



From Our Family to Yours: Dynamics of the JHS Family

Lavon Young

The JHS staff and participants from Hinds, Madison, and Rankin Counties make up a family unit teaming up for a common purpose. We have the responsibility to each other to influence the future improvement of our community's health status. At times, we may experience life-changing personal experiences that abruptly disrupt the normal flow of activities, attitudes, and behaviors. The psychological and mental anguish that accompany such changes cause some family members to reassess priorities. Situations that were once of primary importance lose their significance regardless of how meaningful they started off being. The cohesiveness and strength of the family unit will assist all of us in remaining focused when negative events might influence us to stray from our intentions. Hopefully, we can make sound decisions

steeped in meaningful well established values and common sense and not through the emotions of the moment.

As Exam 3 comes to a close, we must remember the promises we made to ourselves to complete the journey together as a family. Although some may have issues with transportation or childcare, which could reduce the ability to freely participate, the JHS will assist family members in overcoming those challenges. If the obstacles relate to other personal, physical or psychological issues, the JHS family stands ready to provide support that is available to ensure fulfillment of the commitments. We must not allow the daily demands and struggles of life to derail our contributions to history and the overall improvement of health status for each other.

Lay Summary: Fatty Liver, Belly Fat High Cholesterol, High Blood Pressure and Diabetes: The Jackson Heart Study

Jiankang Liu, Caroline S. Fox, DeMarc Hickson, Aurelian Bidulescu, J. Jeffery Carr, Herman A. Taylor, Jr. Published in *Arteriosclerosis Thrombosis Vascular and Biology* 2011;31:00-00. © 2011 American Heart Association, Inc.

The epidemic of obesity affects a large number of African Americans. It is interesting that studies have consistently shown that African Americans have less fatty liver and belly fat, also called Visceral Adipose Tissue (VAT), even though they also have higher rates of insulin resistance (or decreased ability of the body to process sugars), elevated lipids or fats in the blood, high blood pressure and type 2 diabetes (the more common type among adults). This finding suggests that either the associations of fatty liver or belly fat with insulin resistance, abnormal fats in the blood, high blood pressure and diabetes vary across different ethnic groups or higher rates of these disorders in African Americans are due to factors above and beyond fatty liver and belly fat.

The goal of this study was to examine whether fatty liver and belly fat are jointly associated with abnormalities in insulin resistance, elevated levels of fats in the blood, high blood pressure and diabetes. Study participants were from the Jackson

Heart Study; there were 2882, (65% of them women and 35% of them men), who underwent computed tomography. Fatty liver was measured by passing a beam of radiation through the liver and determining the extent to which the beam of radiation was decreased by the presence of fat in the liver (attenuation), and belly fat was measured by amount or volume.

Results from this study indicate that both fatty liver and belly fat are independently associated with abnormalities in insulin resistance, fats in the blood, high blood pressure and diabetes. However, these associations are stronger for belly fat than for fatty liver. This is important because it means that increased amounts of both belly fat and fatty liver increase the risk of worse abnormalities in insulin resistance, fats in the blood, high blood pressure and diabetes in African Americans. Whether attempts to reduce belly fat or fatty liver in African Americans can help lower risk requires further study.



Jackson Heart Study Clinic Update Debra Douglas, LMSW

On July 8, 2011, the JHS reached another major milestone. The Exam Center had its 3,000th participant come in for clinic Exam 3 visit. Mr. Howard Blackmon said he was excited when he was recognized by the JHS staff members with his photograph being taken to mark the occasion. He stated that he was recruited to the JHS as part of the Family Study, and his sister was the first family member to participate. He admitted being hesitant at first because he did not know much about the study. After talking to several people about the JHS, he finally decided to come in for the first exam visit and felt that it was a good decision.

Mr. Blackmon confessed that before coming to the JHS, he was not compliant with taking his blood pressure medications. As a result of the information given to him by the nurses, he was encouraged to watch his weight, cholesterol numbers, and manage his blood pressure. He stated that at his age, he really needed this type of health information. He is pleased that his two daughters are also participants of the JHS. Because of the positive impact that this study has had on his life, Mr. Blackmon said he wants everyone to know about the study, particularly young black men.

Returning Individual Genetic Results to Participants in Cohort Studies Dr. Donna Antoine-LaVigne

Donna Antoine-LaVigne, MSED, MPH, PhD is the local Principal Investigator (PI) of the Jackson Heart Study ancillary study entitled “**Returning Individual Genetic Results to Participants in Cohort Studies.**” The Overall PI is Steven Joffe, MD, MPH from the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in Boston, Massachusetts.

Investigators in this study surveyed a total of 1500 participants in the Jackson Heart Study (JHS) and the Framingham Heart Study. The overall goal was to understand participants’ views on being

provided their results from genetic tests conducted in a research setting, especially in relationship to the positions advocated by commentators and expert panels. The participation from the JHS cohort has been exceptional for a mail survey. Additional staff for this study are: Ms. Alice M. Smith, DrPH Student, Research Assistant and Mrs. Lynette Ekunwe DrPH Candidate, Project Manager.

JHS Annual Family Reunion Debra Wilson

On September 24, 2011, JHS celebrated its Annual Family Reunion, and we had over 160 people in attendance. Our program entailed a different twist this year as we used our very own participants as guest speakers. The event was led by our co-worker/participant, Mrs. Belinda Johnson, who served as our Mistress of Ceremony. She was followed by a gracious invocation by Rev. James Sims, spouse of Mrs. Jeraline Sims, Clinic Research Nurse. Our guest participants, Mrs. Mammie Crowley, Mrs. Ruby Winters (mother of Dr. Karen Winters), and Dr. Freda Bush, astonished the audience with their heartfelt testimonials. Dr. Herman A. Taylor, Jr. presented the “State of the Study” which included the closing date of the JHS Clinic. He reminded the audience to inform others to get their 3rd exam as soon as possible.

Another unique item on the program included the Family Campaign contest. It spotlighted winning families who had the largest percentage of family members to receive their 3rd exam in a specified period of time. Participation included Mary Cox (100%), Alice Peters (83%), and Mary Joyce Milton (83%). Entertainment for the festivities was spectacular, and it gave the sensations of listening to Mozart and watching Debbie Allen dance. This experience gave a hint of the greatness exemplified by the performances of JeMarcus Welch (JHS Scholar) and Sarah Wyatt (Tougaloo Science, Language and Math Summer High School Program graduate). We received positive feedback from the audience regarding the event, and we are looking forward to surpassing the expectations of our audience next year.

2011 Celebration of Life: “Ethics in Community Based Research” Dr. Donna Antoine-LaVigne

Approximately 200 Jackson Heart Study (JHS) participants and friends attended the 11th *Annual Celebration of Life!* The theme “**Ethics in Community Based Research**” was endorsed by the enthusiastic interaction between the speakers and audience. The guest speakers were Dr. Jeffrey Carr, Director of the Center for Biomedical Informatics, Wake Forrest University and Health Sciences, Winston Salem, North Carolina, and Dr. Reuben Warren, Director of the National Center for Bioethics in Research and Health Care and Professor of Bioethics at Tuskegee University in Tuskegee, Alabama. Dr. Carr, an established leader in clinical, research and information technology locally and nationally, and Dr. Warren, known nationally and internationally for his extensive public health experience at community, state, local, national, and international levels, educated the audience and led a stimulated interaction respectively on the

following topics: “How Looking Inside the Hearts of Healthy People Will Help Us Better Understand the Causes of Heart Disease in African Americans” and “A New Ethic Called Public Health Ethics”.

Participants and community friends commented that Dr. Carr’s presentation eased some of their anxieties about the MRI. They expressed appreciation for the education on how the MRIs could assist their physicians in diagnosing their symptoms. Other participants shared that while they are confident of the security measures JHS has in place to protect their data, Dr. Warren’s message on community ethics in research resonated loudly and clearly with them on what their choices are. Clinic Manager, Mrs. Mary Crump, was very impressed by the guest speakers’ thoroughness in responding to questions from the audience and their level of interaction with them.

A Priceless Moment



A priceless moment of the JHS occurred when Cynthia Smith, Health Educator in the Community Partnership/Outreach Office, and Henrietta McCall shared a hug and smile at one of the Community Monitoring Board meetings. Building a relationship with the community is a talent and building a relationship with community members who appreciate the hard work you do is priceless.

Community Partnership Meeting

Dr. Dorothy McGill (pictured) expresses her point of view at a Community Partnership Meeting. The Community Partnership consists of Jackson Heart Study (JHS) participants, community members, and the JHS Community Health Advisors. This group collaborates to provide guidance and direction regarding issues involving the community and the JHS.



Physicians Who Donate Their Time to Jackson Heart Study Community Health Advisor Health Fairs

Three physicians donated their time to participate in a Health Fair held in Rankin County. The physicians were Dr. Lionel Fraser, Dr. Kimberly Bibb, and Dr. Chris Bullin. Dr. Fraser is pictured with Tammy Conerly. Dr. Bibb is pictured with Intern Kelly. Dr. Bullin

is pictured with two health fair participants. The Health Fair was hosted by Sweet Rest Church of Christ Holiness USA and the Rankin County Community Health Advisors to bring about total health awareness including the prostate health of men.



(L-R) Tammy Conerly and Dr. Lionel Fraser



(L-R) Kelly (an Intern Student) and Dr. Kimberly Bibb (Rankin Health Fair)



(L-R) Dr. Bullin and Participants (Rankin Health Fair)



(L-R) Eva Thomas, Susette Palmer, and Billie Fuller

The Fuller Sisters

These sisters are from Bolton, MS and they are known to us as the Bolton Legends. The fellowship with these ladies is priceless. Here they share a sisterly smile during the Bolton Community Health Advisors (CHAs) Community Holiday Celebration.

Clinton Health Advisors

The Community Health Advisors (CHAs) from Clinton, MS are all about business when it comes to a healthy community. They have made adjustments in their lifestyles and are spreading the word on healthy cooking in their community.

(L-R) Tommy Winters, Lillie Stewart, Annie Williams, Carleaner Spann, and Mattie Manyfield



Quarterly Health Walk

The Community Health Advisors (CHAs) of Canton hosted their Quarterly Health Walk and Mini Health Fair at Rogers Park in Canton, Mississippi. Mrs. Fleming, a retired nurse, uses her skills to check the blood pressure of Paul Griffin. The goal of the Canton CHAN is to encourage their community to take advantage of the community parks and to walk regularly to promote healthy hearts.

The Proud and Distinguished Gentlemen

The Jackson Heart Study has some proud and distinguished gentlemen. This group supports the JHS by representing their community, and they stand firm on their beliefs.

(L-R) Clyde Christopher, Jerry Keahey, Jermal Clark, Rev. James Sims and Rev. Carl Fleming



Heart Health: A Family Affair

by Debra Douglas



On October 19, 2011, the JHS welcomed sisters, Sandra Marshall, Stacie Arnold, and Vanessa Knott to the exam center for their third clinic exam. The sisters are a part of the JHS Family Study. Being a part of the JHS is important to each of them, but it is definitely a family affair.

There are 30 members of their family who participated. What made their visit special is the fact that the sisters enjoy getting their exams

done together. At their last clinic visit, they all came together along with a fourth sister who is also in the study. The sisters are proud of the fact that three generations of their family have taken part in the JHS Family Study.

Stacie stated that her mother and her mother's siblings were the first to be recruited for the JHS Family Study. Sandra said, "It was important to her and her sisters to accept the invitation to participate because her mother had a heart condition and they wanted to know more about their own health." Vanessa stated, "The biggest benefit to being in the study is knowing that my sisters and I are heart healthy, and we are working to maintain our heart health." The sisters believe that the study is important and their experience with the JHS has been very positive for them and their family.

JHS Bulletin Board

- ♥ **Exam 3 will end on May 31, 2012.** Don't forget to **schedule your 3rd exam**, call the Exam Center at 601-815-5050.
- ♥ **Community Monitoring Board: June 2, 2012**
- ♥ **Jackson Heart Study Annual Family Reunion: September 22, 2012**
- ♥ **Urgent that we hear from YOU: This is YOUR Newsletter and you have a voice. Send an article, a healthy recipe, a story, a picture, a poem, a comment or suggestion, or you may want to ask a question about the study.** Email your articles, suggestions and comments to lavon.young@jsums.edu or call Lavon Young at 601-979-8700.
- ♥ **Need help** with obtaining information on housing, medical and or social services? Contact the JHS Social Worker, Mrs. Debra Douglas at 601-815-1101. Debra will be happy to assist you!
- ♥ **Need help to quit smoking**, visit www.quitlinems.com or call **1-800-Quit Now** (1-800-784-8669).
- ♥ **Concerned about your test results** and want to discuss them with someone? Contact our Clinic Manager, Mrs. Mary Crump at 601-979-8762.
- ♥ **HEALTH FAIRS** in your area? Call Mrs. Darcel Thigpen-Odom at 601-979-8709.
- ♥ **The Jackson Heart Study appreciates your continued interest and support; however, the study is closed to new participants until further notice.**

Jackson Community Health Advisor Celebration

The Jackson Community Health Advisor Community Holiday Celebration left some with big smiles and gifts from the heart last year. Food, fun and fellowship were the highlights of this event. The Jackson Heart Study Community Partnership Office utilizes events such as this one to show gratitude to the community for all the support that it gives to the Jackson Heart Study.

Pictured (from left to right) Melinda Todd, Charles Holmes, Lepolian Gentry, Mattie Davenport, Lula Cheatham, Mary James, Mary Jenkins and James Sims.





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Article Submissions

The JHS Heartbeat Newsletter is published semi-annually. Its intent is to enhance health awareness and provide an understanding of cardiovascular related diseases including diabetes, hypertension, strokes, cholesterol, physical activity and nutrition through research findings, articles, lay summaries and reviews. The newsletter also facilitates communication among the JHS staff and collaboration with investigators, cohort members and partnering institutions.

Request for information is being solicited for the upcoming issues of the JHS Heartbeat Newsletter. The submission deadline for the Summer Edition is March 15 and the Winter Edition is September 15.

Submissions should be approximately 250 words or less. Relevant pictures, illustrations and/or charts may be submitted with the articles. Information regarding upcoming educational conferences and/or meetings is also requested. All material information is subject to copyediting. Include the author/agency's full name, credentials, mailing address and website (if applicable), telephone and fax number and email address. The use of all photos is subject to consent approval. All information should be emailed to Dr. Brenda Jenkins at brenda.w.campbell@jsums.edu or mailed to JHS Heartbeat Newsletter, 350 W. Woodrow Wilson Drive, Suite 701, Jackson, MS 39213.

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