

*Racial/Ethnic Differences continued*

events such as racism and discrimination, resulting in greater morbidity. This study aims to assess whether cortisol / DHEA and cortisol / DHEA-S ratios are associated with high levels of stress as measured by validated self-report questionnaires, and determine if there are racial / ethnic differences in these measures between African American, Caucasian, and Hispanic healthy women. A total of 105 women 20 – 40 years of age will be recruited to complete stress related questionnaires and have blood samples taken. (PI: K Fulda; Funded by: UNTHSC Intramural Grant).

Psychophysiological Regulation of Stress-Related Eating Behavior

The purpose of this study is to determine the effect of psychological stress on relationships among cortisol, active ghrelin, psychological states, eating behavior, and food intake in obese women who identify themselves as stress-induced eaters. Obesity has become a world-wide epidemic, yet few advances have been made in understanding obesity as a function of the complex interactions between biological and behavioral factors that regulate appetite and eating behavior. Stress-related eating has been identified as a major problem affecting the weight loss efforts of more than 60% of obese people and may be a key reason why weight loss interventions are largely unsuccessful for a substantial proportion of the target population. This research will provide a valuable foundation for related research that will lead to the eventual development and testing of evidence-based interventions to effectively promote sustained weight loss and reduce obesity-related diseases. *continued*

*Stress-Related Eating continued*

Since the study inception, a total of 93 participants were screened with only 36 eligible participants. 28 participants have completed the study and 8 are to be scheduled. Currently we are processing first phase participant's salivary samples to identify cortisol levels. Those with high salivary cortisol levels will be identified as cortisol-reactive subjects and will be invited to the next portion of the study approximately in one month. The study goal is to process 40 cortisol-reactive subjects on whom will be randomly assigned to the stress or control condition. (PI: S Franks; Funded by: UNTHSC Intramural Grant)

Race and Differences in Asthma Prevalence among Children in Tarrant County Texas

The purpose of this study is to examine the association between race and asthma among children in Tarrant County. The study is translational and includes a population-based epidemiological component and a patient-based individual component. The epidemiological component of the study examines characteristics of patients' environments including data from the Environmental Protection Agency, Tarrant County Public Health, and the U.S. Census Bureau. The individual component of the study examines patient characteristics obtained from survey questionnaires, blood samples, dust samples from patients' homes, and genetic studies. Data analysis is currently in progress. (PIs: B Benz, H Jones, & N Lackan; Funded by: UNTHSC EXPORT Center Intramural grant)