



The Women's Health Study

From Adolescence to Adulthood

A Note from the Directors:

Thank you for being a part of The Women's Health Study: From Adolescence to Adulthood (A2A). The success of a longitudinal study depends on the continued participation of its study members. We truly appreciate your dedication and the time you have contributed to the study to date! It is because of YOU that we can conduct this high quality, impactful research.

We are delighted to share this year's newsletter with you, including new research publications, ongoing studies, and staff updates. Stay updated throughout the year by checking [our website](#) and [Facebook page](#).

Please keep your eye out for an email from us with a link to your annual health questionnaire, which should arrive in the next 6 weeks. We hope you will take the opportunity to participate this year. Again, your contributions are unique and truly invaluable - we can't do it without you!

Sincerely,

Dr. Marc Laufer, Director and Dr. Stacey Missmer, Scientific Director

Welcome to Amanda, our newest Research Assistant

We are excited to introduce Amanda, the most recent addition to our research team. Amanda joined the A2A team after graduating from college in 2023. You may recognize Amanda, as she was also a college intern with the study in 2022. Now Amanda joins Shruthi, Esther, Emma, and Cam as one of the friendly faces meeting you at research visits, or calling and emailing you with study reminders and answers to all of your study-related questions.



COVID-19 and Women's Health Sub-study

In spring 2023, we launched a 3rd wave of our COVID-19 and women's health sub-study, funded by a grant from the National Institutes of Health. More than 500 participants responded to our 2023 questionnaire and sample collection. Our research team is now hard at work looking through the questionnaire data, and the saliva samples are ready to be processed in the lab. Stay tuned for study results!



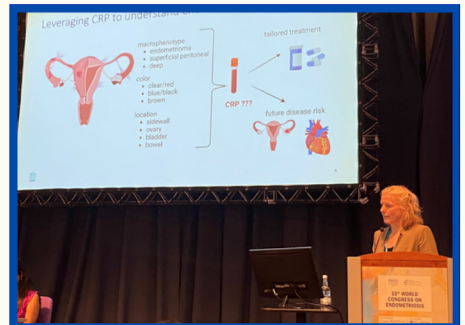
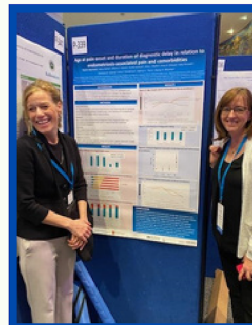
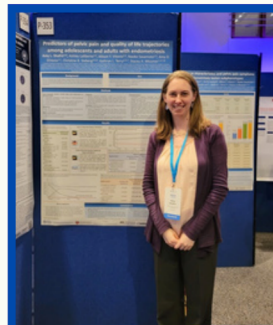
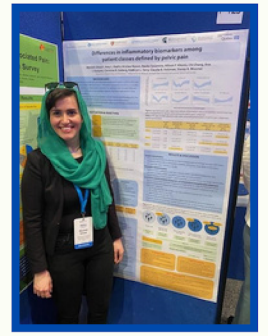
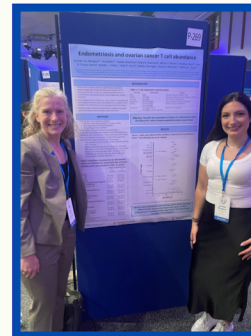
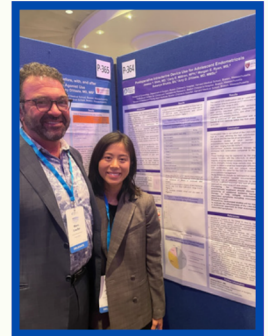
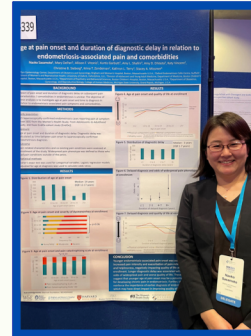
We Want You Back!

Your study participation is important, whether you complete the questionnaire every year, or if you took a break from the study and now want to participate again. The annual questionnaire is sent to your email via REDCap every year. It is designed to allow you to provide health updates from the time since we last received your study questionnaire, whether that was one year ago or longer. Please reach out to the study team if you have any questions about rejoining the study after a break in participation.



15th World Congress on Endometriosis

In May 2023, some of our research team attended the 15th World Congress on Endometriosis in Edinburgh, Scotland. The World Congress on Endometriosis is a global event that allows researchers to connect and exchange ideas, research, and build valuable professional networks that advances the understanding of patient treatment, patient care and the causes and consequences of endometriosis on the lives of countless women. Our research team contributed to 15 oral presentations and 28 poster presentations at the 2023 conference!



Recent Publications from our Researchers

Sasamoto N, Ngo L, Vitonis AF, Dillon ST, Sieberg CB, Missmer SA, Libermann TA, Terry KL. Plasma proteomic profiles of pain subtypes in adolescents and young adults with endometriosis. *Hum Reprod.* 2023 May 17:dead099. doi: 10.1093/humrep/dead099. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 37196326. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/37196326/>

Shim JY, Laufer MR, DiVasta AD. Treatment of Adolescent Endometriosis before, during, and after Use of Gonadotropin-Releasing Hormone Agonist: A Retrospective Cohort Study. *J Pediatr Adolesc Gynecol.* 2023 May 11:S1083-3188(23)00331-5. doi: 10.1016/j.jpog.2023.05.001. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 37178784. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/37178784/>

Wang S, **Farland LV**, Gaskins AJ, Mortazavi J, Wang YX, Tamimi RM, Rich-Edwards JW, Zhang D, **Terry KL**, Chavarro JE, **Missmer SA.** Association of Laparoscopically-confirmed Endometriosis with Long COVID: A Prospective Cohort Study. *Am J Obstet Gynecol.* 2023 Mar 25:S0002-9378(23)00177-1. doi: 10.1016/j.ajog.2023.03.030. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 36972892. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/36972892/>

New A2A Visual Abstract

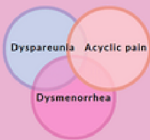
Visual abstracts are a way for researchers to communicate study results with research participants and the community at large. To view a larger version of this visual abstract, and to see all of our visual abstracts, visit the [A2A website](#).

Sasamoto and Shafir et al., PAIN; 2022

Trends in pelvic pain symptoms over 2 years of follow-up among adolescents and young adults with and without endometriosis

Background

Pelvic pain can be felt in many locations in the pelvis with different levels of how severe and often the pain occurs. This pain can substantially impact the lives of people with pelvic pain. Pelvic pain is also a common symptom of endometriosis. While endometriosis is often diagnosed among adults, we now think that endometriosis may start to develop earlier in life during adolescence.



Most common types of pelvic pain include:

- Dysmenorrhea: Pain with periods
- Acyclic pelvic pain: Pelvic pain unrelated to periods
- Dyspareunia: Pelvic pain with sex

Study Aim

For the first time, we followed adolescents and adults for over two years to see what happened to their pain symptoms.

Methods

Study Population

The Women's Health Study: From Adolescence to Adulthood (A2A) (n = 1291 completed baseline questionnaire)

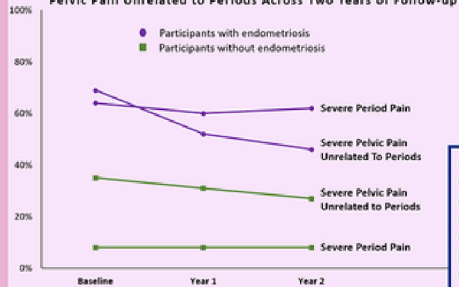
Surgically confirmed endometriosis (n = 620)

Controls (n = 671)

Every participant told us once a year about pain symptoms on an expanded version of a questionnaire used across the world (WERF EPect). We looked at period pain, pelvic pain unrelated to periods, and pelvic pain with sex. We examined how often and how severe the different types of pain were across three timepoints (baseline, year 1, and year 2).

Key Findings

Percentage of A2A Participants with Severe Period Pain and Pelvic Pain Unrelated to Periods Across Two Years of Follow-up



Conclusion

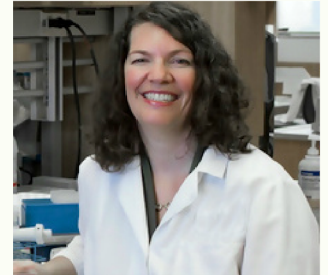
- How often and how severe pelvic pain was remained fairly consistent over time among participants without endometriosis.
- We saw differences in how often and severe the three pain times were among participants with endometriosis.
- It is important for healthcare professionals to consider different types of pelvic pain when assessing and treating pelvic pain among adolescents and young adults with and without endometriosis.

Future Research

We are hard at work in our offices and labs working on a variety of women's health research topics, including:

- Inflammation and pelvic pain symptoms
- Sleeping difficulty and reasons for not getting enough sleep
- Using RNASeq to explore differences in endometriosis lesion cells and the relationship with participant characteristics
- The effects of COVID-19

We are proud to announce BCE Scientific Director Dr. Stacey Missmer has been elected the next President of the World Endometriosis Society for 2023-2026.



The NOTE Study

The Novel Treatments for Endometriosis (NOTE) study is now recruiting at multiple hospitals and clinics in Boston, as well as several other US sites. We are recruiting participants 15-40 years old who have endometriosis-associated pain despite hormonal medication treatment. We are investigating whether adding a twice weekly non-hormonal medication is effective for controlling pain and symptoms of endometriosis.

For more information, eligibility criteria, and a list of all currently recruiting sites, please visit [our website](#), view our study listing on [Clinicaltrials.gov](#), or email bce@childrens.harvard.edu.

The NOTE study is separate from your participation in A2A, and like all research, this study is voluntary.

Contact the A2A Team

A2A team at Boston Children's Hospital:
email: womenshealthstudy@childrens.harvard.edu
phone: 617-355-3309

A2A team at Brigham and Women's Hospital:
email: womenshealthstudy@bwh.harvard.edu
phone: 617-732-4242

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