

BCFR NEWSLETTER

Keeping you up to date on the Breast Cancer Family Registry

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PUBLICATIONS & NEWS

Steroid Metabolome and Breast Cancer Risk in Women with a Family History of Breast Cancer

Many breast cancer studies focus on the role of estrogens (“female hormones”) in increasing breast cancer risk, but fewer studies have explored the potential role of other steroid hormones. A recent study published in *Cancer Epidemiology, Biomarkers & Prevention* comprehensively examined the steroid metabolome for its association with breast cancer risk among women with a family history of breast cancer. The study, led by Dr. Lauren Houghton at Columbia University and using data from 186 participants of the New York site of the BCFR, investigated the association between 36 urinary metabolites with breast cancer risk in pre and postmenopausal women. The 36 metabolites included glucocorticoids, androgens, progestogens, and estrogens.

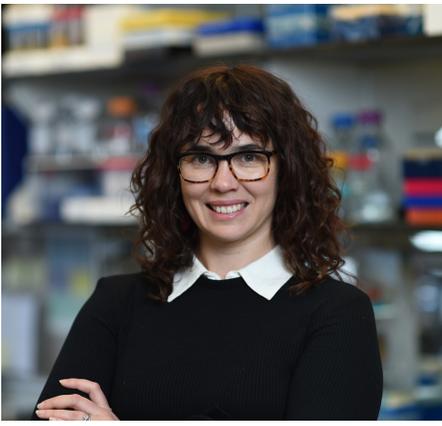
Researchers found that urinary metabolites of glucocorticoids (“stress hormones”) and androgens (“male hormones”) were associated with an increased risk of breast cancer and that this effect was seen in women at low, intermediate, and high risk based on their family history. Results also showed that specific glucocorticoids were associated with an increased risk of breast cancer ranging from 9% to 161%.

The study is the first to detect a relationship between stress hormones and incident breast cancer. If replicated, future implications of these findings include a better understanding of hormonal causes of breast cancer, new biomarkers for assessing breast cancer risk, and the need for additional research into the factors that influence glucocorticoid and androgen levels.

[Read the full study, “The Steroid Metabolome and Breast Cancer Risk in Women with a Family History of Breast Cancer: The Novel Role of Adrenal Androgens and Glucocorticoids”](#)

HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM THE REGISTRY

Thank you so much for your participation in the BCFR. We truly appreciate your contributions to breast cancer research, and we hope you and your family have a healthy and happy new year.



MEET A RESEARCHER Lauren C. Houghton, PhD

Dr. Lauren Houghton is an Anthropologist and Epidemiologist at Columbia University. She uses mixed-methods to understand how culture gets beneath the skin through hormones, specifically in relation to women's reproductive lives from puberty to menopause. Dr. Houghton has conducted fieldwork with Native Americans in the Southwest US, mothers in New York City, school girls in Bangladesh, UK, and US, and has personally interviewed over 1,000 women and girls about puberty. She is currently exploring how menstrual health apps can be used in studying the causes and prevention of breast cancer.



Patterns of menstrual cycles can provide information about hormone levels and other factors that may influence the risk of breast cancer. If you are a Young Women's Study participant, contact your BCFR site to learn more about tracking your menstrual cycle using the [Clue Period and Cycle Tracker App](#)!

5 HEALTHY TIPS FOR THE NEW YEAR

Ring in the New Year with these healthy habits



- 1 Spend time with friends, family, and your community**
Take time to safely spend time with loved ones and get to know your community in 2022.

[Learn more](#)



- 2 Switch to "green" cleaning products**
Switch to "green" cleaning products or make your own cleaning solutions

[Learn more](#)



- 3 Try new foods and recipes**
Find a balanced diet and recipes that fit with your lifestyle. New recipes can help make healthy eating more exciting

[Learn more](#)



- 4 Incorporate Stretch Breaks**
Whether you are at work, school, or at home, try to incorporate regular exercise into your routine. Start small by incorporating stretch breaks or investing in a compact under-desk bike to get your body moving.

[Learn more](#)



- 5 Schedule those doctors appointments**
COVID-19 had many of us forgoing regular check ups and medical examinations. Remember to go back to your primary care doctor to update them on any changes and make appointments with specialists

[Learn more](#)

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Australia ABCFR-research@unimelb.edu.au | **California** bcfamilyregistry@stanford.edu
New York metronyregistry@cumc.columbia.edu | **Ontario** OFBCR@uhnresearch.ca
Philadelphia BCFRYoungWomenStudy@fcc.edu | **Utah** jo.anson@hci.utah.edu