



CHS telephone interviews to continue

Although we are no longer requesting that you visit the clinic on a regular basis, it is still important for us to stay in contact with you.

We will be calling you every six months to ask some questions about your general health and to find out if your cardiovascular health has changed in any way. These telephone interviews will be similar to previous ones.

If you are hospitalized or become ill, please call to let us know. The phone number of your clinic is (301) 733-8860.

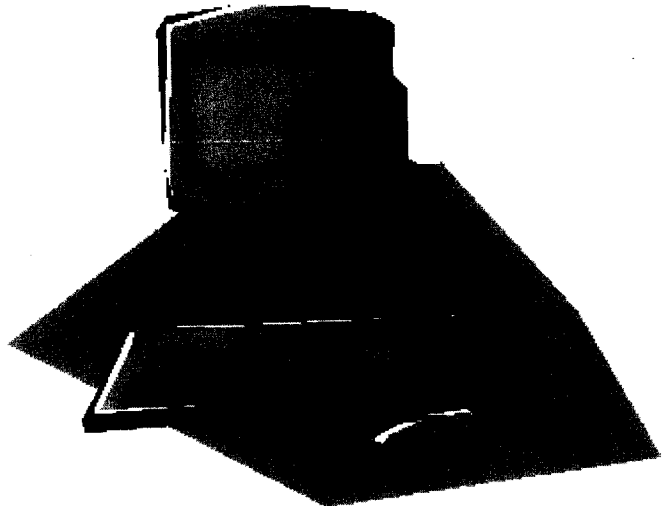
We will contact some participants to find out if they'd like to come into the clinic for specific tests or other studies. We hope you'll consider participating.

Thank you so much for your participation in CHS!

CHS web site provides information and resources

CHS has a web site that you can access from a computer with an Internet connection. Some of the resources you will find on the web site are bibliographies of all our published papers, background information about CHS, links to other related web sites, and back issues of this newsletter.

If you don't have a computer, try visiting your local public library. Many libraries have computers that are available to the public.



A Letter to CHS Participants

Linda Fried, MD, MPH, Principal Investigator

Congratulations to all of us. Amazingly, it is our collective 10th anniversary. The Cardiovascular Health Study (CHS) was started in 1989 because of the pressing need to understand the causes of heart disease and stroke in older adults, and what effective prevention of these diseases needs to involve.

Prior to this study, there was some information that suggested that the approaches to preventing heart disease and stroke might need to be different for older adults than for young and middle-aged persons.

Since most heart disease and stroke occurs as people become older than 60, knowing how to prevent these diseases for older adults is extremely important for our nation's health and the health of the next generations.

CHS is now succeeding in providing this information — with your help. I would like to emphasize your help because each participant in CHS has generously contributed information about themselves, and each person's information is critical to our answers.

Your participation in CHS has allowed us to make important research discoveries. We are, together, defining which older adults are at risk of disease. Moreover, we are beginning to understand the risk factors at older ages and ways to identify people who would benefit from prevention.

In particular, the study has shown:

- that high cholesterol is not always bad and that we need to understand better which older adults need to be treated;
- new risk factors that may be good avenues for preventing cardiovascular diseases, such as inflammation;
- that people who do not have atherosclerosis (measured by the ultrasound exam of the carotid arteries in your neck) are unlikely to develop heart attacks or strokes;
- that there is a high frequency of silent strokes (as indicated by brain scans) and we need to understand how to prevent them;
- that both heart attacks and stroke are serious contributors to loss of independence with aging, and effective prevention will make a difference in helping maintain independence.

The results from the current examination will be analyzed over the next few years, and will provide long-awaited information to complete the answers in the areas above. We will let you know of the important findings as they are identified. In the meantime, we have been offered several ways to stay in touch.

The National Heart Lung and Blood Institute of the National Institutes of Health sees the great success of this study and also the questions that remain to be answered. To complete these answers, they have provided funding for us to call you twice a year to find out how you are doing, and how your health is. We hope you will continue to be part of the study in this way.

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**CHS staff at JHU:**

First row (from left to right): Fae Toms, Melissa Minotti, Ravi Mitruka, Doris Haines, Joyce Chabot. Second row (from left to right): Kathy Reid, Joyce Flynn, Patricia Crowley, Trudy Littenberg, John Grissinger, Carol Christman, Anne Martz, Pat Smith.

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In addition, we may be able to offer additional opportunities to make public health contributions through new studies of methods to improve memory and healthy aging. We will stay in touch and let you know about these opportunities as they arise. We look forward to continued contact by phone and at our picnics, and possibly an examination, and hope you will join us.

You are making a substantial contribution

to the health of our nation by participating in this study. There is no other study of older adults that has the length of follow-up on individuals, starting with yourself. It is the ability to understand changes in health over time that provides great power to the findings from CHS.

We greatly hope that you will continue to participate and to increase the value of the findings from this study. We look forward to being in touch.

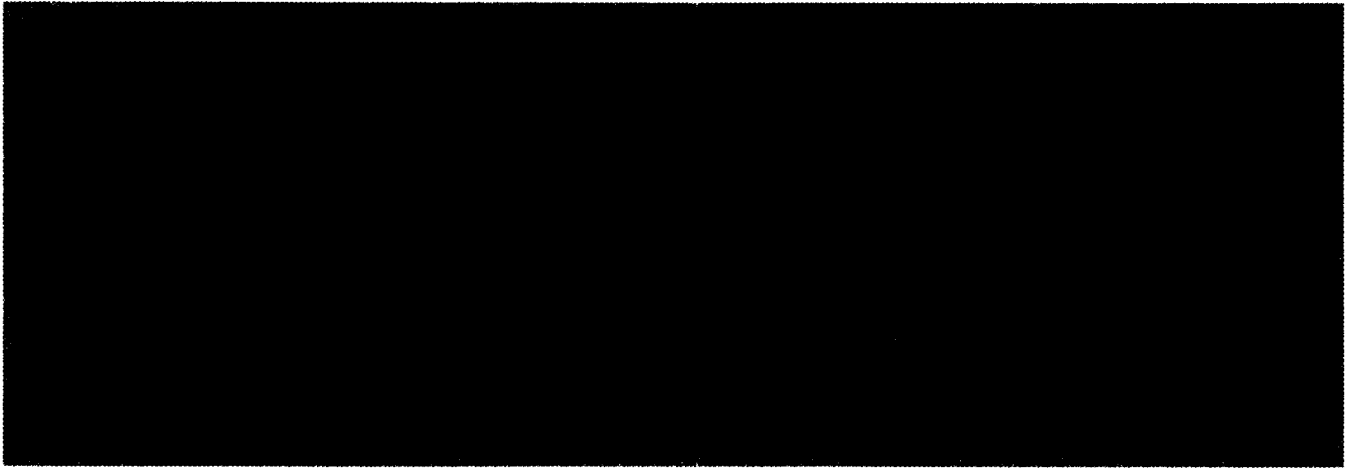
With many thanks, and best regards,

Linda P. Fried, M.D., M.P.H.
Principal Investigator

A reminder to stay in touch

Please call us if you move or if you have to go to a hospital or nursing home for any reason. You are always welcome to call us collect at (301) 733-8860 or write to us at:

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5 Public Square
Professional Arts Building
Hagerstown, Maryland 21740



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