

Women's Health Initiative addresses health concerns of American women

HOUSTON — Kris Mulligan decided to change the course of her family health history after seeing her mother suffer from cancer.

Mulligan is one of the more than 800 women at Baylor College of Medicine participating in the Women's Health Initiative (WHI), the first long-term study to address the health concerns of American women. The multicenter study is being conducted

by the National Institutes of Health.

Designed to look at leading cause of death and disability in postmenopausal women, the WHI focuses on the effects of hormone replacement therapy, low-fat diet, and calcium and Vitamin D supplementation on heart disease, breast cancer, colorectal cancer and osteoporosis.

The 12-year project involves programs."

Although mammography is currently the best method for detecting breast cancer, even skilled mammographers can fail to spot between 10 and 30 percent of the cancers present in women who get screening mammograms. According to University of Chicago researchers, in as many as two-thirds of these "false negative" mammograms, the radiologist missed subtle signs of cancer that, when the mammogram was more closely examined months or years later, were present and visible. Fatigue and distractions can explain some of those reading errors, but in other cases the mammographic abnormalities caused by the cancer were subtle enough to escape detection—even by the experts.

Research for the development of this new system took 40 researchers more than 10 years to complete. The estimated cost of the system is \$100,000, about the same as a full-featured mammography machine. Experts hope the system will begin to be available to community radiologists in the near future.

Your physician or testing center can obtain more information about the system by calling John Easton, Office of Public Affairs, University of Chicago Hospitals, 312-702-6241.

Computer-aided mammography arrives

(NAPS) -- The American Cancer Society estimated that 207,000 women would be diagnosed with breast cancer in the United States in 1996. Fortunately, more women may be able to benefit from early detection and treatment thanks to a new computer-assisted system used to read mammograms.

Researchers at the University of Chicago Medical Center have brought into clinical use the first computer-assisted system of this kind. It could reduce by as much as one-half the number of subtle and difficult to find breast cancers missed by radiologists.

The system is similar to a "spellcheck program on a word processor," explains project leader Kunio Doi, Ph.D., Ralph W. Gerard, Professor of biological sciences and director of the Kurt Rossman Laboratories for Radiologic Image Research at the University of Chicago.

The IBM RS/6000 computer now makes clinical computer analysis practical for the first time by providing "an automated second opinion, alerting the radiologist to take a closer look at subtle warning signs that might have been missed on the first pass," according to Dr. Doi. "We hope this system can significantly reduce the number of undetected breast cancers, even for the best screening

40 clinical centers nationwide and is recruiting more than 163,000 post-menopausal women.

"The findings from this long-term study will decide definitely the most effective treatment and prevention strategies doctors should use for women," said Dr. John Foreyt, principal investigator for the Baylor Clinical Center.

Baylor Clinical Center investigators are following the health of the participants for an

average of nine years in either an observational study group or a clinical trial group.

Mulligan is enrolled in the clinical trial's hormone replacement therapy and dietary intervention groups. The 54-year-old widow favors the dietary group, which requires her to attend nutrition classes.

Mulligan says the nutrition classes have shown her how to turn her junk-food eating habits into a more nutritious routine. She and her fellow classmates

share low-fat recipes and are taught by Baylor nutritionists how to incorporate a low-fat diet into their lifestyle.

"My fat-free lentil soup recipe won second prize at a cooking contest in my class," Mulligan said. "I have even lost a little weight."

Mulligan believes from experience that a high-fat diet can increase the cancer risk in women — information WHI researchers hope to confirm.

"When I was a young girl

living in Germany, my mother would serve chicken with the skin and butter, not margarine," Mulligan recalls. "Maybe she would have lessened her chances of illness if she had eaten healthier foods." Mulligan often encourages her friends and co-workers to join the study.

"I have two grown daughters, and I know this study will provide subsequent results that will benefit them and my grandchildren," Mulligan said.

IF YOU'RE WONDERING WHETHER TO SWITCH BANKS, ASK THE BANKERS WHO DID.

With all the recent banking mergers, your bank may be greeting you with some unfamiliar faces. Or, in some cases, no faces at all. If you're wondering whether to switch banks, ask the bankers themselves. Like the bankers here, with over 80 years of experience, who have switched from their former banks to Nevada's Bank, Pioneer Citizens.

Their reasons make perfect sense. Nevadans want to deal with bankers, not with banks. They want banking decisions that are made right here. They want familiar faces, personal service, and people they feel comfortable with and trust. And that's been Pioneer Citizens' way of banking for over 30 years.

If bankers have so many smart reasons to switch to Pioneer Citizens, maybe you should, too. To find out more, call them personally today. Because the more you know about personal banking, the more you'll like Nevada's Bank, Pioneer Citizens.



Left to right: Marco Semeraro, Janie Hollingsworth, Nancy Hamer, Marian Beeler, and Donna Davis have all joined Nevada's Bank, Pioneer Citizens.

Marco Semeraro
Vice President, Branch Manager
Spring Mountain Branch
873-4429

Marian Beeler
Assistant Vice President, Branch Manager
Las Vegas Downtown Branch
382-3433

Donna Davis
Assistant Vice President, Branch Manager
Green Valley Branch
454-1434

Nancy Hamer
Assistant Vice President, Branch Manager
Pioneer Center Branch
734-5733

Janie Hollingsworth
Assistant Vice President, Branch Manager
Summerlin Branch
242-1946

Briefs

(Continued from Page 8)

lack of compatible organs for donation.

"The best 'match' for blacks is organs from blacks," said Dr. James L. Phillips of Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, "but in 1993 in Houston, for example, only 10 percent of organ donations came from blacks even though 26 percent of people on organ waiting lists were blacks."

Blacks make up 12 percent of the U.S. population but account for 34 percent of all kidney-failure patients.

Organ donations can vastly improve the quality of life and save lives of recipients.

Organs are removed only with family consent or with pre-arranged donor consent. Removal of organs does not disfigure, and open-casket funerals can still be held.

FREE BROCHURE ON WOMEN'S HEALTH

HOUSTON — Among people older than 50, black women are more likely to suffer from high blood pressure than are other racial and ethnic groups.

High blood pressure (hypertension) is one of the topics covered in a free brochure, "Women's Health: Ideas for a Lifetime of Wellness,"

(See Briefs, Page 17)

Nevada's Bank
PIONEER
CITIZENS
Member FDIC
Equal Housing Lender