

The WIHS Woman



The Connie Wofsy Women's HIV Study

Changes for Visit 33

By Claudia Ponath, Field Manager

It's hard to believe that another six months have come and gone; it seems like we just started visit 32 and here I am already writing about visit 33. Heneliaka's daughter just celebrated Trinity's first birthday, another reminder how quickly time has passed. On October 1st we start visit 33 and below are some of the things you can expect for your next WIHS visit.

What's new?

We are starting a new sub-study called the Fibroscan study and it consists of an ultrasound scan of your liver to check for stiffness (also called "Fibrosis"). You have to come to Moffitt Hospital on Parnassus in San Francisco for the study visit and the reimbursement is \$40. Alyson, our new sub study coordinator, will be coordinating this study (see the article on page 4 introducing Alyson), and she will determine if you're eligible. A more detailed article by Dr. Phyllis Tien appears on page 3 of this issue.

What's back?

We will ask you some questions about your family medical history. These questions were last asked at visit 16 and we want to capture any changes that have happened since then.

What's continuing?

Please **bring your medications in their original bottles, your medi-set, or a list of the medications you have taken since your last visit to your study visit. For those of you on HIV meds, we'll also need the dose information.** Bringing this information to your interview is incredibly helpful, and it will make your interview go more smoothly. And if you have been bringing this information, please continue to bring it. Both you and your interviewer will be glad you did.

Please **fast (don't eat or drink anything, except water, for at least 8 hours)** before your WIHS visit 33. This is crucial for getting an accurate test result for your cholesterol, lipids, and glu-

(Continued on page 2)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Changes for Visit 33	page 1
Fat, Metabolism, and Liver Health. The Fibroscan Study	page 3
Introducing Alyson Holsclaw	Page 4
CAB Corner - Summer Meeting	page 4
Introducing Tara Ilsley	page 5
Diet & Nutrition	page 5
In Memory of Claire Borkert	page 6

(Continued from page 1)

cose. These blood tests are important markers for diseases that affect women, including diabetes, heart disease, and high blood pressure. So please try to fast 8 hours before your next core WIHS visit.

For those of you taking HIV medications, we will continue to ask your permission to cut a small **hair sample** (about 20 strands), as we have done at previous visits. These hair samples are being tested for levels of HIV medications. So far, we have looked at levels of Lopinavir and Reyataz and found that levels of those drugs in hair are a very strong predictor of doing well on treatment. We are in the middle of writing another grant to do more research on those hair samples.

The **neuro-cognitive component** of the WIHS will continue during visit 33. So far almost 75% of all WIHS participants have completed this series of tests, and we anticipate that the rest will complete this component during visit 33. If you are in the group that hasn't done it yet, it consists of a number of mental tasks. The tasks are administered verbally, using paper and pencil, and using a pegboard. You will be asked to read words, recognize shapes, solve problems, memorize things and engage in other mental tasks. Some of the tasks will be familiar from previous WIHS visits and some will be new. The purpose of this new component is to look at cognition – that is mental processes such as memory and learning. This new component takes about an hour, and we reimburse you an additional \$20 for your time and effort to complete it. If you are among the many participants that have already completed this component, thank you very much.

The **PK study** will continue during visit 33 and women who are on Isentress (Raltegravir) are eligible to participate, if they haven't already.

The PK study looks at the different factors that influence how HIV drugs are metabolized in women. For this study, eligible participants bring their medication to the hospital. They have their blood drawn once before they take their dose and then 11 times after they take their dose over the course of 12 hours. It takes place at the main UC hospital on Parnassus in San Francisco. The reimbursement is \$150 and Heneliaka coordinates this study.

The **Pulmonary Study** will continue during visit 33 and it consists of a blood draw, interview, a lung function test and a chest CT scan. All procedures take place at the UCSF Mount Zion campus in San Francisco. The study visit takes about 3 hours, and you will be reimbursed \$60. Heneliaka is coordinating this study and your WIHS study interviewer will determine if you are eligible. Please be patient – we have many more women who are eligible than we have slots available to schedule.

Abbreviated visits will continue for women who are unable to have a full core visit. If you do have an abbreviated visit, we will now ask you a few short questions about pregnancies.

For women undergoing colposcopy, we will continue to ask if you want to **donate tissue** to the AIDS and Cancer Specimen Resource (ACSR). Women do not need to have cancer or HIV to enroll in this sub-study. Women who are eligible and wish to donate tissue to the bank will have an extra biopsy, oral rinse, and one tube of blood collected for this study at the time of their colposcopy examination. We thank you for your donations to this study!

What's gone?

The examination of your feet and ankle reflexes is on break for this visit, as are the breast and

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

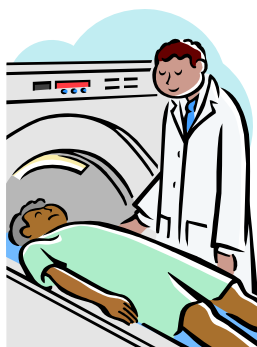
uterine exams. These will be back for the next visit.

The **Metabolic Study** is complete for now. Thanks to all the women who participated and came to the UCSF Moffitt Hospital for a glucose tolerance test and a DEXA scan, and to those who also came in for an MRI, either to Mount Zion or to Mission Bay. We are getting very important data from this study and will update you on the results in a future newsletter. We hope to have another round of Metabolic Study follow-ups in about 2 years time.

Also gone are the questions about Nicotine dependence (we still ask the usual smoking questions) and the swine flu questions (we still ask about the regular flu questions).

In conclusion

Your individual contribution to this very important study is extremely valuable and we really and truly appreciate your continued dedication to this research project. We will continue to make your study visits as pleasant as possible and look forward to seeing you at your next WIHS visit, sub-study visit, or CAB meeting.



Fat, Metabolism, and Liver Health: The Fibroscan Study

Phyllis C. Tien, MD

This fall the WIHS will be starting a new study to understand how body fat and metabolic changes (including diabetes) might affect liver health. Too much alcohol and having hepatitis B or C infections are known to affect liver health. In recent years, obesity and the metabolic changes that result from obesity have also been identified as risk factors that affect liver health. Because HIV infection can cause changes in body fat and metabolism, it is important to understand how these changes will affect liver health in HIV-infected women.

An exciting part of this study is that we will be using a new ultrasound-based technique called the Fibroscan to measure scarring (or fibrosis) in your liver. The Fibroscan has been used in Europe for many years and is starting to be more widely studied in the United States. Normally, liver scarring is measured through a liver biopsy, which requires that a needle be stuck into your liver to get some liver tissue. With the Fibroscan, you will have an ultrasound probe placed over the skin that overlies the liver. You will lie flat on your back during the procedure and there will be a painless tapping feeling while the probe is over the liver and the measurements are being taken. The entire procedure will take about 15 minutes.

The Fibroscan Study will be open to most WIHS women including those with and without hepatitis C infection. Women who are pregnant, are on dialysis for kidney failure, are taking hepatitis C treatment, have a body mass index over 35 or are receiving chemotherapy for cancer will be excluded from the study. In

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

addition to understanding how changes in body fat and metabolism might affect liver health, this study will also provide important data regarding the use of Fibroscan to measure liver scarring in women in the United States.

Let Me Introduce Myself

by Alyson Holsclaw

I'm excited to be a new staff member for WIHS at UCSF. I have a Masters in Psychology from New York University. Prior to joining WIHS, I worked on a research project at the Columbia University School of Social Work that developed interventions for empowering women and serodiscordant couples to protect their health and reduce their risk for HIV and sexually transmitted infections. I live in the East Bay with my partner, John, and my cats, Chicken and Bean. I enjoy photography and music, and, as a recent transplant to the Bay Area from New York City, I love exploring my new home. I look forward to meeting and working with the amazing WIHS women!



food, good people, and a good speaker, the outcome is sure to be good.

For our August CAB meeting we invited Dr. Kathleen Clanon to answer our health related questions. Not surprisingly, there were several questions about menopause and HIV. There were also questions about diet and weight, vitamins, and even sex. Dr. Clanon covered them all. Below are brief summaries of we discussed:

1). MENOPAUSE. For women that are considering hormone replacement therapy, Dr. Clanon suggested taking it only as a final alternative and treatment should only be given to women at low risk of complications. Since we are all different, it is important to discuss this decision with your primary care provider.

2). VITAMINS. It is safe to take vitamins within 6 months after the expiration date; however, the potency of the vitamin will start to decline.

3). HIV and HERBS. If you would like to take herbs, then speak to a professional first. Some herbs, such as St. John's Wart, negatively interact with prescription medicines.

The key point to remember is always ask your doctor or health care professional before making any dietary or supplemental changes.

CAB CORNER



Summer CAB Meeting

By: Heneliaka Jones and Barbara Garcia

Hello Ladies, I hope you had a wonderful summer. Time flies when you're having FUN and fun is a word to describe our WIHS summer CAB meeting. When you bring together good

After our discussion, we took a moment to remember Dr. Claire Borkert - a pioneer in the field of women and HIV. There was a time when very little was known about HIV and few physicians were interested in helping HIV-infected women. So a special THANKS to Drs. Borkert and Clanon and other local medical pioneers who helped lead the way when the path was not well marked.

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

Toward the end of our meeting, our NCAB representative Barbara Garcia shared information she learned at the WIHS Executive Committee Meeting in May. Another announcement was made by Tara Ilsley, one of our new sub study coordinators, about enrollment in the study of immune cells and the cervix.

All in all we had a good meeting and a good time and left with new information. Stay tuned for details about our next CAB meeting. You can also e-mail Heneliaka Jones at heneliaka.jones@ucsf.edu or Barbara Garcia at birdgarcia@sbcglobal.net, with any questions or ideas!

Introducing Tara Ilsley

Hello! My name is Tara Ilsley, I am the new Research Assistant working with Jane on the new sub studies. I have heard many wonderful things about all of you and I look forward to meeting you. I am originally from the East Coast and I am happy to now call the Bay Area home. I previously taught HIV education in rural villages in Malawi, Africa and on the northern coast of Honduras. I have worked in East Oakland doing HIV Testing and counseling and in North Carolina. When I'm not at work I enjoy riding my bike, cooking, and dancing. I look forward to seeing you around!

Diet & Nutrition

Fruit & Veggies



Diet and Depression

Diet can affect your mood. Diets rich in whole foods (such as fruits and vegetables) have been shown to promote positive moods. Eating a balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole

grains, and lean protein gives your body the nutrients and energy it needs to function optimally. Can this same diet attribute to your mood?

When you're struggling with depressive symptoms, maintaining good eating habits may be difficult, but studies are showing that certain eating patterns may actually make you feel *better* emotionally. Regardless of the studies, **eating a balanced diet of whole, nutritious foods may improve your mood for several reasons:**

- You'll have more energy because you won't be eating empty-calorie foods
- Your body will get the nutrients it needs to run most optimally
- Over time, eating a balanced diet that's low in fat and saturated fat can lead to weight maintenance/loss
- You won't feel guilty when you eat nutritious, whole foods

There are so many physical and mental benefits to eating a diet rich in whole foods.



A recent study published in the *British Journal of Psychiatry* reported that individuals eating a diet rich in whole foods were less likely to report feelings of depression than those who ate lots of desserts, fried foods, processed meats, refined grains and high-fat dairy products. After five (5) years, the study determined that a processed food dietary eating pattern is a risk factor for depression, whereas a whole food eating pattern is a protective measure for depression.

Another article published in the *European Journal of Clinical Nutrition* found that a diet with high intakes of fruits, vegetables, and soy products was associated with fewer depressive

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

symptoms. The study contributed these results to a cumulative effort of the antioxidants in fruits and vegetables as well as the omega-3 fatty acids in fish.

We've all turned to food after a bad day but instead of reaching for whatever seems soothing, eat food that may actually lift your spirits! A diet that promotes a healthy lifestyle is going to promote a positive outlook on life too! Your clothes are going to fit better, you'll have more energy, and you won't feel guilty about what you're eating.

Leading a healthy lifestyle equipped with a healthy diet (rich in fruits and vegetables) and being physically active is just another aspect of your life you can be proud of! So while more studies need to be done to determine if it is the food itself that enhances your mood or the results of a certain eating pattern, we do know a healthy diet has many benefits to offer!

Taken from the following website: <http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org>



In Memory of Claire Borkert, MD

Claire Diane Borkert, a prominent Bay Area AIDS physician, died peacefully at age 59 in her home in El Granada, California, on June 24, from cancer. A gifted doctor and natural conciliator, she devoted her professional life to the service of others, first as a social worker and then as an Internal Medicine physician. For the last 18 years, she served as the medical co-



director of the East Bay AIDS Center (EBAC) at Alta Bates Summit Medical Center, where she was also on the medical staff. Claire was born in Memphis, Tennessee, the middle of five daughters. She obtained her undergraduate degree at Memphis State University and her Masters in Social Work from University of Louisville, and then spent her early career as a social worker in Tennessee and Arizona. She also lived in San Diego and San Francisco before returning to Memphis, where she completed her medical degree at the University of Tennessee in 1988. Claire did medical rotations in Tennessee, Mississippi and Alaska before completing her residency at Highland General Hospital in Oakland, California. She subsequently worked at the Over 60 and the Native American Health Centers, and Kaiser and Highland Hospitals in Oakland before joining EBAC. Claire helped develop and obtain funding for programs to advance HIV care, and actively participated in international AIDS conferences and research forums. She started and ran EBAC's Women's HIV Program which now serves the largest group of women living with HIV in California. She served on the Board of Directors of the Family Care Network (a care consortium for women and youth affected by HIV) and Women Organized to Respond to Life-Threatening Diseases (WORLD). She was an avid dancer, sailor, kayaker, hiker, and craftsperson who made glass and wirework jewelry. Claire was known to her many friends, relatives, and patients as exceptionally warm and generous. Donations in Claire's memory may be sent to WORLD or KIVA.

Published in Inside Bay Area from June 26 to June 28, 2010





Female Volunteers Needed !

You can help UCSF researchers learn about how menopause affects immune cells in the cervix.

You may be eligible if:

- You are generally healthy
 - You are HIV negative
 - You are HIV positive, and you are not taking anti-HIV medicines
 - You are age 18 - 40 and have regular periods
- OR***
- You are at least 50 and have not had a period for at least a year

Participants will have 2 or 3 visits at Mount Zion Hospital and will be reimbursed up to \$70, plus transportation.

Please call Tara for more information: 415-353-9872





Attention All POSITIVE Women!



Scientists have recently learned that immune cells in the intestines and lining the uterus are more affected by HIV than we previously knew.

You can help UCSF researchers learn more about this important development.

You may be eligible if:

- You are HIV positive
- You are 18 - 44 years old
- You have regular menstrual cycles
- You are not pregnant or breastfeeding
- You are not planning to become pregnant soon
- You are not using an IUD, birth control pills, or hormones

Participants will have 3 or 4 visits at Mt. Zion Hospital in San Francisco and will be reimbursed up to \$165 plus transportation reimbursement.

**Please call Jane at 415-353-9767
or toll free at 866-476-5109**