Newsletter - October 2013

With more than 12 years of follow-up now available the Million Women Study continues to be an extremely valuable resource for the study of women's health. With a new period of funding recently awarded by the Medical Research council to support the study until October 2018, we look forward to answering many new questions related to the health of our cohort. We are grateful for the continued support of all our collaborators and study participants.

We have published 23 MWS papers in 2012 and 2013. These include studies of body size, smoking, reproductive factors, alcohol consumption, pet ownership, mobile phone use, genetic and environmental factors, as they relate to cancers at specific sites. We have also looked at some risk factors for coronary heart disease, fractures, and motor neuron disease. All publications are available on the study website: www.millionwomen study.org.

Genes, the environment, and breast cancer

We found that in situ ductal breast cancers (DCIS) and invasive ductal breast cancers had similar genetic and environmental risk factor profiles, implying that they both share the same aetiology. However, while there was an association between BMI and invasive ductal breast cancer, there was no association of BMI with DCIS. This suggests that BMI may influence disease progression.

Reeves G.K., et al; Comparison of the effects of genetic and environmental risk factors on in situ and invasive ductal breast cancer. *International Journal of Cancer* 2012; 131:930-937

The 21st century hazards of smoking and benefits of stopping

Women born in developed countries during the early 1940s were the first generation in which a substantial number of women smoked throughout their adult life. We found that long term cigarette smokers lose at least 10 years of their lifespan. However, stopping smoking before the age of 40 years avoids more than 90% of this increased risk of death.

Pirie K, et al; The 21st century hazards of smoking and benefits of stopping: a prospective study of one million women in the UK. *Lancet* 2013; 381: 133-141.

Blood Samples and the disease susceptibility study

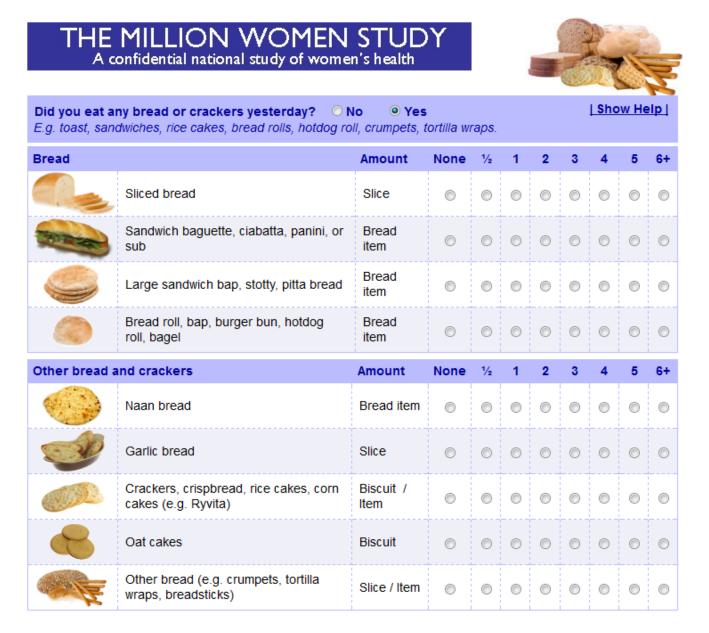
We have been asking more study participants to provide blood samples to help us expand our understanding of the relationship between genetic and biochemical factors, and disease susceptibility. This phase of blood collection is due to be completed by the end of 2014.

4th General follow-up questionnaires

Mailing of the 4th general follow-up questionnaire began in June 2013 and will finish in March 2014.

Online diet questionnaire

To date, 27 500 women have completed at least one online 24-hour dietary recall questionnaire.



What do you think of our website? Please let us know if you have any comments or suggestions. Contact: Barbara Crossley barbara.crossley@ceu.ox.ac.uk