



MASSACHUSETTS
Alzheimer's Disease
Research Center



THE MADRC MESSENGER

Research Education & Updates

Fall 2020 Issue

We are Your Research Home:

We hope this newsletter finds you well. The Massachusetts Alzheimer's Disease Research Center and Center for Alzheimer Research and Treatment are your home for information and resources about Alzheimer's disease and related dementia research. Please visit us at www.madrc.org and www.bwhcart.org or follow us on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#).

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us: (857) 307-0708 or BWHMADRCeducation@partners.org

COVID-19: We have re-opened our research operations and are taking every precaution to protect our research participants, study partners, and staff. If you or a family member need information or resources, MGH Brigham has set up a COVID-19 hotline for clinicians, patients and the public at **617-724-7000**.

Research at BWH & MGH: We have several observational studies and clinical trials open across the BWH and MGH campuses. There are five-investigator-led observational studies currently looking for volunteers concerned about, or noticing change with, their memory and thinking abilities, or those with a diagnosis of Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI) or Early Alzheimer's Disease (AD).

These studies will help improve our understanding of methods to obtain an earlier diagnosis in patients concerned about cognitive decline, identify contributing factors to cognitive decline, and help improve monitoring and assessment. If you want to learn more about these studies, please contact Molly Lawrence, recruitment specialist: mlawrence9@bwh.harvard.edu

Alzheimer Prevention Study: We recently opened the AHEAD A3,4-5 study. This study is comprised of two different trials testing the same investigational drug (known as BAN2401). Cognitively normal study participants are enrolled in one of two AHEAD trials based on whether they have intermediate or elevated levels of amyloid in their brain:

- Participants with intermediate amyloid levels take part in the AHEAD A-3 trial
- Participants with elevated amyloid levels take part in the AHEAD A-45 trial

This study is looking for healthy adults ages 55-80 who may be at an increased risk of memory loss associated with Alzheimer's disease but do not have significant symptoms yet. To learn more about this study contact Allyson Pulsoni, recruitment specialist: apulsoni@bwh.harvard.edu

Research participation from home during COVID-19: Individuals with a family history of Alzheimer's disease, or who have memory concerns, have asked if there is a research study they can do from home. The answer is yes! The Alzheimer's Prevention Trials (APT) Webstudy engages people in their own homes, on computers, and uses technology to identify those potentially at risk for Alzheimer's disease. Anyone aged 50 or over can participate in the APT Webstudy. Learn more: www.aptwebstudy.org.

Thanks again to those of you in the registry who have previously completed online surveys. Please keep an eye out for a brief questionnaire/check-in that we are preparing to send during the upcoming holiday season.

Get the Facts!

Check out our infographics below to learn the difference between clinical trials and observational studies, as well as age-related memory problems vs. cause for concern.

**Age Related
Memory Changes
VS.
Cause for Concern**

UNDERSTANDING THE DIFFERENCE

Many people notice changes with their memory and thinking as they age. If these changes are causing concern, write them down and address them with your doctor.



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Normal Aging

- Forgetting, or slow to recall, names
- Misplacing items
- Forgetting where you parked
- Forgetting why you entered a room
- Occasional difficulty finding words
- You are worried about your memory changes but your friends & family are not.

Cause for Concern

- Missing appointments
- Putting items in odd places (milk in cabinet, keys in microwave)
- Difficulty following traffic signs
- Asking the same questions repeatedly
- Getting lost in familiar places
- You do not notice memory problems but friends & family are concerned.

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CLINICAL TRIALS VERSUS OBSERVATIONAL STUDIES

COMPARING THE 2 TYPES OF RESEARCH

Clinical trials	Observational studies
Determine new ways to treat or prevent disease	Determine new ways to detect and track disease
Involve an intervention with a drug or treatment to discover if it is safe and effective	No treatments or interventions are involved
Participants are randomly assigned into groups and either receive an investigational treatment or are in the control group which will receive standard of care or placebo	Clinical evaluations such as memory tests, MRI, PET scan, physical exams, lumbar punctures and blood draws may be performed
Neither the study team nor the participants know in which group they will be	Evaluations may help identify new tests, procedures, biomarkers that improve how we diagnose or monitor people living with disease
Clinical evaluations such as memory tests, MRI, PET scan, physical exams, lumbar punctures and blood draws may be performed	Study may help inform development of a clinical trial
Safety and efficacy is closely monitored by research team	May involve one or more visits

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