

BCFR NEWSLETTER

Keeping you up to date on the Breast Cancer Family Registry

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PUBLICATIONS & NEWS

New publications and articles featuring the BCFR and Registry Updates

Physical Activity Reduces Breast Cancer Risk, Even for BRCA Carriers

Women at higher risk for breast cancer either because of family history or a genetic mutation often ask about non-surgical strategies to reduce their cancer risk. Physical activity has long been associated with lower breast cancer risk. However, for women with a familial or genetic risk for breast cancer it was unknown how physical activity could affect their cancer risk.

Researchers from our Breast Cancer Family Registry team used self or relative reported questionnaire data from our participants to look at the association of recreational physical activity, at baseline (first entering the study) and during adolescence, with breast cancer risk. They examined whether associations were modified by underlying familial risk (based on pedigree data) or by genetic risk (BRCA1 or BRCA2 mutation). The final sample analyzed for the study was 15,550 women from 6,503 families, including 659 BRCA1 and 526 BRCA2 mutation carriers.

Evidence suggests that recreational physical activity during adulthood is associated with lower breast cancer risk. Specifically, the researchers found that attaining at least 2.7 hours of moderate or 1.5 hours of strenuous physical activity per week was associated with a 20% lower breast cancer risk. There was no association with physical activity during adolescence. They did not find evidence that the association of baseline recreational physical activity with breast cancer risk is changed by familial risk or by BRCA mutation status.

The study, published in [Cancer Research](#), provides further support for an association between recreational physical activity in adulthood and breast cancer risk and suggests that even a modest level of physical activity in adulthood is associated with reduced breast cancer risk. In addition, this association exists for women at high familial and genetic risk. Therefore, physical activity could be an effective prevention strategy for all women, especially for women at higher than average risk of breast cancer.

To read more about the study and an interview with the lead researcher, [click here](#).

Coronavirus, COVID-19, and Cancer

Visit the American Cancer Society for information on how to protect yourself from the coronavirus and routine medical care. [Click here](#).



MEET A RESEARCHER

Dr. Kristen Whitaker, MD

Dr. Kristen Whitaker has joined the Breast Cancer Family Registry team at our Philadelphia site. She received her undergraduate degree at the University of Pennsylvania and earned her medical degree from Drexel University College of Medicine. She went on to complete her internal medicine residency at the George Washington University Hospital and hematology/oncology fellowship at the University of Chicago with a focus on breast cancer and clinical genetics. As a member of the clinical genetics team at Fox Chase, Dr. Whitaker works to counsel patients on interventions to help lower their chance of developing cancer. In addition, Dr. Whitaker treats patients in both our high risk clinic and our breast cancer clinics. She is particularly interested in how genetic risk information is communicated within families.

HEALTHY TIPS

Chicken and White Bean Soup

Find this recipe and more at [American Cancer Society](#).

Ingredients

- 1 rotisserie chicken breast section or 3 cups chopped white chicken meat
- 1 tablespoon canola oil
- 3 carrots, sliced
- 2 celery stalks, sliced
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 cups water
- 6 cups reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 1 (15-ounce) can Great Northern beans, rinsed and drained
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper



Remove wings from chicken and reserve. Remove skin from breast and discard. Shred the meat from the breast and break off breastbones. In a stockpot over medium heat, add oil. Sauté the carrots, celery, onion, chicken wings, and breastbones for 8 to 10 minutes, or until vegetables soften. Add water and chicken broth and bring to a boil, stirring to combine. Reduce the heat, cover, and simmer for 15 to 20 minutes. Add beans and chicken meat and cook for 5 minutes. If too thick, add additional broth or water. Discard bones and wings before serving. Season with salt and pepper.

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