.

UTMB Levin Hall, Faculty Dining Room

Displays on research related to women's health campus-wide

Wednesday, May 12, 2004

UTMB Mini Medical School

6:30–8:30 p.m., free, but advance reservations required.

UTMB Levin Hall

Informative and entertaining public education program designed to familiarize lay people with medical terminology while providing a basic knowledge of medicine and insight into medical research. For reservations and information, call (409) 747-8192. Deadline: Wednesday, May 5.



MINI MEDICAL SCHOOL

Wednesday, May 12, 2004

Reducing the Risk of Coronary Heart Disease

Dr. David L. Ware

Coronary heart disease is the number one killer of women and men in the U.S. This course reviews the established and newly emerging risk factors for CHD, and provides guidelines on how they may be reduced by developing a healthy lifestyle.

Wednesday, May 19, 2004

Introduction to Vaccinology: Immunization Science and Policy

Dr. Martin Myers

Most of us have received vaccinations to protect us against many serious diseases like polio and smallpox. How do vaccines work? What's on the horizon for vaccine development? Find out from the experts at UTMB's Sealy Center for Vaccine Development.

Wednesday, May 26, 2004

Gsundheit! Allergies Are Nothing to Sneeze At

Drs. Andrew Grant and Randall Goldblum

Allergies are the sixth leading cause of chronic disease in the U.S. About 50 million Americans suffer from some type of allergic condition, including rhinitis or "hay fever," atopic dermatitis or skin reactions, certain forms of asthma, and food or drug allergies. Find out about recent advances in the prevention and treatment of allergic diseases.

National Women's Health Week

Continued from Page 1

Behavioral Sciences and professor of community and family medicine at Duke University School of Medicine, will present the second William Rupert Kerr Lecture in Obstetrics and Gynecology at 4 p.m., May 11, at William C. Levin Hall. His topic will be "Depression and the Older Woman." A reception will follow.

The first of three weekly classes of Mini Medical School, the popular educational series presented by UTMB faculty members, will be held 6:30–8:30 p.m. May 12, also at Levin Hall. (See box for a schedule, topics and presenters.) Preceding Mini Med, 3–5 p.m., UTMB physicians and scientists will present posters with illustrations and text describing the work going on in their labs. The session provides an opportunity for the public to learn about the array of research in women's health at the university from the women and men responsible for it.

Honors and Awards

Dr. Elie Al Chaer, assistant professor of internal medicine and anatomy and neurosciences, and director of the Laboratory of Neurophysiology and Biobehavior, Center for Pain Research, was appointed chair of the NIH Special Council on Mind-Body Interactions and Health: Research Infrastructure Program in January. Also, as of this year, he was selected as a member of the Rome Foundation for Disorders of Gastrointestinal Function (membership by invitation only). The next meeting will be in Rome, Italy, in November 2004. Al Chaer also was invited to talk on sex-related differences in models of irritable bowel syndrome at the Spring Pain Conference, April 28, in the Cayman Islands.

Dr. Sandra S. Hatch, the Ruth Levy Kempner Professor, and vice chair and director of clinical operations in the Department of Radiation Oncology; **Dr. Cheryl S. Watson**, professor in the Department of Human Biological Chemistry & Genetics and associate director for basic research in the Center for Interdisciplinary Research in Women's Health; and **Dr. Karin N. Westlund High**, professor in the Department of Anatomy & Neurosciences, were nominated by the UTMB School of Medicine to participate in the 2004-2005 Executive Leadership in Academic Medicine (ELAM) Program for Women.

Dr. John C. Jennings, professor in the Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology, recently was seated as president of the Texas Association of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. He also was elected vice chair of the Texas Section of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists in January, and was inaugurated as secretary-treasurer of the Galveston County Medical Society for 2004-2005.

Dr. Ellen More, professor of history of medicine in the Department of Preventive Medicine and Community Health, and professor of medical humanities, in the Institute for the Medical Humanities, received a fellowship for 2004-2005 from the National Endowment for the

Humanities (NEH) to pursue research on her next book, "Sexuality and American Society." She also was awarded a Presidential Faculty Development Leave, to begin at the conclusion of her fellowship in 2005, to study current approaches to sex education by the medical profession.

Invited Presentations

Dr. Elizabeth T. Anderson made an invited presentation, with Karen Brykczynski and Hiroyo Hatashita, at the 3rd International Multidisciplinary Health Care Conference, Department of Health Studies, University of South Africa, Johannesburg, March 3-5, 2004. Their topic was "A narrative cross-cultural study of survivors of wife abuse: Galveston, Texas, and Wakayama, Japan."

Dr. Regina Lederman, with associates W. Chan and C. Roberts-Gray, was invited to present a paper, "Family interaction regarding sexual risk behavior: Youth ages 12-14 years in social learning versus didactic parent-teen prevention intervention" at the annual meeting of the Society of Behavioral Medicine in Baltimore March 24-27.

Watson chaired a session entitled "Interactions of membrane steroid receptors with signaling partners" at the American Society for Cell Biology annual meeting in December in San Francisco, Calif. She also gave a talk in the session.

New Grants

G.D. Anderson, Obstetrics & Gynecology. UTMB WRHR Career Development Center of Excellence. National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. \$1,989,409/5 yrs.

Concepcion Diaz-Arrastia, Obstetrics & Gynecology. "The Natural History of HPV Infection in Aging Latinas." Baylor Chronic Disease Prevention and Control Research Center Subcontract/NCI \$50,000/1 yr.

Susan Rosenthal, Pediatrics. "Seroprevalence of HSV-2 Infection in Adolescents from School-Based

Health Clinics." GlaxoSmithKline Pharmaceuticals.

Karen D. Wagner, Psychiatry. "Treatment of early age mania (TEAM)." National Institute of Mental Health. \$432,689/1.5 yrs.

Recent Publications

Arai Y-CP, Ueda W and **Al-Chaer ED** Pre-anesthetic maternal separation increases pups' locomotor behavior during emergence from anesthesia in rats. *Acta Anaesthesiol Scand*, 2004; 48: 174-177.

Curran EM, Judy BM, Newton LG, Lubahn DB, Rottinghaus GE, MacDonald RS, Franklin C, and Estes DM. Dietary soy phytoestrogens and ER α signaling modulate interferon gamma production in response to bacterial infection. *Clinical and Experimental Immunology*, 2004; 135: 219-225.

Thota C, **Gangula PRR, Dong YL, Yallampalli C**. Changes in the expression of CRLR, RAMP₁, RAMP₂ and RAMP₃ in rat uterus during pregnancy, labor and by steroid hormone treatments. *Biol Reprod*. 2003; 69:1432-1437.

Gangula PRR, Thota C, Wimalawansa SJ, Bukoski RD, Yallampalli C. Mechanisms involved in calcitonin gene-related peptide-induced relaxation in pregnant rat uterine artery. *Biol Reprod*. 2003; 69:1635-1641.

Klein GL, Chen TC, Holick MF, Langman CB, Price H, Celis MM, Herndon DN. Synthesis of vitamin D in skin after burns, *The Lancet*, 363: 291-2, 2004; accompanied by commentary, P. 259. The publication resulted in an interview by Dr. Karen Johnson and appearance on KHOU-TV Channel 11 on the 5 p.m. news program, Wednesday, Feb. 25. The news item is posted on www.khou.com.

Lederman RP and Mian TS. Development of the Parent Adolescent Relationship Education (PARE) Program: A curriculum for the prevention of STDs and pregnancy in middle school youth. *Behavioral Medicine*, 2004; 29, 33-41.

From the Director's Desk

Continued from Page 1

Please join us in congratulating Monica and in encouraging Gayle and Shilla as they continue their important research in women's health.



Dr. Monica Longo

The first center scholar to receive an NIH grant also deserves a big pat on the back. Dr. Terumi Midoro-Horiuti, a 2003 seed grant recipient and Writing Effectiveness Group member, just received a K08 from the National Institute for Allergy and Infectious Disease for a three-year study: "Structural biology of cedar pollen allergy."

Yours in good health,

Abbey B. Berenson, M.D.

CIRWH Calendar

CIRWH Seminars

April

April 2, Jan Blalock, Ph.D., UT M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, "Evaluating a mood management smoking cessation intervention for pregnant smokers"

May

May 7, Shilla Chakrabarty, Ph.D., "Effect of performance enhancing drugs on the maturation of the reproductive axis in females," and Gayle Weaver, Ph.D., "Coping Well with Systemic Lupus Erythematosus: Is the Health Care System a Help or Hindrance?—The Boston Group." They are the first CIRWH Seed Grant recipients.

Women's Health Conferences

April

April 14–16, Fourth National Asthma Conference, Atlanta

May

May 3–6, 2004 Newborn Screening and Genetic Testing Symposium, Atlanta

May 11–14, CDC Diabetes Translation Conference, Chicago

May 25–28, National Sexual Violence Prevention Conference, Los Angeles

July

July 25–29, The Second Conference on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities, Washington, D.C.

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