



WOMEN'S
HEALTH
INITIATIVE

2024-2025

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WOMEN'S
HEALTH
INITIATIVE

EXTENSION STUDY

WHI MATTERS

A PUBLICATION OF THE WOMEN'S HEALTH INITIATIVE | 2024-2025

Center Information

Dr. Garnet Anderson is the Principal Investigator of the WHI Clinical Coordinating Center and you may have seen her name on our communications and/or throughout the WHI Participant Webinar Series. She recently said in a lecture series:

"The idea of legacy really resonated with women. They were doing something for their daughters and granddaughters. We were lucky it was an altruistic approach, because we only had \$1 per person per year for any incentive, which doesn't go very far. We want to thank you at this time to continuing to be altruistic participants of WHI who we hope will benefit future generations, including your children and grandchildren."

There has recently been a great deal of news and social media coverage regarding WHI results, which are not often accurate — please do reach out to us if you ever have questions.

Stay in touch

Please call your Regional Center if your address or phone number changes.

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WHI COORDINATING CENTER

Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center, Seattle, WA (message line):
(800) 218-8415

E-mail address: participant@whi.org

Long Life Study 2 Updates

In 2012-2013, the Women's Health Initiative (WHI) launched the Long Life Study (LLS), a home visit protocol in nearly 8000 WHI participants designed to revisit key elements of the original WHI physical exams and blood collections and add a few new measurements.. Fast forward to 2022-2024, and the Long Life Study 2 (LLS2) was approved to follow up on the success of LLS. This follow-up study aimed to replicate the LLS activities with all surviving members who consented to a second home visit.

LLS2 expanded its reach to include women from the Life and Longevity After Cancer (LILAC) sub-study, as well as additional WHI participants who weren't part of the original LLS. During these home visits, participants underwent comprehensive physical exams, including collecting physical measurements, blood pressure and pulse checks, and conducting functional status assessments. A fasting blood draw was also administered. Impressively, 5,905 participants completed these home visits, with a remarkable 93% success rate for blood draws.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all participants who contributed to this vital research. The data collected will continue to advance health research into chronic disease and longevity plus provide integral information for several WHI ancillary studies linked to the LLS2, such as the Women's Health Initiative Strong and Healthy (WHISH) trial (led by Charles Kooperberg, Marcia Stefanick, and Andrea LaCroix), the LILAC cancer survivorship cohort (led by Drs Garnet Anderson, Bette Caan, and Electra Paskett), Muscle mass in the Life and Longevity After Cancer (LILAC) (MsLILAC; led by Dr Hailey Banack), Objective Physical Activity and Cardiovascular Health 2 (OPACH2; led by Drs An`drea LaCroix and Michael LaMonte), and Vision Impairment Project (VIP), an eye exam study (led by Dr Emily Gower). These studies will leverage the in-person visits to generate new insights into aging and related themes.

WHI Webinar Announcement



Thank you to those who have watched the live or recorded Participant Webinars in 2025.

The remaining webinar in the 2025 series will occur on October 15th, 2025 at 11am PT/1pm CT/2pm ET. Tune in and learn more about WHI research, hear from experts, and ask questions! You can join via the Zoom link or by calling a toll-free number to listen which will be available on the website below about one week before the scheduled webinar.

All webinars will be recorded and available to view on our website. Visit whi.org/ppt/pptwebinar for more details. For questions call **1-800-218-8415**.

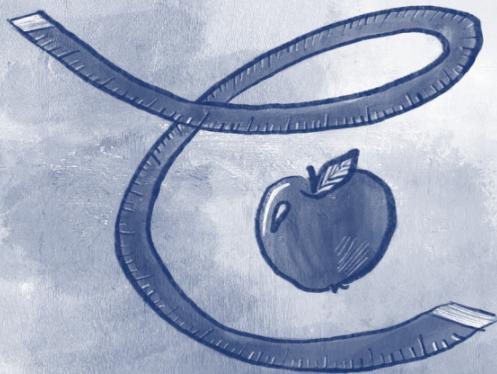
Focus on Findings

Intentional Weight Loss, Waist Circumference Reduction, and Mortality Risk Among Postmenopausal Women

Can losing a few inches off your waist help you live longer?

For postmenopausal women, the answer may be yes if it is intentional. In a study that followed nearly 59,000 women aged 50 to 79 for over 18 years, researchers found that women who lost weight on purpose and had measured reductions in their waist size had a lower risk of dying from any cause, including cancer and heart disease. However, simply losing weight without shrinking the waist was only linked to a lower risk of heart disease. The story changed when weight loss was unintentional. Women who lost weight or waist size without trying—often a sign of underlying illness—faced a higher risk of death. This showed that not all weight loss was equal. The most beneficial kind of weight loss is intentional, targeted, and health-focused. For older women, this means adopting habits like balanced eating and regular exercise, especially strength training, to preserve muscle. Waist size, more than weight alone, may be a better indicator of health outcomes. If your goal is to improve your health span, focus on purposeful changes that support a healthier waistline.

Online link to article: rebrand.ly/bb69x26



The Relationship Between Cardiometabolic Abnormalities and Mortality in the Women's Health Initiative: A Comparison of Associations Among Women with Cancer to Women without Cancer

How does your cardiometabolic health affect how long you live — does this change after a cancer diagnosis?

Our WHI investigators set out to answer that question by looking at how cardiometabolic issues such as high blood pressure, diabetes, high cholesterol, and abdominal obesity impact mortality in postmenopausal women, both with and without cancer. Researchers followed over 43,000 women, including those with early-stage obesity-related cancers like breast and colorectal cancer, and compared them to women without cancer. They found that having more cardiometabolic abnormalities increased the risk of death for everyone—but surprisingly, the risk was even higher in women without cancer. For women with cancer, these health issues still mattered, especially for heart-related deaths, but the link to overall mortality was weaker. One possible reason? Cancer patients may receive more regular medical care, leading to better management of these conditions.

The takeaway is clear: managing heart and metabolic health is crucial for all older women, not just cancer survivors. Whether or not you've had cancer, keeping blood pressure, blood sugar, cholesterol, and waist size in check can make a real difference in how long and how well you live.

Online link to article: rebrand.ly/r4pph2r

Menopausal Hormone Therapy and Ovarian and Endometrial Cancers: Long-Term Follow-Up of the Women's Health Initiative Randomized Trials

Hormone therapy can ease menopause symptoms — but what are the long-term effects on cancer risk?

We followed our participants, over 27,000 postmenopausal women, for up to 20 years to explore how different hormone therapy regimens affect the risk of ovarian and endometrial cancers. Researchers compared two common treatments: estrogen alone and a combination of estrogen and progestin.

The results showed that women who took estrogen alone had more than double the risk of developing ovarian cancer and were also more likely to die from it, compared to those who took a placebo.

In contrast, the combination therapy did not increase ovarian cancer risk and actually reduced the risk of endometrial cancer. These findings show that the type of hormone therapy matters—and that estrogen alone may carry more risk for certain cancers. While hormone therapy can be helpful for managing menopausal symptoms, this study highlights the importance of understanding the potential risks. Women and their



healthcare providers can use this information to make more informed decisions, weighing the benefits of symptom relief against the possible impact on cancer risk over time. Personalized care and regular follow-up remain key to safe and effective treatment.

Online link to article: rebrand.ly/5pnqhb

Identifying the Relation Between Food Groups and Biological Ageing: A Data-Driven Approach

Can what you eat influence how fast you age?

This study explored that question by analyzing the diets and biological aging patterns of nearly 4,000 postmenopausal women. Researchers used a cutting-edge tool called an epigenetic clock, which estimates biological age based on DNA changes, to see how different foods might speed up or slow down aging.

Using a data-driven method called Copula Graphical Modeling, they found that certain foods were linked to faster aging—like eggs, organ meats, sausages, cheese, legumes, starchy vegetables, added sugar, and lunch meats. On the other hand, foods like peaches, poultry, nuts, and even some fats and oils were associated with slower aging.

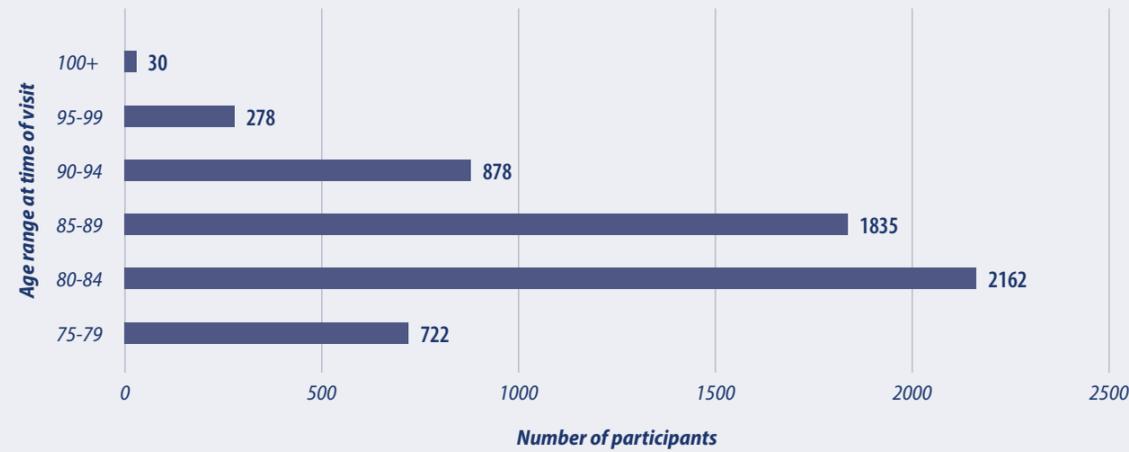
These findings remained consistent even when accounting for factors like body weight, physical activity, and health conditions. While the study doesn't prove that eating certain foods causes slower aging, it offers a fresh look at how everyday food choices might influence the aging process at a biological level. For postmenopausal women, this research highlights the potential power of diet in supporting healthier aging. It also opens the door for future studies to explore how specific foods might help extend not just lifespan, but health span—the number of years we live in good health.

Online link to article: rebrand.ly/cay3aku

General Information

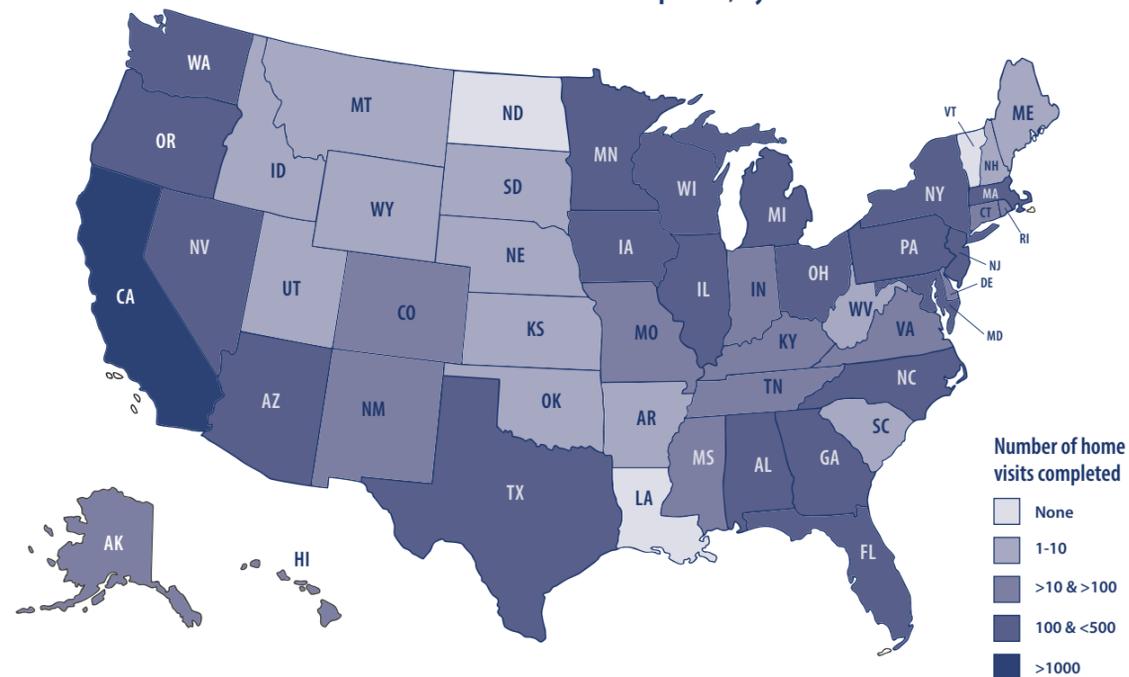
Below are two graphs providing some demographic information about the LLS2 participants.

Age distribution of LLS2 participants (5905 total)



*the majority of LLS2 participants were in their 80s at the time of study enrollment

Number of home visits completed, by state

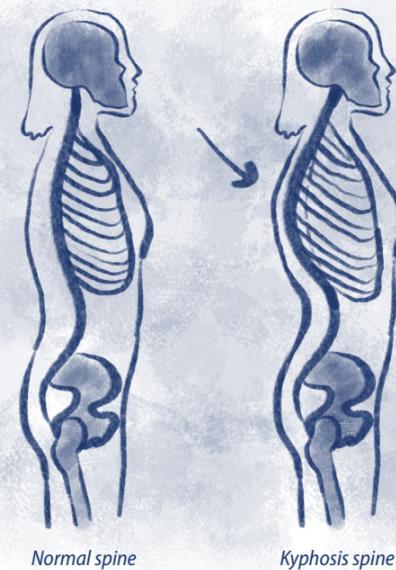


*study participants were located in 47 out of 50 states

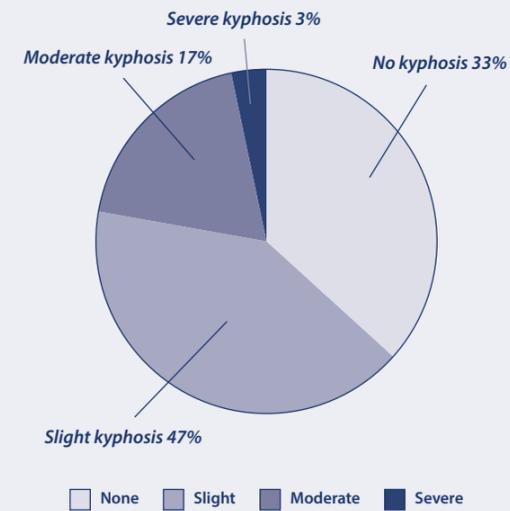
Physical Function Measurements

What is kyphosis?

Kyphosis is a condition where the spine in the upper back has an excessive outward curve, making a person appear to have a hunched or rounded back. This is a new measure collected in WHI.



Percent kyphosis

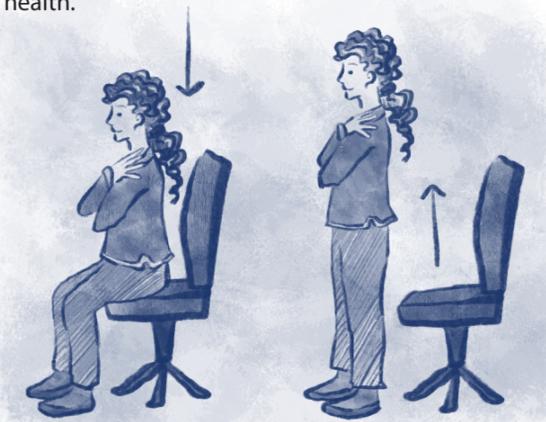


Functional Status

MEASURE	AVERAGE FOR LLS2 PPTS
Grip strength (right-hand)	13.7kg
Repeated chair stands (#stands/sec)	.37 stands per second
Walking pace	.58 meters/sec

What is grip strength?

Grip strength refers to the force exerted by your hand when you grasp or hold onto something. It's a measure of how strong your hand muscles are and is often used to assess overall muscle strength and health. Good grip strength is important for everyday activities like opening jars, carrying groceries, and even shaking hands. It can also be an indicator of your overall physical fitness and health.



What is the repeated chair stand test?

The **repeated chair stand test** is used to measure lower body strength and endurance. **Walking pace** is used to assess functional mobility. Both the repeated chair stand and walking pace can be used to monitor physical fitness and can be a good indicator of overall health and fall risk.

Please check with your personal health care team if you have questions about these physical measurements.



Q&A: WHI Funding Update – What You Need to Know

Q: What is the latest news about WHI funding?

A: As of May 6th, 2025, we are pleased to share that WHI will be allowed to continue. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) acquisitions officer confirmed that the previous decision not to renew our funding has been rescinded.

Q: What are the broader implications of this funding news?

A: While we are relieved and grateful that WHI will continue, we remain deeply aware that many other important scientific projects have been affected by recent, devastating budget cuts. Our thoughts are with our colleagues and study participants across the research community.

Q: If WHI funding was cut, would it affect my participation in a current WHI Ancillary Study?

A: WHI Ancillary Studies are funded separately from the WHI contract. If the WHI contract's funding was impacted, it would not affect the funding of current Ancillary Studies.

Q: If WHI funding was to end in the future, how would it affect future Ancillary Studies?

A: If WHI funding were to cease in the future, it would greatly reduce access to WHI's unparalleled **high-quality women's health dataset and biorepository**, and thus opportunities for **new discoveries** and **future scientific advancements**. Those future scientific advancements include the ability to support future Ancillary Studies.

Talking Points: Why WHI Matters

As a valued WHI participant, your continued involvement is making a lasting difference in women's health. If friends, family, or others ask you about WHI, here are some key points you can share:

What is WHI?

The Women's Health Initiative (WHI) is a landmark research study that began in the 1990s to improve our understanding of major health issues affecting postmenopausal women. It's one of the largest and longest-running studies of its kind.

What makes WHI unique?

Over 42,000 women across the U.S. are still actively involved in WHI. This includes nearly 28,000 in their 80s, over 13,000 in their 90s, and over 550 in their 100s. Their ongoing participation helps researchers study aging, chronic disease, and cognitive health in ways no other study can.

Why should funding continue?

The NIH made a tremendous investment in WHI over the years. Ending the study would mean not only walking away from decades of valuable data, and but also from the potential to discover even more that could benefit future generations.

What's the big picture?

WHI reminds us that high-quality science is essential for shaping the clinical care and policies that affect women's lives. Thanks to you and your fellow participants, WHI continues to lead the way in influencing these groundbreaking outcomes.

WHI 2025 Online Resources

About WHI: Learn more about the Women's Health Initiative (WHI), one of the largest women's health research projects ever undertaken in the United States. Discover its mission, objectives, and the groundbreaking studies conducted to improve women's health. Please visit [whi.org/about-whi](https://www.whi.org/about-whi) to learn more about WHI.

WHI News Archive: Stay up to date with the latest news and posts from the Women's Health Initiative. From research breakthroughs to upcoming events, this section keeps participants informed about the study's progress and its impact on women's health. Please visit [whi.org/news/archive/fp](https://www.whi.org/news/archive/fp) to learn more about WHI News Archive.

WHI Matters Newsletters (2011-2024): Delve into the annual WHI Matters Newsletters spanning from 2011 to

2024. These newsletters offer study updates, participant profiles, and health and other information of interest to women. WHI Matters is provided in both English and Spanish (estos boletines también están disponibles en español). Please visit [whi.org/whimatters](https://www.whi.org/whimatters) to read the WHI Matters Newsletters.

Participant Webinar Series: Explore our archive of recorded webinars designed specifically for WHI participants. These informative sessions feature expert speakers discussing various aspects of WHI research, sharing valuable insights, and addressing participant questions. Tune in to deepen your understanding of women's health and the ongoing efforts of the WHI study. Please visit [whi.org/ppt/pptwebinar](https://www.whi.org/ppt/pptwebinar) to find the latest link to the upcoming webinar and to watch previously recorded webinars.

WHI Healthy Habits Bingo

How to Play

Mark off a square each time you complete a healthy habit. Try to complete a full row, column, or diagonal in one week. Or challenge yourself to fill the whole card! If you complete the whole Bingo card and want to receive a shout out during our next Participant Webinar, please email us at info@whi.org.



Ate a fruit or vegetable at every meal in one day	Took a walk (10+ minutes)	Practiced deep breathing or meditation	Read a WHI newsletter or watched a participant webinar	Drank 6-8 glasses of water
Stretched for 5+ minutes	Called or texted a friend	Took a break from screens	Tried a new healthy recipe	Got 7-9 hours of sleep
Wrote down 3 things you're grateful for	Did a puzzle or brain game	ADD YOUR OWN GOAL _____ _____	Made a doctor's appointment or checked an online health portal	Ate a fiber rich food
Limited processed sugar for the day	Spent time outside	Did a balance or strength training activity	Listened to music that made you feel good	Read or listened to a book
Took medications and/or vitamins on time	Did something creative (craft, draw, journal, etc.)	Laughed or smiled today	Planned meals or snacks	Learned something new