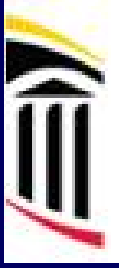


# 2015



# University of Maryland School of Medicine Amish Research Clinic Annual Newsletter

## Happy 20th Anniversary!



We hope that this newsletter finds you and your family healthy and happy.

This is our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary! Since we began our research 20 years ago, we have enrolled over 6,000 Amish volunteers in our studies. Most of these volunteers have participated in more than one study. Our Wellness Study has recruited over 3,000 volunteers. For approximately half of these volunteers, this is the first study that they have done with us.. This study has provided these participants with screenings for heart disease, anemia, thyroid problems, liver disease, kidney disease, diabetes. abdominal aneurisms and osteoporosis.

This newsletter comes to you each year to keep you informed about our new studies and what we have learned from the studies that we have completed. Some of the diseases we study include diabe-

tes, osteoporosis, high blood pressure, cholesterol abnormalities, breast density, celiac disease, longevity, seasonal affective disorder, obesity, heart disease and wellness. We currently have 10 active studies. None of this work could be possible without our compassionate Amish volunteers and the Amish Community, who have provided their partnership and support.

Together, our research has resulted in new discoveries and it has helped us better understand the causes of a number of diseases. As described in this newsletter, the results of some of our studies have already had an impact on health in the Amish as well as in other populations.

Many of our studies continue to need volunteers. Thousands of Amish volunteers have benefited from participating because it provides a



number of health benefits including free medical evaluations and screenings for a number of common diseases and disorders. Participating in research studies also provides the opportunity to contribute to new knowledge, which may help millions of people with the diseases that we study.

Some of the studies are conducted at our clinic in Lancaster and free transportation to and from the clinic is provided. Other studies are conducted right in your own home. Not only do you gain lots of knowledge about your health but with most studies, we even pay you for your time and effort. If you have any questions or you are interested in participating in any of our studies, please call 717-392-4948. You can also write us a note. Please make sure you include your address so we can get back to you.

## Our Mission

The Amish Research Clinic contributes to improvements in healthcare through research. We serve as a resource for health information and knowledge to the Amish Community.

## Our Staff

- Alan Shuldiner, M.D.
- Amber L. Beitelshoes, Pharm.D, MPH
- Andrew Goldberg, M.D.
- Braxton Mitchell, Jr., Ph.D.
- Christy Chang, Ph.D.
- Coleen Damcot, Ph.D.
- Elizabeth Streeten, M.D.
- Elliot Hong, M.D.
- Joshua Lewis, Ph.D.
- Julie Douglas, Ph.D.
- Mao Fu, Ph.D.
- Michael Miller, M.D.
- Nanette Steinle, M.D.
- Nisa Maruthur, M.D.
- Richard Horenstein, M.D.
- Soren Snitker, M.D., Ph.D.
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- Toni Pollin, Ph.D.
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Research Nurse
- Yvonne Rohrer, R.N.,  
Research Nurse
- Patrick Donnelly, R.D.C.S.,  
Sonographer
- Maryann Drolet, BSMT,  
ASCP, Research Specialist
- Sylvia Newcomer, BSMT,  
ASCP, Research Specialist
- Elizabeth Zehr,  
Clinic Assistant
- Grace Redcay, Driver
- Nancy Weitzel, Clinic  
Supervisor/ Research Nurse



20th Anniversary Edition

# Supporting the Amish Research Clinic

Most of you recently received a letter from our Advisory Board about the opportunity to make a financial contribution to the Amish Research Clinic. Because the Wellness Study (see below) is not focused on a particular disease, funding it is challenging. We therefore appealed to the Amish community for support. Many of you have contributed, and for that we humbly thank you. *Please know that we are dedicated to continuing the Wellness Program and that donations are purely voluntary. The only contribution we require of those who choose to participate is your good will and time.* Should you choose to also make a financial donation to help sustain the study and the clinic, please make your check payable to the UMBF (University of Maryland Foundation, Inc.) and either drop it off at the Amish Research Clinic or mail it to the address below, noting that it is for the Amish Research Clinic.

University of Maryland School of Medicine, Office of Development  
Attn: Pamela Lambert, 31 S. Greene Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Baltimore, MD 21201

## Ongoing Studies

### Wellness Study (active)

The Amish Wellness Study continues to recruit participants. This study offers all Amish adults basic wellness screening including tests of cholesterol, blood sugar, thyroid, bone strength, and heart health. We have found that high cholesterol and hypothyroidism (low thyroid function) are quite common in the Amish. Blood is also being collected and stored at the University of Maryland for research on genet-

ic and non-genetic factors in health and disease. The research team hopes to visit all Amish households. Testing takes place in our "Wellmobile" housed in a large motor vehicle which visits each Church district. If we haven't visited your Church district yet, we will be there in the future. To date, nearly 3000 Amish



individuals ages 18 and older have enrolled in the Wellness Study, which is funded by the University of Maryland Program for Personalized and Genomic Medicine. Thank you!

### MiACT Study - Metabolic Impact of ApoC-III (active)

Based on our exciting finding that about 1 in 20 Amish people carry a gene change that helps them to clear dietary fat from their blood faster and may help prevent heart disease, we are conducting a study to learn more about this gene change called APOC3 R19X. People with this gene change make less of a sub-

stance in the body called ApoC-III. The new study is helping us to learn how ApoC-III works and whether lowering it in other people might be a useful way to prevent heart disease. We are comparing people with and without the gene change for how their fat is distributed in their bodies, how their bodies process die-

tary fat, cholesterol and sugar, and how fat and cholesterol move around in their bloodstream.



20 years ago the Amish Research Clinic started with 2 people. Now there are 23 employees at our Lancaster Clinic.

