

# A+ CALIFORNIA TEACHERS STUDY Report Card

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*Dear Study Member,*

*I am writing to thank you for participating in the California Teachers Study and to update you on the latest news. Since 1995 when you joined the study by completing a "baseline" survey, the California Teachers Study has become a national leader in understanding the causes of breast cancer and other health conditions among women.*

*With over 133,000 women participating in the California Teachers Study, we have achieved much, as described on the back of this letter. You will also see a list of the participating research centers from across the state.*

*I am also enclosing our brand new survey, made possible by continued support from the National Cancer Institute. We are looking to obtain current information from you on leading questions regarding causes and prevention of breast and other cancers, as well as other important health conditions. Please complete and return it as soon as possible.*

*On behalf of all of us, thank you so much for your continued support of the California Teachers Study.*

*Sincerely,*

*Leslie Bernstein, PhD  
and the CTS research team*

**California Teachers Study**

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# CALIFORNIA TEACHERS STUDY EXPANDS IMPACT

**IN THE 17 YEARS SINCE THE CALIFORNIA TEACHERS STUDY** was created, the importance of the study results has grown far beyond our state borders. By chance, the study began just at the time that has been generally recognized as the emergence of widespread, public access to the Internet. This, in turn, has changed how new scientific findings are reported. Previously, research results were published in soft-cover magazines, mostly found only in college or hospital libraries. Those print copies are now largely replaced with “e-print”, accessible by nearly anyone with Internet access – not only other researchers but also the general public.

The California Teachers Study has published over 85 detailed reports in medical journals based on the information that the study members have provided. We have re-



structured the CTS website to simplify your access to this information. Please visit the [Publications](#) section on our website and find links to the "e-print" content containing some of the study summaries. Just click on the link to the paper and you will be transferred to this information. While our early reports focused primarily on breast cancer, the study design supports research on many aspects of women's health. The results presented in all of our papers relate only to the participants in our study, but we believe that most can be extended to other women. For example, just in the past year, some of the findings are listed here (the numbers below correspond to entries on our website):

- We examined whether common variants in several genes affects breast cancer and endometrial cancer risk (61 and 78)
- Hormone therapy does not influence lung cancer risk (62)
- Diet with soy, nuts, fruit or vegetables does not reduce risk of lymphoma and multiple myeloma (65)
- Oral contraceptive use overall has not been linked with the most common types of non-Hodgkin lymphoma.

- We have a suggestive finding that oral contraceptive use before age 25 may be related to risk, but this is not certain since we did not see that longer use by women was predictive of higher risk. Use of menopausal hormones was not related to non-Hodgkin lymphoma risk (67)
- We combined our research efforts with those of 13 other groups to study pancreas cancer, which can only be studied well in cohort studies like the California Teachers Study. We found that obesity is related to increased risk of pancreatic cancer (68), but neither folate (vitamin B intake) (75) nor coffee and tea drinking are related to risk of pancreatic cancer (77)
- Women who have used oral contraceptives before breast cancer diagnosis are not at greater risk of death after diagnosis than women who never used oral contraceptives (71)
- We have done several unique studies looking at risk of death in the cohort and have shown that women who have both ovaries removed have the same survival as similar women who have not had this surgery (79). Furthermore, evaluating air pollution patterns in the areas where study participants live, we have found that small particulates in the air are related to rates of cardiovascular disease deaths in the cohort (72)
- Smoking and secondhand smoke may increase risk of non-Hodgkin lymphoma (73)
- Delayed pubertal development may be related to increased risk of thyroid cancer in younger women (74)

## YOUR RESEARCH PARTNERS

**THE CALIFORNIA TEACHERS STUDY** has always been a collaboration of several institutions from around the state. The California State Teachers Retirement System played a key role by introducing the study to its members. Similarly, the California Department of Public Health has frequently contributed information from its data sources. The active research is conducted at four institutions:

- The City of Hope, Duarte [www.cityofhope.org](http://www.cityofhope.org)
- The University of Southern California, Los Angeles [keck.usc.edu](http://keck.usc.edu)
- The Cancer Prevention Institute of California, Fremont [www.cpic.org](http://www.cpic.org)
- The University of California, Irvine [www.som.uci.edu](http://www.som.uci.edu)

All of these collaborators are grateful for the research funding that has been provided by the State of California, National Cancer Institute, California Breast Cancer Research Program, California Tobacco Related Disease Research Program, National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences and Department of Defense Breast Cancer Research Program. ❖

## Need to Contact Us?

[www.CalTeachersStudy.org](http://www.CalTeachersStudy.org)

or call toll-free at (800) 568-9471

Much more CTS information is available on the website, including all previous newsletters and surveys, study data, descriptions of published results, and how to contact us.