

Atherosclerosis Risk in Communities



at a glance

The ARIC Study, sponsored by the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute (NHLBI), is a prospective epidemiologic study conducted in four U.S. communities. This study began in response to a request NHLBI for research on cardiovascular disease in middle-aged populations. Recruitment and study visits began in 1986 with 4,020 women and men aged 45-64 randomly selected from county motor vehicle registration lists agreeing to participate. ARIC is designed to investigate the etiology and natural history of atherosclerosis, the etiology of clinical atherosclerotic diseases, and variation in cardiovascular risk factors, medical care and disease by race, gender, location, and date.

Geographic areas and their respective field centers nationally include:

- Jackson, MS - University of Mississippi
- Forsythe County, NC – Wake Forest University
- Suburban Minneapolis, MN – University of Minnesota
- Washington County, MD – Johns Hopkins University

The study data coordinating center is the Collaborative Studies Coordinating Center at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill. Principal Investigators at JHU have included: Dr. Moyses Szklo, Dr. Javier Nieto, and currently Dr. Josef Coresh.

Four clinical visits for all participants have occurred since the study began. Data was collected from various physical and interview procedures at these visits, including blood and urine sampling, seated blood pressure, ankle-brachial index, anthropometry, electrocardiogram, carotid ultrasound, and health, diet, medication, and other lifestyle questionnaires.

85 ancillary studies have ranged from large studies such as the ARIC MRI study which recently included a full examination on 2,000 of the study participants (>550 in Washington County) to studies of laboratory specimen or data analysis only grants. Currently Drs. Astor, Coresh and Kao are about to begin using stored specimen to better characterize kidney function and study genetic and non-genetic risk factors for its progression.

Research Center staff began morbidity and mortality follow up in 1986 with annual telephone interviews, medical record abstractions for cohort hospitalizations related to coronary heart disease and community surveillance for coronary heart disease and related conditions. Starting in 2006, event surveillance has expanded to also focus on congestive heart failure.

To date, the ARIC project has published over 510 articles in peer-reviewed journals in addition to summary reports of ARIC data at national and international scientific conferences and meetings.

ARIC is currently funded through January 31, 2012.

The current Principal Investigator is Josef Coresh, MD, PhD, coresh@jhu.edu

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For more information, visit the *ARIC public website* at <http://www.csc.unc.edu/aric/>