

# research news

## Cardiac rehabilitation research: Developing an effective tool to measure diet

A healthy diet can mean different things to different people. Many of us believe we are eating in a healthy way, when in fact, we might not be. People with heart disease may be overweight and have high blood pressure. They may also have diabetes. So following a diet that is low in fat and high in fibre is crucial to regain and improve one's health.

At VGH, patients who enter the Cardiac Rehabilitation Program now no longer have to wonder if their diet is on track. A new tool, developed and currently being tested here, is showing to reliably track fat and fibre consumption.

When nurses and dietitians in the VGH Cardiac Rehab Program couldn't find a way to measure the impact of the nutrition counselling they offer, they decided to develop one. The result was the "Smart Diet Canadian Version Questionnaire" which measures the amount of fat and fibre consumed each day, and allows counsellors to see whether patients are making changes to their diet.

Developing a tool is one thing. It also has to be tested to see if it is valid and reliable. Linda Wiens, a clinical resource nurse from the program, applied to the VCH Research Institute for a grant to test the validity and reliability of the questionnaire.

"It's really important to have a tool that provides accurate information," says Wiens, who is also principal investigator of the study. "We are then able to provide much more focused counselling to improve diet which ultimately leads to a healthier heart."

The study enrolled 54 people who answered the questionnaire and also kept a diet diary. The two different methods were compared to measure the questionnaire's validity. A month later, participants were asked to repeat the questionnaire again. Those results were measured against the answers of the first questionnaire to determine the reliability of information. Although the data still needs to be statistically evaluated, the numbers look very good in terms of confirming both validity and reliability.

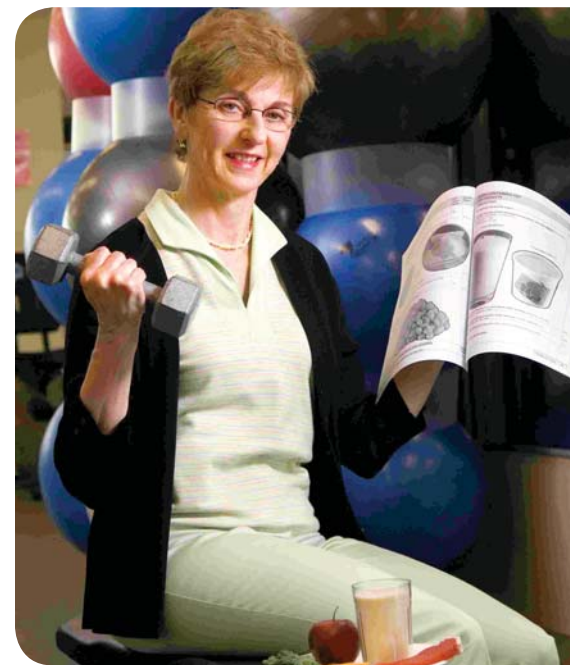
"So far, we are very pleased," says Wiens. "With a valid and reliable diet questionnaire, we will be able to confidently evaluate the effectiveness of our

program's nutrition services by comparing fat and fibre intake at the beginning and end of the program. We can also use this for other comparative evaluations including cholesterol levels and changes in weight."

The Cardiac Rehabilitation Program at VGH sees about 600 patients; approximately half of whom choose to receive individualized nutrition counselling.

For more information, visit [www.vch.ca/rehabilitation/cardiac/vancouver.htm](http://www.vch.ca/rehabilitation/cardiac/vancouver.htm) or call the VGH Centre for Cardiac Rehabilitation at 604-875-5389

Linda Wiens, clinical resource nurse



# around VCH Research Institute

## Celebrate Research Week

March 8-15, 2008

Across Vancouver Coastal Health, a significant amount of research is being conducted. We are proud to promote, showcase, and increase the awareness of the important work being done at our hospital and health care sites. Please join us for our feature lecture (details below). For a full list of celebrate research events go to [www.vchri.ca](http://www.vchri.ca) or [www.celebrateresearch.ubc.ca](http://www.celebrateresearch.ubc.ca)



Dr. Chris Buller

### Straight from the heart: your guide to the latest in cardiac research, care, and prevention

Featuring: **Dr. Chris Buller**, Head Division of Cardiology, Vancouver General Hospital and UBC; **Dr. Karin Humphries**, Investigator, Cardiac Health Outcomes at VGH & St. Paul's Hospital; Associate Professor, Division of Cardiology, UBC; and **Dr Sam Lichtenstein**, Head Division of Cardiovascular Surgery, St. Paul's Hospital and UBC. Moderated by **Dr. Rhonda Low**, Host, "Your Health," CTV News at Five; family physician and clinical associate professor, Dept of Family Medicine, UBC.

- Date/Time:** Tuesday, March 11 at 7:00 pm (doors at 6:00pm)
- Location:** Vancouver General Hospital, Jim Pattison Pavilion  
899 West 12th Ave  
Cordula & Gunter Paetzold Health Education Centre
- Registration:** e-mail [celebrateresearch@vch.ca](mailto:celebrateresearch@vch.ca) or call: 604.875-4372

## Latest CIHR Funding Announced

CIHR awarded VCHRI Investigators close to three million dollars in the September 2007 Operating Grants Competition.

- **Dr. Howard Feldman and Dr. Ian MacKenzie**, are recipients of a \$1.5 million, five-year grant for their work in frontotemporal dementia (FTD). The team earlier discovered the genetic cause of this type of dementia. They now look at genetic, clinical, pathological and biomarker studies.



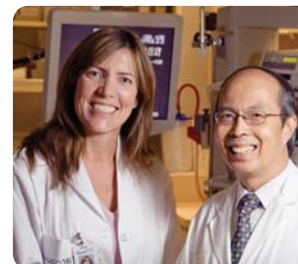
Dr. Ian MacKenzie and Dr. Howard Feldman

Five-year awards of approximately \$700,000:

- **Dr. Aziz Ghahary and Dr. Christopher Ong**, BC Professional Fire Fighters' Burn and Wound Healing Lab, for the development of a non-rejectable skin substitute for wound coverage.
- **Dr. Tom Oxland and Brian Kwon**, ICORD, for investigating the clinically relevant mechanisms of spinal cord injury.
- **Dr. Yu Tian Wang**, the Brain Research Centre, for investigating molecular mechanisms and physiological roles of AMPA receptor insertion.

Three-year awards of \$300,000 - \$400,000:

- **Drs. Yuzhuo Wang and Martin Gleave**, the Prostate Centre at VGH, for studies in metastatic prostate cancer therapy.
- **Drs. Annette M. McWilliams and Stephen Lam**, Respiratory & Critical Care, for "electronic nose," detecting lung cancer from markers in breath.
- **Drs. Vesna Sossi and Stanley B. Floresco**, the Pacific Parkinson's Research Centre, for studies of treatment related compulsive behaviours and impulse control disorders in Parkinson's disease.



Drs. Annette M. McWilliams and Stephen Lam

Proof of Principle Phase Two Grant Funding – designed to help commercialize research: **Dr. Aziz Ghahary**, BC Professional Fire Fighters' Burn and Wound Healing Research Laboratory, received over \$500,000 from CIHR and industry partner, Augurex Life Sciences, to look at biomarkers for arthritis.