

# The California Teachers Study

## Quarterly Digest

### Summer Updates from Our Team

*Here's how we're supporting essential research*

Like you, we're all adjusting as best we can to the COVID-19 pandemic. We hope you all are finding the right balance you need to stay safe, healthy, and optimistic.

The last few months showed us how central—how foundational—schools & teachers are to our communities. From our local elementary schools to university campuses, teachers at every level stepped up, supported their students, adjusted to distance and virtual learning, and even conducted virtual commencements. Our fingers are crossed that schools everywhere can return to a safe and new normal routine sometime soon.

COVID-19 has reminded all of us of how much our health depends not just on what we do as individuals, but on what happens around us. Multiple individual, environmental, and societal factors contribute to health. Many of the questions that are being asked about COVID-19 (Why are some groups at higher risk than others? What can be done to lower those risks?) also apply to cancer and other diseases. The California Teachers Study researchers' top priority is to continue to use the incredibly valuable data you all have provided to guide important and timely research that generates discoveries that improve women's health.

One especially important area of research right now is understanding how societal factors affect health and health disparities. One of those societal factors is racism. Racism is hard to talk about; it is even harder to experience, and too many people still do. The last few months have shown that all of us need to do more of the hard work that's required to eliminate racism in all its forms. Equality and opportunity for all can improve health for all.

We don't have all of the answers, but we'll keep working, trying, and learning. Of course, our California Teachers Study work continues, and this Quarterly Digest provides updates on some recent developments.

### Why I Participate in the California Teachers Study

*Participants share why they joined and why they stay*

In commemoration of the California Teachers Study's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, our last Quarterly Digest asked study participants to share the reasons they initially joined the California Teachers Study and their motivation for continued participation.

More than 300 study participants wrote to share their personal stories. Participants shared thoughts about their commitment to science, their desire to help others, their enthusiasm for study results, and

the ways in which cancer has personally affected them and their families.

The California Teachers Study is made possible by you and the 100,000 other women who, like you, have been a part of the study for a quarter century. In celebration of 25 years together, we've shared some of the common themes and anonymous quotes from your fellow cohort members. [Visit our blog today to read those stories.](#)



## Findings from Questionnaire 6

*How did participants respond to the recent questionnaire?*

Between October 2017 and July 2019, more than 30,000 study participants responded to Questionnaire 6! The responses to that questionnaire will be used to drive future research into breast cancer and other health conditions.

How happy are participants overall? Which health conditions do participants commonly report? Now that the questionnaire is completed, we've updated our website with interactive graphs so you can see how study participants responded to questions on happiness, physical activity, health conditions, sleep, and much more. [Click here to explore those charts and graphs.](#)

## Dr. Cheryl Anderson Named as Founding Dean

*Join us in congratulating our CTS Steering Committee Member*

Dr. Cheryl Anderson has been named the founding dean of The Herbert Wertheim School of Public Health and Human Longevity Science at the University of California, San Diego (UC San Diego). The school was established in 2019.

Dr. Anderson joined the CTS Steering Committee in 2018, has played an integral role in the California Teachers Study's research response to COVID-19, and continues to contribute her valuable expertise in research on nutrition and chronic disease prevention.



Please join us in congratulating Dr. Anderson on her new role at UCSD!

## Study Findings: Sugar-sweetened beverage consumption

*How does consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages affect risk of cardiovascular disease?*

A while ago, we let you know about an analysis project led by Dr. Lorena Pacheco, which was examining the effect of sugar-sweetened beverages—caloric soft drinks, sweetened bottled waters or teas, and fruit drinks—on different health outcomes. The findings of that research project were recently published and [highlighted on CNN!](#)

The study found that consuming one or more sugar-sweetened beverages a day was associated with a nearly 20% increased risk of developing cardiovascular disease.

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