

INSTITUTE FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH NEWSLETTER

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insights into women's health,
research, and advocacy



February 2026 Newseletter

Abstract submissions are open! The 20th Annual VCU Women's Health Research Day will be held on **April 28th, 2026 from 1:00-4:30 PM** at the Larrick Student Center. The program, presented by the VCU Institute for Women's Health, includes a plenary symposium entitled "Midlife Matters: Integrating Menopause Research, Innovation, and Impact", a poster session showcasing women's health research by VCU faculty and students, poster awards, and a reception. Visit [our website](#) for more information. Click [here](#) to register. To [Submit an Abstract](#), click [here](#). For questions regarding abstract submissions, please contact Kellyn Moody (Kellyn.Moody@vcuhealth.org).

Registration open! The Health of Women 2026 Conference, presented by the VCU Institute for Women's Health, will be held on **Friday, May 29, 2026**, at the Hilton Richmond Hotel & Spa – Short Pump. This is a national continuing education conference for clinicians covering many aspects of women's health, including reproductive health, cardiovascular health, bone health, mental health, and breast health. [Registration is open!](#)

IWH Training Survey

- Please complete this [survey](#) to help us gather data on training and mentoring activities of IWH Affiliate Faculty. Contact Dr. Heather Jones (hjones7@vcu.edu) with any questions.

Upcoming IWH Research Development Group Meetings

- Addiction and Women's Health Research Development Group: Friday, February 6 at 2:30pm
- Female Athlete Research Development Group: Wednesday, February 11 at 11:00am
- Perinatal Health Research Development Group: Wednesday, February 18 at 10:00am
- Nutrition and Women's Health Research Development Group: Thursday, February 26 at 11:00am
- Cancer in Women Research Development Group: Tuesday, March 10 at 11:00am

To be added to the list for any of the Research Development Groups or to suggest a new group, please contact molly.hyer@vcuhealth.org.

Featured Faculty of the Month

Please join us in congratulating **Ana Diallo, PhD, MPH, RN**, as our IWH Featured Faculty of the Month! Dr. Diallo is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Adult Health and Nursing



Systems within the School of Nursing and a former BIRCWH Scholar. Dr. Diallo's research focuses on the impact of nutrition on cardiovascular disease risk factors and community-based strategies to reduce nutrition insecurity and its burden on health. Dr. Diallo's work will drive real-time preventive care and better health outcomes across multiple populations by removing the barriers to accessing healthy foods. Dr. Diallo was recently awarded her first NIH R01 grant through the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases for her project titled, "Integrating a Prescription Produce Program within a Diabetes Prevention Program for the Prevention of Type 2 Diabetes." This project will incorporate a Prescription Produce Program, which will provide

healthy fruits and vegetables and cooking instructions to participants at no cost, into a nationwide Diabetes Prevention Program and examine outcomes for adults at risk of diabetes.

News from IWH leadership and affiliate faculty

Multiple affiliate faculty members were recently featured in the media:

- **Jasmohan Bajaj, MD**, Professor in the Department of Internal Medicine, was featured in a New York Times article titled, "[7 Ways to Boost Your Gut Health](#)" discussing the relationship between alcohol and gut health.
- **Alex Krist, MD, MPH**, Professor in the Department of Family Medicine & Population Health, was quoted in a New York Times article titled, "[Is It Healthy to Take Aspirin Every Day?](#)" discussing the changes in aspirin guidelines. Dr. Krist was also featured in a story by [ABC 13 News](#) discussing doctor shortages.
- **Steven Woolf, MD, MPH**, Professor in the Department of Family Medicine & Population Health, was quoted in an [NPR](#) article titled, "U.S. Life Expectancy Hits a New High as Deaths from Overdoses and COVID fall."
- **Nicholas Thomson, PhD**, Associate Professor in the Department of Surgery, was featured in the [VCU News](#) for his work on bringing virtual reality mental health therapy to youth populations.

Upcoming Events

The NIH Office of Research on Women's Health and the Uniformed Services University Military Women's Health Research Program are hosting a webinar series on military readiness on February 12th from 3:00-4:00. Click [here](#) to learn more and register.

The Massey Cancer Center is hosting their Director's Distinguished Visiting Scholars Seminar Series on February 24-25th. This year's featured speaker is Reshma Jaggi, MD, Chair of the Department of Radiation Oncology at Emory University and an internationally known breast cancer researcher. Click [here](#) for registration and additional information.

The [Inaugural National Conference on Women's Health \(NCWH 2026\)](#) is being held March 11-13, 2026 in Washington D.C. Click [here](#) for more information on registration and the agenda.

The Department of Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies at VCU, in partnership with The Sexual Health Exploration Project, will be hosting a virtual symposium April 17-19th. Registration is free and open to everyone. For more information, please visit the [symposium website](#), and contact Ethan Coston, PhD (bmcoston@vcu.edu) with any questions.

Research Study Recruitment Corner

Are you looking to recruit participants for active studies? Please fill out the [Research Study Recruitment Corner Form](#) if you are interested in having your study included in the newsletter.

- Deciphering the Cognitive and Neural Underpinnings of Risk-Taking in Eating Disorders (RISK-EAT)
 - Recruiting adolescent (ages 12-17) and young adult (ages 18-25) females with and without bulimia nervosa
 - Two study visits are required:
 - Visit 1: (in person or virtual) will be a ~3 hour screening visit
 - Visit 2: (in person at VCU CARI center) will be a ~3-4 hour visit
 - Two-week follow-up of online surveys and games
 - Participants will be compensated \$75 per visit and additionally compensated for engagement in the follow-up period
 - Please contact Kelsey Hagan, PhD, LP (Kelsey.Hagan@vcuhealth.org) for more information.

Follow our new social media pages!

The VCU Institute for Women's Health has a new social media presence on [LinkedIn](#), Instagram, and [Facebook](#). Connect with us to stay up to date on the latest IWH news!

Do you have exciting news to share? We want to hear from you! Please share any recent career developments (grants, publications, promotions, media stories) using the [Newsletter Submission Form](#). We will feature these highlights in the next IWH newsletter.

Help us celebrate excellence by nominating standout faculty or yourself to be the next **IWH Affiliate Faculty of the Month**. Use the [Newsletter Submission Form](#), and be sure to include 1-2 sentences highlighting their impact, achievements, or what makes their work stand out.