



CANADIAN FOUNDATION FOR DIETETIC RESEARCH

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CFDR Announces Results of 2014 Annual Grants Competition

Toronto, June 14, 2014 – The Canadian Foundation for Dietetic Research (CFDR) announced today that it awarded nearly \$140,000 to seven dietetic researchers and their teams to advance nutrition knowledge.

Helen Ann Dillon, MSc, RD, Chair of the Board of CFDR, said, “These seven projects are all of the highest caliber of science and cover a wide variety of food, nutrition and dietetics practice research. Certainly, they will answer some important questions and provide new knowledge that will enhance dietetic practice and lead to better health for Canadians. Congratulations to these researchers from the CFDR Board of Directors.”

Below are summaries of the seven new research projects.

Prenatal Nutrition in Team-Based Care: A Qualitative Investigation of Current Practices and Opportunities for Collaborative Optimization of Care **Principal Investigator: Laura Forbes, RD, PhD, University of Guelph**

Most Canadian women have poor quality diets and gain excess weight. This research aims to explore the nature of nutrition-related prenatal care delivered in Family Health Teams (FHTs) and Community Health Centres (CHCs) in Ontario from the perspective of care providers, and to identify opportunities for improving the quality of prenatal nutrition care. The study will provide information about how primary care teams can provide improved, efficient and high quality prenatal nutrition care that will promote both the optimal growth of infants and the long-term health of both the mother and child.

Attitudes and Beliefs of Young Adults Towards Dietary Calcium: Mobilizing Knowledge for Consumers and the Dietetics Community **Principal Investigator: Andrea Buchholtz, RD, PhD, University of Guelph**

As many as 60% of young Canadian adults do not meet their daily intake requirement for calcium, which is needed for achieving and maintaining strong bones (particularly in young adults) and in preventing disease. However, dairy products, good sources of calcium, are the most under-consumed food group of *Canada's Food Guide*. The main goal of our study is to determine young adults' knowledge, attitudes and beliefs about calcium, its dietary sources and its role in health, as well as what factors may influence calcium intake. Identifying and communicating facilitators of, and barriers to, calcium and dairy product intake to consumers and Registered Dietitians is key to increasing calcium intakes of young adults. In turn, this will encourage optimal bone health in young adults while also decreasing risk of other health problems.

Effects of caffeine-gene interactions on health and performance

Principal Investigator: Nanci S. Guest, MSc, RD, CSCS, University of Toronto

Numerous studies have investigated the effects of caffeine on athletic performance, but the results have not been consistent. Previous research in our lab has identified genetic differences between individuals that affect the rate of caffeine metabolism, which helped to explain why caffeine has different effects on heart disease risk in different individuals. We will investigate whether the inconsistencies among studies showing improvements, no effect or adverse effects on athletic performance with caffeine use, could also be due to genetic differences among athletes. The outcome of this research will enable us to determine which individuals (based on their genetic profile) are likely to derive a performance-enhancing effect from caffeine and at which dose of caffeine.

Nutritional status and dialysis modality: Their effect on folate status and methylation capacity 15 years after the institution of a national folic acid fortification program

Principal Investigator: Christine Nash, RD, MSc (C) University Health Network

Most dialysis patients in Canada are supplemented with folic acid (FA) daily; initially implemented for prevention of micronutrient deficiency, and later to reduce cardiovascular events through the lowering of homocysteine. Mandatory FA fortification and widespread dietary supplement use have significantly increased FA exposure, while recent trials have negated FA's role for reducing cardiovascular risk in chronic kidney disease. It is unclear whether FA protocols remain appropriate. This research will help answer 2 important questions: 1) What are the current intake and blood levels of folate and FA in Canadian dialysis patients 15 years after the introduction of a national FA fortification program? And 2) Does nutritional status or type of dialysis influence blood levels of folate and other methyl donor nutrients? The results of this study will provide guidance on dietary recommendations and help update clinical protocols for FA supplementation.

Nutritional intake of colorectal surgery patients after the implementation of an ERAS (Enhanced Recovery After Surgery) protocol as compared with conventional care

Principal Investigators: Sophia Yeung, BSc, RD and Leslee Hilkewich BSc, RD, CDE, Alberta Health Services

Alberta Health Services is in the process of putting into practice a group of proven methods to improve patient outcomes after bowel surgery, called the Enhanced Recovery After Surgery (ERAS) protocol. The ERAS protocol has been shown in research studies to improve patient experiences and recovery. This study will collect food and drink information during the first four days after surgery to determine if starting an ERAS protocol improves energy and protein intakes, how well patients meet those needs, and if better nutritional intakes predict better outcomes. The research will indicate whether patients' protein intake is much greater when patients are given food early after surgery and receiving the benefits of the ERAS protocol. This information should promote surgeons to change practice to early postoperative feeding, and help dietitians to develop nutrition care plans and hospital menus that will encourage optimal nutrition in surgical patients.

An Investigation of the Relationship between Illness Severity and Energy Expenditure in Cirrhotic Candidates for Liver Transplantation.

Principal Investigator: Janet Madill, RD, PhD, Brescia University College

Malnutrition is a common complication in patients with cirrhosis (liver disease) and is linked to reduced survival both before and after receiving a liver transplant. Finding ways to ensure that patients with cirrhosis receive adequate nutrition is very important. This research study seeks to determine whether the index currently used to assess the severity of liver disease is related to changes in metabolism and if this index could be used to identify patients who are at higher risk of receiving inadequate calories for their needs. This study may also allow us to calculate the amount of extra energy needed by patients with cirrhosis who have a high metabolism and are waiting for a liver transplant. Gaining a better understanding of the role nutrition plays in cirrhosis will help health care providers offer the best nutrition care possible to patients with cirrhosis in the future.

A comprehensive evaluation of nutritional status in critically ill patients after extubation

Principal Investigator: Lesley Moisey, RD, MSc, PhD Candidate, University of Waterloo

Patients surviving critical illness are frequently discharged from the intensive care unit (ICU) with worsened nutritional and functional status, which are associated with short- and long-term disabilities and reduced quality of life. It is plausible that nutrition-oriented therapies and care processes that occur in hospital wards after discharge from the ICU affect short- and long-term health outcomes in survivors of critical illness. The primary objective of this study is to evaluate nutrition intake post-extubation and identify barriers to achieving optimal nutrition in this population. This research will help to identify gaps in nutrition care processes related to providing optimal dietetic care to this vulnerable patient population. It will also provide the knowledge foundation for the development of novel dietetic interventions targeted at improving recovery from critical illness via the optimization of nutrition and rehabilitation therapies.

Further information on all of the above research projects can be found in Research Room, CFDR's database of research and researchers. Visit <http://researchroom.cfdr.ca/login.aspx>

The Canadian Foundation for Dietetic Research was created in 1991 by Dietitians of Canada to support applied nutrition and dietetic practice research. Thanks to the generous support of corporate donors and individual members of Dietitians of Canada, CFDR has awarded research grants annually since 1993. To date, CFDR has funded more than 100 research teams across the country, awarding more than \$1,600,000 in grants. The CFDR research program supports the Foundation's mission: *Enhancing the health of Canadians by contributing new knowledge about food and nutrition.*

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