

## Johns Hopkins Research Center in Downtown Hagerstown

This downtown Hagerstown research center is the home for several large community based cohort studies focused on providing a scientific basis for cardiovascular disease prevention and healthy aging. The center is managed by Ms. Pat Crowley who oversees a dedicated research staff with a longstanding commitment to the highest quality standards for data collection.



Active studies at the center and their principal and co-principal investigators include:



**Atherosclerosis Risk in Communities (ARIC) Study**  
*Dr. Coresh*



**ARIC Carotid MRI**  
*Drs. Coresh and Astor*



**Cardiovascular Health Study (CHS)**  
*Drs. Fried and Chaves*



**Ginkgo Evaluation of Memory (GEM) Study**  
*Drs. Fried and Carlson*



**Sleep Heart Health Study (SHHS)**  
*Dr. Punjabi*

These studies involve substantial public health contributions by over 6000 residents of Washington County. They have also given rise to a large number of ancillary studies. Some include participant contact while many focus on laboratory and data analysis. The ongoing studies have included many faculty, staff and students at Johns Hopkins and other universities.

The downtown research center is affiliated with The George W. Comstock Center for Public Health Research and Prevention which was established in 1962 and named after Dr. Comstock in 2006. The downtown research center was started with the funding of the Atherosclerosis Risk in Communities (ARIC) study. Drs. Moyses Szklo and George Comstock together with Ms. Joel Hill, the first project coordinator, identified 5 Public Square as the location and established the center in 1986. ARIC continues to follow the approximately 4,000 participants recruited between 1986 and 1989 as well as conduct community surveillance for heart disease as one of four collaborative sites. The ARIC carotid MRI study updated the assessment of atherosclerosis in 575 cohort participants during 2005-2006. ARIC was followed in 1989 by the Cardiovascular Health Study (CHS), again with four collaborative sites. CHS focuses on cardiovascular disease risk factors and outcomes in adults 65 and older, and included 1300 participants selected when the study began. CHS continues contact with these participants every six months regarding health status and hospitalizations related to heart disease and stroke. During 2005 -2006, the CHS participants were invited to participate in the CHS All Stars Study, a functional aging study. Participants in a third multi-site study, the Sleep Heart Study (SHHS), were recruited from persons enrolled in either ARIC or CHS. Since 1999, Ms. Pat Crowley has held the position of project coordinator having been trained by Ms. Joel Hill since 1990. In 2000, the downtown unit became one of the national sites for the Ginkgo Evaluation of Memory (GEM) study, a clinical trial designed to find out if *Ginkgo biloba* can prevent or delay the decline in memory, thinking, and personality that can occur as people get older.

The research center staff has established a track record of the highest quality data collection with attention to detail and accuracy. In partnership with the community the research studies in Washington County have maintained outstanding recruitment and retention rates throughout the years. Staff is experienced in translating ambitious scientific plans for state of the art research into an action plan for the conduct of the study.

Related web sites:

<http://www.jhsph.edu/cvdepi/hagerstown.html>

<http://www.jhsph.edu/comstockcenter/description.html>