

# Southern Community Cohort Study

THE SOUTHERN COMMUNITY COHORT STUDY NEWSLETTER IS AN ANNUAL PUBLICATION FOR STUDY PARTICIPANTS.

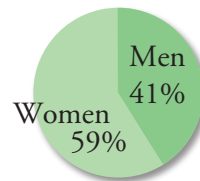
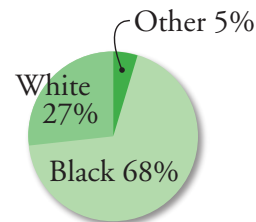
## Study Snapshot

### 60,000 and growing!

As a participant in the Southern Community Cohort Study, you are making a difference and helping to lessen the burden of cancer in the United States for generations to come. And you're in good company. More than 60,000 "cohort members" have joined to date. See the map and charts below to give you an idea about the makeup and home states of the cohort.

Participants can currently enroll in the study in one of two ways: by visiting a study interviewer in community health centers across the Southeast (see complete list of centers at [www.southerncommunitystudy.org](http://www.southerncommunitystudy.org)), or by returning a paper questionnaire that we are mailing to thousands of randomly selected people across the Southeast. Each day we come closer to reaching our enrollment goal of 100,000 members!

### How Many Have Joined From Your State?



## Welcome

We are happy to bring you another issue of the Southern Community Cohort Study newsletter to update you on the progress of the study and provide you with information to help you lead healthier lives.

As a participant in the Southern Community Cohort Study, you are helping to make history. Doctors and researchers have known for some time that some cancers and other serious health problems are more common in the South and also among African Americans compared to other ethnic groups. The SCCS will enroll nearly 100,000 people and is the largest study ever to focus on understanding the reasons behind these differences. Our ultimate goal is to help find ways to prevent cancer, improve treatments, and create better lives for everyone.

Being able to follow you over time is an important part of the study, so please be sure to call us at 1-800-734-5057 if you have moved or if your phone number has changed since you first enrolled.

Please know that your participation in this study is important and greatly appreciated. This exciting and meaningful project would be impossible without you!

Best wishes,



**Dr. William J. Blot**  
Principal Investigator  
Vanderbilt University



**Dr. Margaret K. Hargreaves**  
Co-Principal Investigator  
Meharry Medical College

## Cancer Now Outnumbers Heart Disease

The latest national data on trends in mortality show that cancer has now replaced heart disease as the number one cause of death among Americans under age 85. The shift is due to the fairly sharp decline in heart disease rates, compared to a smaller drop in cancer. Lung cancer continues to be the number one cancer killer, with most cases due to cigarette smoking. Since quitting smoking significantly reduces risk of lung cancer, as well as risk of a number of other diseases, and since a large percentage of participants in the SCCS still smoke, we urge smokers in the SCCS family to consider stopping. You can get help and support about quitting smoking by calling 1-877-44U-QUIT.

# Recipe

## A Healthy and Delicious Way to Use Left-over Chicken



### CHICKEN CREOLE

Preparation: 15 min.  
Cooking time: 15 min.  
Serves: 4

#### INGREDIENTS:

- 1½ cups diced, cooked chicken
- 1 small onion, chopped
- ½ medium green pepper, chopped
- 2 stalks celery, diced
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 can (4 oz.) mushroom stems and pieces, undrained
- 1 can (16 oz.) stewed tomatoes, crushed
- 1 bay leaf
- ½ tsp. brown sugar
- ½ tsp. seasoned salt
- ⅛ tsp. pepper
- 1 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 1 Tbsp. each cornstarch and cold water
- ¼ cup chopped parsley or cilantro

#### PREPARATION:

1. In 2-quart saucepan, sauté onion, green pepper and celery in the olive oil until onion is tender but not browned.
2. Add mushrooms, tomatoes, bay leaf, brown sugar, seasoned salt, pepper and Worcestershire sauce. Bring to a boil. Simmer, uncovered, for 10 minutes.
3. Add chicken and heat. Blend cornstarch and water. Stir into mixture. Cook, stirring until thickened.
4. Add parsley or cilantro. Serve over hot cooked brown rice. Great with a green salad and French bread.

Enjoy!

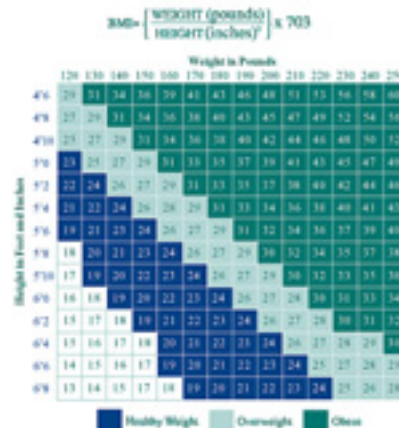
# The Biggest Loser?

On NBC's primetime reality series, "The Biggest Loser", the competition is about who can lose the most weight. The contestants lose weight by learning healthier eating and exercise habits. At the end of the show's season, the contestant who loses the most weight, the 'biggest loser', is the biggest winner, and not only because of the cash prize! By losing weight, the contestants are all lowering their risk of early death, heart disease, diabetes, some types of cancer, breathing problems, arthritis, stroke, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol.

Obesity is a growing problem in the US. In 2000, 31% of adults age 20-74 were obese, compared to just 13% in 1960. Rising rates of obesity can be seen across all age groups, ethnicities, and genders. Obese individuals have a 50-100% increased risk of premature death from all causes, and are twice as likely to have high blood pressure when compared to individuals at a healthy weight. Your risk of developing arthritis increases by about 10% for every two pounds of weight you gain.

Among the participants in the SCCS, 43% are obese. How can you tell if you are overweight or obese? One way of determining obesity is body mass index, or BMI. To find your own BMI, use the simple chart below.

If your BMI is between 25 and 30, that means that you are overweight (the light green shaded area of the chart). A BMI of 30 or greater indicates obesity (the dark green shaded area of the chart).



Obesity is related to a combination of genetic, metabolic, behavioral, environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic factors. While we cannot control all of these factors, we can each work to change our eating and exercise behaviors so that we can all be big winners, too. Did you know that you could potentially lose about 10 pounds in one year just by eliminating one 12-oz can of soda (150 calories) from your diet each day? Adding moderate amounts of physical activity, like a 30 minute brisk walk, 5 or more times per week, can also mean a difference in your weight of about 10 pounds in one year. Other things you might want to keep in mind when reaching for that snack:

- One small chocolate chip cookie (50 calories) is equivalent to walking briskly for 10 minutes.
- One hour of walking at a moderate pace (20 min/mile) uses about the same amount of energy that is in one jelly filled doughnut (300 calories).
- A fast food meal containing a double patty cheeseburger, extra-large fries and a 24 oz. soft drink is equal to running a full 2½ hours at a pretty quick pace (10 min/mile) (1500 calories).

## So, what can you do?

- Experts currently recommend eating a diet that consists of plenty of fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and 'healthy fats' like those from vegetable oils, fish and nuts.
- Pay attention to portion sizes— cutting back on portions is a good way to control your total calorie intake while still eating the foods you like.

Create opportunities for physical activity every day.

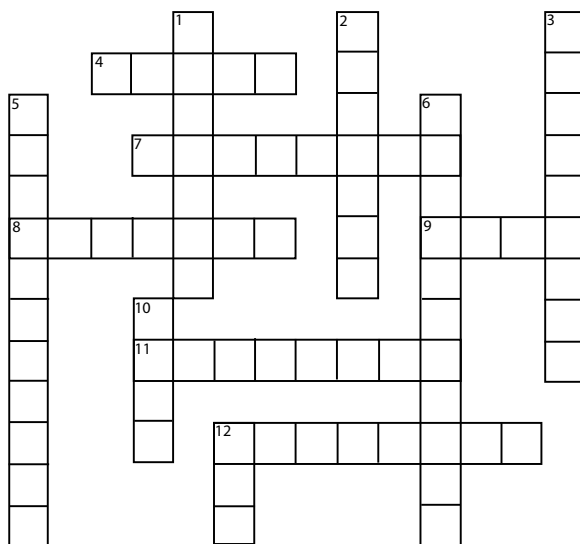
- Park your car farther away than you need to, or get off the bus one stop early, to give yourself a longer walk.
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Instead of snacking through your favorite TV show, take the time to stretch, do sit ups or jog/walk in place.
- Turn up the music and dance, by yourself or with a partner.

# Puzzle

(See solved puzzle on back.)

## ACROSS

- \_\_\_\_% of SCCS participants are cancer survivors.
- Black men in the U.S. have the highest rate of this type of cancer, compared to any other group in the world.
- Red wine is thought to have anti-\_\_\_\_\_ properties.
- Smoking is a known risk factor for this cancer, which accounts for 29% of all cancer deaths each year.
- The state with the highest rate of lung cancer (for both men and women) in the country.
- Genetic change that affects the workings of a cell and can lead to cancer. Can happen by chance or be the result of environmental exposures.



## DOWN

- This female cancer kills more women each year than cervical and endometrial cancers combined.
- You can decrease your risk of developing mouth (or oral) cancer by avoiding these types of products.
- This x-ray that detects breast cancer is recommended for all women age 40 and older. Breast cancer will affect about 1 in 8 women!
- A screening tool that helps detect colon cancer--if you are age 50 or older and haven't had one, ask your doctor.
- About 1/3 of cancer deaths might be prevented with a \_\_\_\_\_ including more fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and beans.
- Wearing sunscreen is a way to protect yourself from this cancer; the most common in the US.
- Breast cancer is 100 times more common in women, but about 1690 \_\_\_\_\_ were diagnosed in 2005.

The 2005 Atlantic Hurricane Season was the most active season on record. Many of us on the SCCS study team have friends, family, or colleagues whose lives were greatly impacted by these storms. It saddens us to know that many of you in our SCCS family were directly affected.

Below is one SCCS interviewer's account of the impact Hurricane Katrina had on his community. We hope that you all have been able to discover 'good things' from 'bad storms', just as he did.

Hurricane Katrina impacted so many lives and changed so many communities. It was so inspiring to see and hear about how people came together during this tragedy to comfort and help each other. Many people took in strangers, donated food, clothing, automobiles, and financial resources to help those whose lives were turned upside down by this storm.



My home town of Mobile, Alabama was affected directly and indirectly by Katrina. In my very own neighborhood, I awakened after the storm to discover that my automobile was bordered by two large oak trees that had given in to Katrina's 150 mph wind. The interesting thing is that one of the large trees had fallen directly in front of my automobile and the other large tree had fallen directly behind my automobile entrapping it. Both trees were only inches away from falling directly on and totally destroying my vehicle. I was very relieved and thankful. A neighbor, whom I have never met nor seen before, after noticing my situation, offered assistance and spent some time helping me "free" my automobile. To this day, we are friends. "Good" things can come out of "bad" storms!

### Rod Ferrell

SCCS Interviewer

Franklin Primary Health Center, Inc.

Mobile, Alabama

## Where Is My Sample Now?

If you are one of the more than 50,000 people who generously donated a blood, mouth rinse or urine sample to the study, you might be wondering what happened to it. Today, your sample(s), split into several tiny storage vials and labeled with only a number, are stored in freezers at Vanderbilt University. Your decision to donate a sample is the key to unlocking answers about how cancer risk is related to things like genes, vitamins, hormones and proteins. Over time, we will take samples from the freezers to use them for laboratory research. The amount of sample you donated will allow us to run hundreds of lab analyses just from your sample over the coming years!

We want to remind you that the sample you donated is for research purposes only. That means that we do not run tests and send you the results (like your doctor does). However, be assured that you will read about any important findings from the Southern Community Cohort Study in future editions of this newsletter.

During the course of this study, we have found some abnormal test results when conducting our laboratory research. We remind you that we do not contact participants regarding any individual results from the study. Therefore, please remember to get your yearly check-up and all recommended health screenings.

# Interviewer Spotlight



## Pamela Taylor-Coleman

Please meet Mrs. Pamela Taylor-Coleman, a full-time interviewer with the Southern Community Cohort Study at Quality of Life Health Services, Inc. in Gadsden,

Alabama. Since her employment with the study in October 2003, Pam has enrolled over 1,600 participants!

Pam believes that meeting the people who join the SCCS is the most interesting part of being a study interviewer. "There are no two participants alike, as two work days are not the same. The same questions are asked to each person who joins the study and the responses are different."

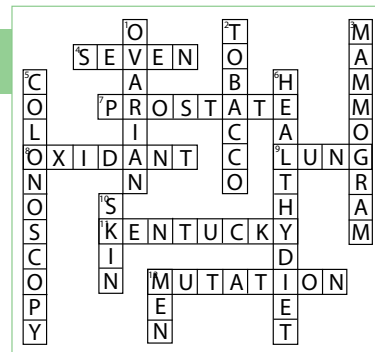
"Some participants do not have anyone that they can converse with; people need to know that they are not alone in this world. As a research interviewer, you cannot give participants advice about their lives or their health, but you can listen to them," said Pam.

"I have enjoyed working on this study," said Pam. "I play an important role in gathering data for a study that will make a difference in the lives of people."

Pam holds a Bachelor's degree in business technology and a

Master's degree in public administration from Jacksonville State University. Pam has lived in Gadsden all of her life, along with her parents, two adult sons, two older sisters, and three younger brothers.

## Answers



The Southern Community Cohort Study newsletter is published yearly for study participants. It is not intended as a replacement for the medical advice of your personal physician; any specific questions about your health should be referred to your doctor.

**To submit story suggestions, to request additional copies of the newsletter, or to report a change in address or telephone number, call us toll free at 1 (800) 734-5057.**

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