

THE Continuum

From Bench to Bedside

Physical Activity to Prevent Disability NewNIHAwardfortheInstituteonAging:LifestyleInterventionsand Independence For Elders (LIFE) Study



As life expectancy in the United States is rising, the maintenance of physical independence among older Americans has emerged as a major clinical and public health priority. The ability to move without assistance is a fundamental feature of human functioning. Seniors who lose mobility are less likely to remain in the community, have higher rates of morbidity, mortality, and hospitalizations and experience a poorer quality of life. Several studies have shown that physical activity improves physical performance, but definitive evidence showing that mobility disability can be prevented is lacking. A Phase 3 randomized controlled trial is needed to fill this evidence gap.

After a successful pilot study, we will now conduct a major Phase 3, multicenter randomized controlled trial to compare a moderate-intensity physical activity program to a successful aging program in 1,600 sedentary older persons who are followed for approximately 3 years. The primary outcome is

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The Clinical Translational Sciences Institute

The National Institutes of Health recently funded the Clinical Translational Science Award (CTSA) to the University of Florida, the only Florida university to receive this prestigious award. The CTSA's are granted to academic health centers to revolutionize how clinical and translation research is conducted, with the ultimate goal to provide new treatments more efficiently and quickly to patients.

The University of Florida's Clinical Translation Sciences Institute (CTSI) provides the new intellectual home for clinical and translational research and training at UF, integrating and synergizing the scientific and educational activities of 12 colleges, two academic and clinical campuses, two

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DIRECTOR'S WELCOME

Dear friends of the IOA,

In this issue, we share outstanding news regarding the relevant expansion of our clinical and translational research programs, such as funding of The LIFE Study, a definitive Phase 3 multicenter randomized controlled trial to investigate the long-term effects of physical activity on major mobility disability, cognition and other important health outcomes. LIFE is the result of 10 years of research development supported by the Pepper Center and other NIH grants conducted by a team of experts across the nation.



Marco Pahor, M.D.

We are also a site for the National Institute on Aging funded T Trial, a large multicenter randomized controlled trial of testosterone replacement therapy in older hypogonadal men. Finally, we lead the creation of a novel clinical translational research program to study age-related cognitive decline and memory loss sponsored by The McKnight Brain Research Foundation and the UF. This is in addition to several awards, including RO1, R21, K, competitive revision and supplement grants, supported by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and regular NIH funds - all of which will not only advance our science, but will also significantly contribute to retain and create jobs and help to revamp our economy.

I am so proud of our faculty, staff and trainees who, over the past few years have worked tirelessly to build our programs and position the UF Institute on Aging at the forefront of the national arena of geriatric and gerontological research. This is indeed a very exciting time for the UF Institute on Aging.



Physical Activity to Prevent Disability

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major mobility disability. Secondary outcomes include cognitive function; fall injuries; mobility disability or death; disability in activities of daily living; and cost-effectiveness. Tertiary outcomes include mild cognitive impairment and dementia. The physical activity intervention consists of walking, resistance exercises, balance exercises, stretching and behavioral counseling. The successful aging intervention consists of health education and upper extremity stretching.

LIFE will provide definitive evidence regarding whether physical activity is effective for preventing major mobility disability. These results will have crucial implications for disability prevention and will fill an important gap in knowledge for practicing evidence-based geriatric medicine. The LIFE study will impact clinical practice and public health policy, and will benefit individuals and society as a whole.

The recruitment for LIFE will start in March 2010. More details about the LIFE study will follow in future issues of this publication.

Cognitive Aging and Memory Clinical Translational Research Program

Approximately 1 in 7 adults over 65 years old experiences moderate to severe cognitive and memory impairment, which adversely impacts independence. Clinical and translational research on interventions to remediate or prevent these highly prevalent age-related conditions is in its early stage.

The Institute on Aging is now hosting the newly established Cognitive Aging and Memory Clinical Translational Research Program (CAM-CTRP). The program is supported by the endowed fund of the McKnight Brain Research Foundation and by the UF. The primary goal of the CAM-CTRP is to address a critical gap in research by developing a cutting-edge interdisciplinary clinical translational research program, which translates basic science discoveries regarding cognitive aging and memory into clinical applications to slow, avert or

restore the age-related cognitive decline. The CAM-CTRP capitalizes on the existing strengths of the Institute on Aging/Pepper Center Cores, the UF McKnight Brain Institute, the Clinical Translational Sciences Institute (CTSI), the Departments of Neurology, Neuroscience, Psychiatry and Aging and Geriatric Research, other UF institutes and colleges, and of the rich UF grant funding portfolio in the arena of aging, brain, cognition and memory.

The CAM-CTRP is designed to be positioned at the forefront of the national arena of aging, cognition and memory research by using an interdisciplinary approach that traverses the entire spectrum of biomedical investigation. The search for the Program Director is in progress. We will provide more news about this program in future issues of this publication.

The Clinical Translational Sciences Institute

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regional healthcare systems and the 67 counties of the State of Florida.

We are proud to announce that the Institute on Aging (IOA) is a part of the CTSI infrastructure and plays key leadership roles in the CTSI. Dr. Pahor directs the KL2 mentored research career development program for junior faculty. He is also the director of the IOA Clinical Research Unit of the CTSI Participant and Clinical Interactions Program. The IOA is part of the of the CTSI infrastructure, and thereby it is fully integrated into the network of the eight Clinical Research Units of the CTSI Participant and Clinical

Interactions Program.

UF has a rich environment of distinguished colleges, state-of-the-art research facilities and statewide health education and health delivery systems. These resources position UF and the IOA at the forefront of institutions to train the next generation of clinical and translational investigators and to help overcome two major obstacles in our nation's clinical research enterprise: the translation of basic science discoveries to early investigations in humans, and the translation of clinical research into better medical practice and health-care delivery.

Legs vs. Arms Event Raises Funds & Awareness for the Institute on Aging



Crescent Beach Legs vs. Arms event participants (from left) Dr. Yvette Bazikian, Dr. Christiaan Leeuwenburgh, Leif Stringer and Carolyn Goddard

Stellar volunteer Carolyn Goddard organized and presented the first Memorial Day weekend Legs vs. Arms beach competition, which was to include sea kayaking ("Arms") and a three-mile run on the beach ("Legs"). Carolyn's son, Leif Stringer, orchestrated the race.

Due to inclement weather, the kayaking was cancelled. The run, however, was a great success, and race winners received spa gift certificates.

Carolyn hopes that Legs vs. Arms will become an annual event that will attract more local sponsors like the ones at this year's event, which included: The Stringer Family; Experience the Island; Island Center Crescent Beach; Dave Waldrop, Inc.; and Napoli Pizza and Reserve Age.

Dr. Christiaan Leeuwenburgh, Chief of the Division of Biology and Aging, had this to say about the event and its support of the Institute: "Despite the poor weather, the turnout was great. Most importantly, the participants were fully engaged and enjoyed the relaxed run on the beach at their own pace. Family and friends watched children run and play on the beach and in the ocean. Carolyn and Leif prepared and ran a flawless event. I hope to do it again next year." 🌴

Retired Faculty Supports Biology of Aging Research

The Institute on Aging recently received \$30,811 through a realized gift annuity established by Margaret W. Hoffmann, MD. The IOA received the gift after Dr. Hoffmann's passing earlier this year. Through her philanthropy, Dr. Hoffmann has provided funds to the Division of Biology of Aging for research discoveries to unravel mechanisms of aging and to use natural interventions to promote healthy aging. Dr. Hoffmann was the first female physician scientist at UF within the Department of Pathology in the 1960s and was very interested in research to improve the quality of life in elderly citizens.

"Due to Dr. Hoffman's generosity, we will now have more

opportunities to continue to make significant contributions to the preservation of independence for older adults," Dr. Marco Pahor, IOA Director, said.

Dr. Christiaan Leeuwenburgh, Chief of the Division of the Biology of Aging stated: "The funds provided by Dr. Hoffman will allow us to support innovative research projects, which may lead to practical interventions to improve the quality of life in the elderly." 🌴



Margaret W. Hoffmann, M.D.

Welcome To Our New Faculty and Staff:

Susan Nayfield, M.S., M.D., M.Sc., Clinical Research Division Chief, Geriatric Medicine Acting Division Chief and Associate Professor (will join us in February 2010); **Bhanuprasad Sandesara, MD** Clinical Assistant Professor; **Thomas Buford, PhD** Lecturer; **Ronald Lester, MBA, PhD** Assistant Director; **Jocelyn Lee, PhD** Senior Studies Coordinator, **Joe Nocera, PhD** Research Assistant, **Lynda Pasteur, MA**, Communication Consultant; **Brenda Barefield and Deborah Crenshaw** Program Assistants; **Cardie Dielschneider and Taylor Holt**, Screeners; **Jeff Knaggs**, Study Coordinator; **Vanessa Horman**, Receptionist; and **Sophy Perdomo**, Student Assistant. **Hazel Lee, MS** has moved to a Biological Scientist position, and **Lorraine Koerper** to a Laboratory Technician position. **Dr. Kenneth Heilman**, a renowned behavioral neurologist whose research interests include attentional, emotional, and cognitive disorders was appointed as an Investigator at the Geriatric Research, Education and Clinical Center (GRECC) at the VA.

Opportunities to Participate In Research Studies:

If interested in participating in one of our current or future studies, you can now enroll in our IRB approved recruitment registry. To enroll, or to obtain additional information about our studies, please call 1-866-386-7730 or email Peggy Smith at psmith@aging.ufl.edu.

New Positions:

We are currently advertising several faculty and staff positions; more positions will be posted soon. For employment opportunities, please visit the University of Florida's website at <http://jobs.ufl.edu> or email your inquiry to Camelia Pascu at cpascu@aging.ufl.edu.

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MAKE A GIFT

Giving to the Institute on Aging ...why every dollar counts

Unlocking life's mysteries – particularly the secrets of how long and how well we live – is the distinct focus of the University of Florida's Institute on Aging. Our scientists and physicians are dedicated to achieving better understanding of the mechanisms of aging and how we can maintain or enhance our physical independence and cognitive abilities.

Private philanthropy is so essential to our work. Your gift, regardless of size, can make the critical difference in funding new scientific endeavors. Imagine discoveries that fuel positive cellular changes; identify new therapies that help rehabilitate aging bones and joints; or uncover additional pharmaceutical allies. Private philanthropy makes all this and much more possible.

To learn more about how you can invest in a healthier and more independent tomorrow for us all, please contact Sandra Fackler, Senior Director of Development, at [\(352\)265-7227](tel:3522657227) or sfackler@ufl.edu. 

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