

CYGNET Taking Flight

Cohort Study of Young Girls' Nutrition, Environment, and Transitions

WINTER / SPRING 2009



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Greetings from the CYGNET Study

By Lawrence H. Kushi, Sc.D.

The CYGNET Study is now in its fourth year of collecting information from dedicated study participants. Along with the companion studies in Cincinnati and New York, we are following over 1,200 girls across the country and have started to analyze our early data to identify factors that may differ between girls who have begun puberty compared to girls who have not yet done so.

The CYGNET Study is currently funded through the summer of 2010 which is rapidly approaching. Since we communicate with you through this newsletter only twice a year, I want to share with you our thoughts about the future of our studies.

Over the past few months, researchers in the four Breast Cancer and the Environment Research Centers have been working on a report describing our studies for the National Cancer Institute (NCI). We will be presenting this report to an advisory group of the NCI in early March. This advisory group has the authority to recommend funding to continue these studies beyond 2010. The National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences will be making similar decisions in the near future.

If we are successful in convincing the NCI's Board of Scientific Advisors to continue to support these studies, it will be due to your continued participation and strong support of the study. We have been able to continue following over 90 percent of the 444 girls and families who joined our study during our baseline enrollment year. This is outstanding and recognized by our scientific colleagues as a testament to the importance and potential contributions of our work.

Although our primary reason for analyzing data is to contribute knowledge that may influence public health, there is no doubt that publishing interim results will also bolster the likelihood of continued funding. Among the factors we are looking at in relation to early puberty are several of the chemicals found in blood and urine samples, dietary factors, socioeconomic variables, psychosocial variables, and use of various products that may contain hormonally-active compounds. You can look forward to a series of publications in the next few months on these topics.

We are also working on the best ways in which to give back your daughter's individual results, including analyzed chemical levels, something that several of you have asked about during our Tea Talks and clinic visits. Since there are a large number of chemicals and some have no reference data – i.e., information from other studies to compare them to – the process of distributing individual results is not as straightforward as it might seem and we are currently discussing how to best present the individual results to you.

Finally, we are excited to invite you to attend a performance of "The Best Me" with the Kaiser Permanente Educational Theater Program at our next Tea Talk on April 14, 2009, in Oakland. The program is fun and entertaining, and I think you and your daughters will enjoy it. We will also present updates on findings from the study and future plans. With continued gratitude for your personal commitment in making our study a success, I look forward to seeing many of you then.

Lawrence H. Kushi, Sc.D., Associate Director, Division of Research, Kaiser Permanente, is the Principal Investigator of the CYGNET Study.



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The Best Me!



Ask your parents to bring you and your family to our next CYGNET Tea Talk on April 14th. Come and enjoy a performance by Kaiser Permanente's Educational Theatre Program!

Your family and friends can watch live theatrical skits that will inspire everyone to make informed decisions about their health and to build stronger, healthier neighborhoods.

The performance, "The Best Me", will discuss healthy eating and active living by following the lives of four middle school students in their pursuit to discover what they can do to be "The Best Me."

The play will be followed by a discussion with Dr. Larry Kushi from CYGNET and the performer/educators. The performance and the discussion afterwards will lead to a lot of learning and plenty of fun.

Check out the Kaiser Permanente Education Theatre Program website:

<http://xnet.kp.org/etp/ncal/index.html>

Spring 2009 CYGNET Tea Talk

Tuesday, April 14, 2009
6:00– 8:00 pm

See you there!

Meet Aileen!

Hey there Cygnets! You may remember me from your last clinic visit or from the Tea Talks. I know I remember you! I went to college at Santa Clara University and graduated about a year and a half ago, and now I live in busy San Francisco. Before college I used to live in Santa Monica, CA, and I think I'm finally getting used to the colder weather up here.

For fun I like to spend time in nature, whether it's hiking in the beautiful Redwoods of Marin or visiting tide pools along the coast. I also like to explore Golden Gate Park, which has a gorgeous botanical garden, an art museum, and the newly renovated California Academy of Sciences. It's a great place for a fun day trip. And if it's one of those rainy, cold, stay-at-home days, I love to curl up with a good book.

It is always a special thing to see you girls every year, and to watch how you have grown and matured into the bright, strong girls that you are. See you next visit!

Aileen Dickinson is one of the Research Assistants you might meet at the clinic.



Here's my picture with my sister who's around your age.

Recipes for the Spring and Summer

by Morola Adjibodou

In the spring and summer, Bay Area farmers' markets are filled with fresh, local and seasonal foods. Here are a couple of recipes that are perfect for a summertime barbeque.



Morola Adjibodou is a Research Assistant you may meet at your next CYGNET Study's clinic visit.

Black Bean, Corn, and Tomato Salad

The first step is making the dressing. Chop the garlic into small pieces and cut up the basil. Combine the basil, garlic, vinegar in a bowl. Add salt and pepper and slowly mix in olive oil.

Drain the corn and rinse it under cold water, do the same to the black beans. Combine the black beans and half of the dressing in a serving bowl. In the bowl containing the dressing, mix the corn, tomatoes, and chopped onions. Slowly combine the corn mixture to the beans and garnish with chopped basil leaves. Chill in the refrigerator.

Ingredients

- 1 ½ cups of cooked corn
- 2 tablespoons of red wine vinegar
- 1 clove of chopped garlic
- Salt and pepper (to taste)
- 5 tablespoons of olive oil (or to taste)
- ¼ cup of fresh basil
- 3 cups of cooked black beans
- 8 ounces of halved cherry tomatoes
- 1 cup of chopped red onions

Grilled Asparagus

Ingredients

- 1 pound of asparagus
- Olive oil
- Wooden skewers
- Salt
- A lightly oiled grill

Soak skewers for 10-15 minutes. Divide asparagus into 4 equal bunches. Arrange the asparagus horizontally and skewer them at each end (the skewers should be parallel). Leave enough space at the end of the skewer to turn the asparagus when it is on grill. Brush the asparagus with olive oil, sprinkle salt and place on the grill. Cook until tender, usually 3-5 minutes on each side.

Strawberry-Rhubarb Sundae

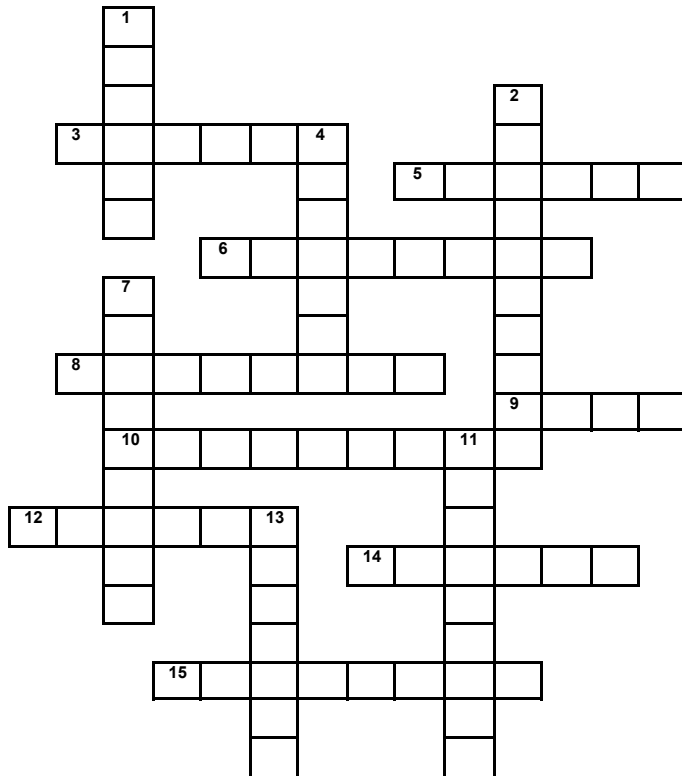
Ingredients

- 1 pound of chopped strawberries
- 2 rhubarb stalks
- ½ cup of sugar
- ¼ cup of water
- Vanilla ice cream

Chop the rhubarb into ½ inch pieces. In a large saucepan, combine the water, rhubarb, sugar, and strawberries. Bring the mixture to a simmer over high heat. Stir occasionally and continue to cook until rhubarb breaks down (usually 6-8 minutes). Refrigerator for an hour or until the sauce is cool. Spoon over ice cream and enjoy!

FOOD FUN CROSSWORD PUZZLE *(answers on bottom of page 3)*

- ACROSS**....
3. A monkey's favorite treat
 5. Eating foods high in _____ will help give you energy throughout the day
 6. A pickle started out as a _____
 8. A tasty fungus
 9. "An _____ a day keeps the doctor away"
 10. The most important meal of the day
 12. Eating this food will surely keep away vampires
 14. Peanut butter + raisins + _____ = Ants on a log



- DOWN**.....
1. A fruit, though many think it is a veggie
 2. Instead of white bread, it is better it eat _____ bread
 4. Green ingredient in guacamole
 7. A small fruit high in antioxidants
 11. AKA green onions
 13. Milk is high in _____, which helps give you strong bones

Recapping the San Francisco Fall 2008 TEA TALK

At our last Tea Talk, *Positive Parenting in Middle Childhood*, on October 11, 2008, at the San Francisco Exploratorium, Drs. Julianna Deardorff and Louise Greenspan led a discussion with parents focused on “positive parenting”, an approach when practiced during the middle years (8–11 years old) promotes a number of constructive outcomes for children in the behavioral, emotional, social and academic realms. Several studies show that parenting behaviors during this time have positive enduring effects through adolescence and even into adulthood.



To establish and maintain positive parenting behaviors, Drs. Deardorff and Greenspan suggest that parents strive for the following:

- Set clear, firm expectations in a warm, loving manner, especially when it comes to safety and health issues.
- Avoid negotiating with kids on health and safety.
- Define limits and consistently follow through.
- Maintain parental warmth, affection and caring, which are key elements to fostering a positive parenting approach.

Children feel safest when they know they have clear rules to follow. They will internalize parental guidelines and expectations as they mature and begin to problem solve on their own. Complex issues and problems will be challenging for children during the middle years, particularly because they have not yet developed strong abstract reasoning skills at this age. They depend on the rules set by parents to help make good decisions.

It is important to remember that every child is different, even when they are raised in the same family environment. Some kids are more resilient, some are more affected by their environments. Those that feel stress more acutely may be particularly in need of this supportive but firm and consistent parenting style.

Julianna Deardorff, Ph.D., is an Assistant Adjunct Professor for the Division of Cancer Epidemiology at the University of California, San Francisco. Louis Greenspan, M.D., is a pediatric endocrinologist and clinician who practices at Kaiser Permanente San Francisco Medical Center. Both are co-investigators with the CYGNET Study.

TEA TALKS EN ESPAÑOL

Queridos/as participantes de habla Española,

“Tea Talks” son eventos que organizamos dos veces al año en varios lugares de la Bahía donde participan los investigadores, los participantes del estudio y sus familias para discutir una variedad de temas de la ciencia y la salud con un enfoque en el Estudio CYGNET. Desearíamos organizar una charla exclusivamente para los participantes de habla Española. Y para organizarla deseamos conocer sus opiniones y sugerencias lo mas tardar en Junio 2009. Por favor conteste las siguientes dos preguntas y comuníquese con el personal del Estudio.

1. ¿Que temporada del año desearía participar en una charla?
2. ¿Que tópicos sobre la salud y el Estudio CYGNET desearía escuchar y recibir más información?

Por favor lláme a Evelyn Landaverde (510) 891-3579 ó a Patricia Atkinson (510) 891-3274. Esperamos escuchar de usted y una vez más gracias por ser parte de este estudio tan importante.

Sinceramente,

El Personal del Estudio CYGNET

Spring 2009 East Bay TEA TALK

For CYGNET's and their Families

"The Best Me"

a play on healthy eating and active living

JOIN US!

Tuesday, April 14, 2009

6:00 pm – 8:00 pm

1438 Webster Street, Suite 205

Oakland, CA 94612

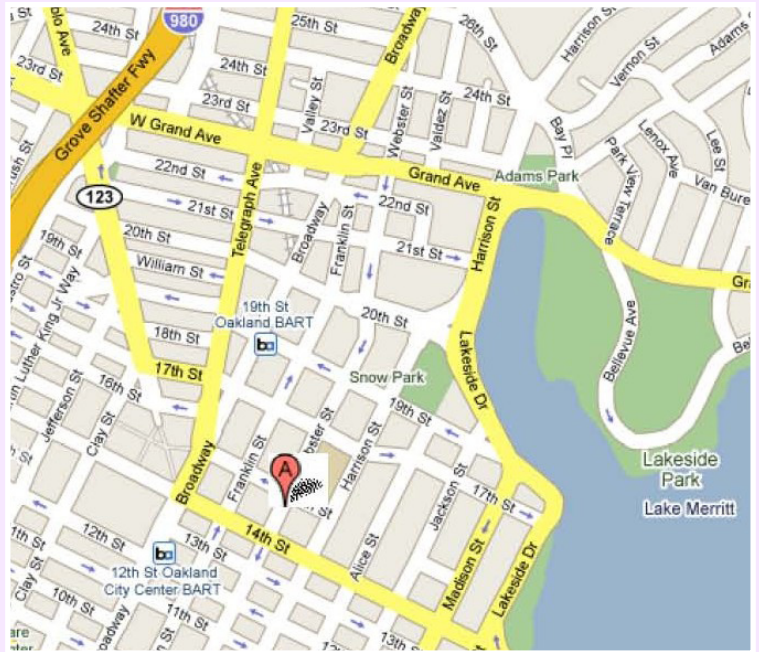
The Kaiser Permanente Educational Theatre Program will perform "The Best Me" to parents and girls, followed by questions and answers with investigators.

Kaiser Permanente Educational Theatre Program website:
http://xnet.kp.org/etp/ncal/shows/best_me/index.html

Dinner will be served!

Please RSVP by Friday, April 10, 2009

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