RINALDO HONORED BY LAMBDA BOARD

The Lambda Foundation Board of Directors presented a Board of Directors Award to Dr. Charles R. Rinaldo, Jr., Principal Investigator of the Pitt Men's Study in recognition of "His Tireless Efforts in the Battle Against AIDS." Speaking on behalf of the board, Randal Forrester, a founder of the Foundation and Executive Director of Persad Center, traced Dr. Rinaldo's work in AIDS from its beginnings in 1982 to the present. Mr. Forrester noted Dr. Rinaldo's leadership role in making Pittsburgh a recognized leader in AIDS research and in supporting the development of AIDS services in the tri-state area. In accepting the award, Dr. Rinaldo recognized the staff of the Pitt Men's Study for its dedication and thanked our volunteers whose generosity has enabled the study to make significant contributions in the battle against AIDS. The award was given at the Third Annual Lambda Ball at the Vista International Hotel on February 24, 1990.

The Lambda Foundation was founded in 1983 to raise and distribute funds to meet needs in the lesbian and gay community. More than $100,000 has been distributed to a wide range of groups and agencies in the area. Anyone interested in learning more about the Foundation or in making a donation should write: The Lambda Foundation, P.O. Box 5169, Pittsburgh, PA 15206.
Ever wonder what happens with all of the forms you fill out? Wonder no more. The following is a partial list of articles published since 1988 using data from the Pitt Men's Study. The local articles are those using only Pittsburgh data. The rest are based on data from Pittsburgh and our other MACS sites. Copies of these articles are available on request by notifying our scheduling or clinic staff.

**Local**


**MACS**


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**PMS ADDS CANCER SUBSTUDY**

What cancers, if any, in addition to Kaposi’s sarcoma and non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma, are associated with the human immune deficiency virus (HIV), the virus that causes AIDS?

Do other factors such as one's lifestyle, other viruses, and the condition of one's immune system make AIDS patients more susceptible to cancer than the average person?

Research at the PMS, funded by a grant from the National Cancer Institute, recently launched a three-year search for the answers to these questions. Scientists will look for the reasons some men with HIV infection develop cancers and others do not, and will seek the potential risk factors leading to the development of cancer.

The scientists will evaluate participants’ lifestyles, sexual practices, past medical history, and current AIDS therapy to determine what role these may have in making some individuals more susceptible to cancer than others.

The study will focus on the 4,955 homosexual and bisexual men enrolled in the Multicenter AIDS Cohort Study (MACS). The study includes men who have developed AIDS, those who have tested positive for antibody to HIV but have no symptoms, and HIV-negative individuals. To date, 88 cancers have developed among the MACS participants.

Dr. Seymour Grufferman, Associate Director for Epidemiology and Preventive Oncology at the University of Pittsburgh and the Principal Investigator of the Cancer Substudy said, "There is concern that as AIDS treatments improve and patients live longer, they may be at greater risk of getting cancer because of their prolonged state of immunodeficiency, or lack of immunity." This study is especially important for gay men because of the high prevalence of Kaposi’s sarcoma among HIV infected gay and bisexual men.

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**SEX, LIES AND HIV**

Studies have shown that of all people tested for HIV, gay men who test positive are the most likely to practice safer sex.
However, a small number of men who know that they are HIV positive continue to engage in high risk activity. In addition to putting themselves at risk for repeated infections with HIV and other pathogens, these men are endangering the health of their partners. This behavior may be due to a number of factors such as denial of their infectiousness, anger, low self-control or self-esteem, and drug and alcohol use. In some cases, these men deliberately lie about their status and claim to be HIV negative.

It is important that all volunteers remember that they can best protect themselves from HIV infection by avoiding all anal sex or, at least, using condoms with all partners. A partner's assurance that he is HIV negative is not enough protection. In addition to deliberately lying, a partner may have become infected since his last test or may be silently infected. Persons needing assistance in learning skills related to negotiating with their partners are advised to seek counseling at the Persad Center or from therapists with experience in dealing with sexuality and homosexuality.

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MEET OUR STAFF

Judy Fossati, Administrative Secretary

Judy, a lifelong Pittsbourgher, raised in Hazelwood and presently living in East Liberty, is a graduate of Brashear High School. In high school, Judy concentrated in business foundation courses which eventually prepared her to accept a secretarial position in the Infectious Diseases and Microbiology Department at the Graduate School of Public Health at the University of Pittsburgh eight years ago.

Judy has performed secretarial services for Dr. Charles Rinaldo throughout her 8 years at Pitt, but in the last 2 years has worked exclusively for Dr. Rinaldo, Dr. Gupta and the Pitt Men's Study. Her duties primarily consist of keeping track of Dr. Rinaldo, typing and handling all grants, papers, manuscripts, letters and proposals for the Pitt Men's Study and performing administrative services for Drs. Rinaldo and Gupta. Though she has no direct contact with patients or laboratory specimens, Judy is still proud to be a part of the study and enjoys the work. As she said, "It gives me a good feeling to know that I'm part of the team that is working to help people and maybe save lives."

In her spare time, Judy enjoys bowling and playing softball. For a fun night on the town, Judy spends her evening watching her favorite Penguin hockey player, Mario Lemieux, score goals. Judy is a Penguin season ticket holder and will never forget meeting Wayne Gretzky on the evening of October 31, 1989.

ALSO

Lea Bontempo, Project Coordinator of the Cancer Substudy

Lea joined the PMS staff in August 1989 to assist the study in its efforts to look at cancers among HIV-infected men. A native New Engander, she attended the College of
the Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts, from which she graduated magna cum laude in biology. She developed an interest in health education, especially related to substance abuse, and came to Pittsburgh to study public health. In the short time it took for her to receive a Masters degree in Public Health from the University of Pittsburgh, she acquired a strong liking for both Pittsburgh and Pittsburghers, and decided to stay in the area.

When the Pitt Men's Study established a malignancy sub-study to examine HIV-associated cancers in detail, Lea saw an opportunity to make the most of her experience and training in research, health education, and administration. She carries out the administrative responsibilities of the cancer sub-study, and is involved in educating the volunteers about cancers. "The cancer sub-study is particularly important because many people with AIDS are living longer and may develop chronic conditions such as cancer during the course of their illness. It's important to learn as much as we can about why some HIV-infected people develop cancer whereas others do not."

Lea is particularly pleased to be working in the field of AIDS research. "AIDS is an issue that shapes our society in many ways, and I consider myself fortunate to be able to contribute to the efforts to fight the epidemic. It adds another dimension to my work. I feel that what the PMS is doing is crucial and extremely worthwhile. Many of the volunteers realize that they are in a unique position to help stop the spread of AIDS, especially among gay men, and do all they can to make a difference. It's really quite inspirational."

TRANSITIONS
With the recent closing of Travelers and the sale of the Crossover, two stalwarts, Lucky and Chuck Locy, appear to have retired (or taken a sabbatical) from the club business. Their leadership will be missed. Since the beginning of the AIDS epidemic both men have been on the front lines raising money, supporting the Pitt Men's Study, the Pittsburgh AIDS Task Force, Persad, MCC, Dignity and other groups responding to AIDS and to the needs of the lesbian and gay community, and working quietly and directly, helping people with AIDS and their families. In all of the years of the study's existence, neither man has ever refused an appeal for help.

They will be missed. We hope they will be back and continue their outstanding support.

PITTSBURGH'S MINISTERIAL NETWORK ANNOUNCES POLICY

The Ministerial Network on AIDS, a professional group of over 40 religious leaders representing Christian, Jewish and Sufi traditions, announced the release of a theological statement on the topic of AIDS. This statement outlines the Network's position on AIDS, the care of those affected by AIDS and the role of religion in the AIDS crisis. The statement is in contrast to those made by other religious groups which characterize AIDS as a punishment by God and which undermine the educational efforts by AIDS service groups.

The statement, which focuses on the compassionate care of all people, calls religious leaders to support and advocate education for those most at risk for HIV infection and services needed by those living with any form of illness related to
HIV infection and their loved ones.

The Rev. Penny Gladwell, pastor of Emanuel United Methodist Church and one of the authors of the statement, said: "There are clear mandates in all our traditions to suspend human judgment in order to meet the immediate needs of our neighbors and, in particular, the needs of those marginalized by societies. Because of the growing number of people with AIDS, they and their families and friends deserve our particular attention and care now and in the future."

Reflecting on the statement, the Rev. Louis F. Kavar, chair of the committee which composed the statement, hopes that "this statement will call all leaders of religious communities to reflect the love of God for all people, especially those affected by AIDS, while working for justice in their name."

MINISTERIAL NETWORK ON AIDS
THEOLOGICAL STATEMENT

We, the members of the Ministerial Network on AIDS, representing a variety of religious traditions, acknowledge our common understanding that God's love and compassion for all of life calls us to respond to others with that same love. Our traditions -- which include the liberating events of Exodus, the injunctions of the Pentateuch, the exhortations of the Hebrew prophets, the preaching, teaching and healing ministry of Jesus, and experiences of illumination and communion -- have taught us the meaning of God's love.

During times of exile, oppression and suffering, the presence of God is clearly demonstrated in Hebrew and Christian scriptures. Now, as then, we affirm that these same experiences of this loving presence are available to us and those whom we serve.

It is the power of God's love which moves life toward integrity, reconciliation, and health. Actualizing this love in our lives requires us to respond with courage, and hope, and faith in the possibility of the healing and wholeness available to all people. We
believe that in God we have the power to transcend those things that prevent us from experiencing a life of wholeness.

It is from this belief in and experience of the liberating love of God that we join as an ecumenical body to stand in solidarity with persons who have been affected by AIDS. Standing in solidarity means opening our lives to the experiences of joy and pain of others; feeling the joy and pain of others; responding to the immediate needs discovered through compassionate relationships; and educating and advocating for a creative and constructive societal response to these needs.

As people of faith who have gathered in an ecumenical body, our solidarity is with all those living with any form of HIV infection, their loved ones and families, and those who are in grief from the loss of loved ones due to AIDS. We recognize that HIV infection has had a particularly devastating effect on those marginalized in our society: gay and bisexual men, people of color, hemophiliacs, women and children. We work toward sharing the liberating presence of the God who is love with these individuals and all those whose lives are affected by AIDS.

**HEALTH NEWS**

Commonly Asked Questions About AIDS Answered by the Pitt Men's Study Staff

Q. After my yearly physical, my doctor told me my blood tests were normal. Does that mean that I am not infected with HIV?

A. Blood tests normally used in physicals do not include tests for the HIV antibody. HIV antibody tests are usually not ordered unless requested by the patient, or if the patient is known by his physician to be at high risk or has shown physical symptoms related to HIV infection. Various non-HIV tests of blood that are ordered are very sensitive and specific and the results of some of these tests can help your physician with the diagnosis and prognosis of HIV infection, but cannot be used in place of the test for the HIV antibody.

Q. How confidential are my doctor’s records?

A. The records are confidential. However, if you sign a consent form to allow your employer or insurance company access to your records, your doctor is compelled to send a copy of the records to them. In addition, your doctor may be forced to turn your records over to courts if they are subpoenaed. You should talk frankly with your health care provider about sensitive information that he or she may have in your records. The Pitt Men's Study does not release its records unless the volunteer signs a specific consent form for such release. The study is not compelled to comply with subpoenas and governmental requests for records because of its confidentiality certificate granted by Congress.
Q. Is oral sex safe?
A. Every sexual act involving body fluids from a person living with HIV infection has some level of risk. The risk ranges from extremely high for unprotected anal sex to almost non-existent for masturbation. There is some evidence that a very small number of people have been infected through oral-passive sex. Oral lesions may increase that risk. Information about the risk associated with specific acts can best be obtained locally through the Pittsburgh AIDS Task Force’s free seminar “Eroticizing Safer Sex.” You can sign up to attend one of their sessions by calling 363-AIDS.

Q. I have white patches on my tongue. Can it be thrush?
A. As a result of the publicity about thrush, many people have, for perhaps the first time in their lives, begun examining their tongues. The dorsum (top) of the tongue is covered by papillae, giving it a roughened surface. A thin white coating is frequent and normal. Often just visible toward the back of the tongue are large papillae. These should not be confused with tumor nodules. Their color can change as a result of vitamin use, certain foods and drugs. Unusual patch-like areas in the mouth should be examined by a health care professional.

Q. For the past year, lymph nodes in my neck have been swollen. Should I worry?
A. Swollen lymph nodes in the neck and groin are very common and can be caused by many factors. Post-nasal drip, cocaine use, denial problems and many viruses can cause neck glands to swell for months and perhaps years. People often feel their nodes to see whether they are swollen and such probing may also cause nodes to swell. If no other symptoms are present, enlarged nodes in the neck or groin are probably not a problem in themselves, but could indicate HIV infection and should be noted by your doctor.

Q. Should I be tested for HIV?
A. Knowing your HIV antibody status can be important. AZT has recently been found to delay the onset of AIDS for people who are infected but show no symptoms. In addition, aerosolized pentamidine has also been shown to be effective in reducing the likelihood of developing Pneumocystis carinii pneumonia. Both of these treatments are recommended for HIV-infected persons whose T cell counts are unusually low. Testing for HIV can help in alerting you and your physician of the need to monitor your T cells and to decide if these treatments are warranted. Some people experience psychological problems as a result of receiving test results. Counseling may be indicated before seeking results.

Q. Is AZT safe?
A. Most people taking AZT have had no harmful side effects. However, the drug has proven harmful to some persons, particularly by causing anemia (loss of red blood cells). AZT should only be taken under close medical supervision. If problems arise, the dosage of AZT can be reduced or discontinued.

NEWS AND NOTES is published by the Pitt Men’s Study. All information and opinions are the sole responsibility of the Study and do not necessarily reflect the policies or views of the National Institutes of Health.