



Strong Heart Study Newsletter

Investigating Cardiovascular Disease in American Indians

Updates for Community Members and Strong Heart Study Participants

Volume 30, Issue 2 Winter 2020

TEAM UP TO FIGHT SPREAD OF COVID – 19 IN COMMUNITIES

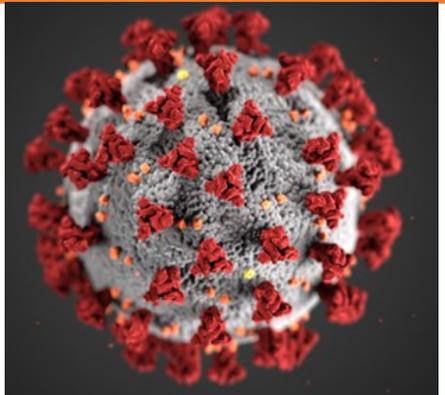
The unprecedented pandemic of novel coronavirus is challenging communities across the country. As cases rise in all of our own regions, we are reminded that this virus can strike everywhere.

On a personal level, many of us have had loved ones, cherished elders, and dear friends suffer from COVID-19. And many of us are grappling with wage loss, job loss, trouble paying bills, problems affording medical care, difficulties in finding child care or keeping our children's education going when we need to work. This is a tough time for everyone. Our patience and endurance are tested in this global pandemic.

When will this be over? What will come out of this pandemic? How are we going to move forward? A recent post on the UNICEF website resonates for many of us – “We humans are fragile by ourselves. Our strength lies in being part of a community.” In the Strong Heart Study (SHS), we have a community of participants, tribal/community health professionals, leaders, research staff, and scientists. Together, we are getting through the pandemic and continuing research efforts for improved cardiovascular health in Native Communities.

The three SHS Field Centers in Arizona, Oklahoma, and the Dakotas have teamed up with local collaborators to battle virus infection. SHS staff have been calling to check on community members and inform them about the essential COVID-19 related services offered by local tribes and other community stakeholders. In addition, staff have been distributing masks, educational materials, and cleaning supplies to those in need.

A questionnaire has been developed to understand the impact of COVID-19 pandemic among SHS participants. SHS investigators are also working with scientists of 13 other studies to assess how heart, lung, and blood diseases affect the development of COVID-19 among diverse populations. With your help, we would be able to learn how to use this research to help American Indian tribal members.



This figure, created at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), reveals the structure of coronaviruses under an electron microscope. Note the spikes that adorn the outer surface of the virus, which give the look of a corona surrounding the virus.

Prevent the Spread of COVID-19



Wash your hands



Get tested when sick



Stay 6 feet from others



Wear a mask



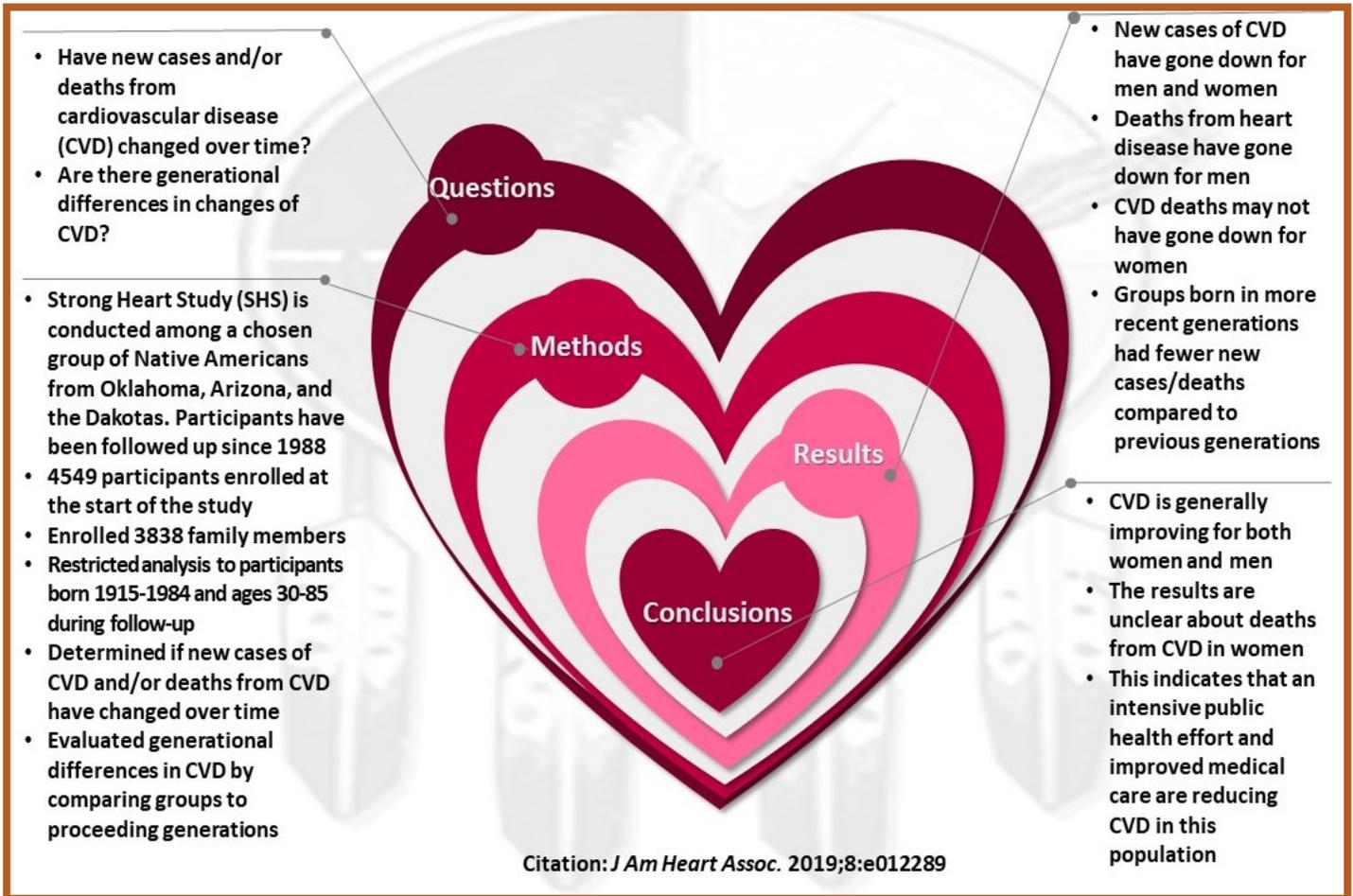
Stay home when able



Work from home when able

To protect our communities, our loved ones, and ourselves during the pandemic, all of us need to practice masking, handwashing, and social distancing. This is a challenging time, and also a time to work together to make sure that each member of our community has been cared for and protected. We hope that, one day, looking back, we can proudly say that we have contributed to the fight against COVID-19 as a community, and we have succeeded. We wish you and your family a peaceful and healthy holiday season.

TRENDS IN CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE OVER 25 YEARS: STRONG HEART STUDY

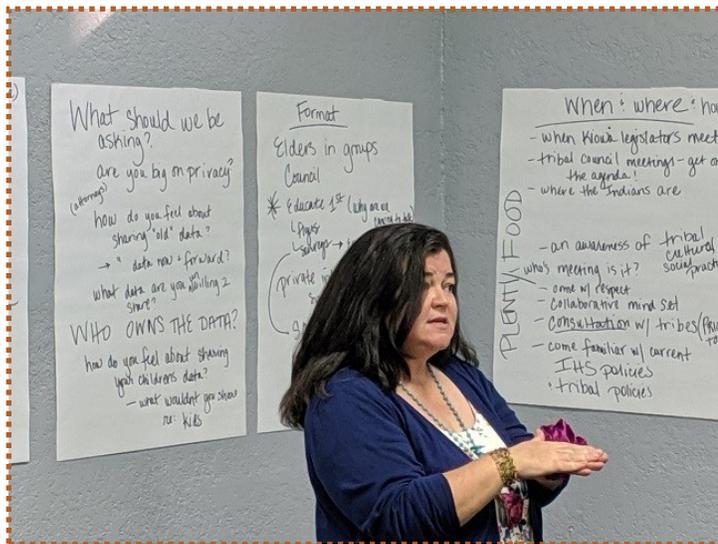


NATIVE INVESTIGATOR CORNER

Lindsey Montileaux Mabbutt is Oglala Lakota and was born and raised in Sioux Falls, SD. She earned her Master's in Public Health from North Dakota State University with a specialization in American Indian Public Health. Ms. Montileaux is finishing her final year at the University of Washington School of Dentistry, working towards her Doctorate of Dental Surgery and has goals of bringing oral health expertise to the Strong Heart Study. Prior to dental school, Ms. Montileaux worked as a research coordinator at Partnerships for Native Health on the project: Family Intervention in the Spirit of Motivational Interviewing within the Strong Heart Family Study. Upon graduation Ms. Montileaux hopes to work as a public health dentist while also building a career in community-led research. She will be working as a Junior Investigator on the Strong Heart Study.



NATIVE INVESTIGATOR CORNER



My name is Burgundy Fletcher. I am a citizen of the Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma. I am a student at the University of California San Diego (UCSD) working toward a PhD in Ethnic Studies.

Ethnic Studies is about trying to better understand how power and control work in society.

What is our team studying?

I work with Dr. Cinnamon Bloss and Dr. Lucila Ohno-Machado on a very important part of the Strong Heart Study. We want to know about:

1) Participants' concerns regarding the privacy of their personal information, 2) with whom the data might be shared, and 3) how the data will be kept secure.

What has already been done?

On December 12, 2019, one research team from the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center (OUHSC) and one team from UCSD met in Anadarko, Oklahoma at the Wichita and Affiliated Tribes Tribal Administration Building. Many people came together for a workshop. The goal **was to plan a project on tribal community health privacy and data sharing that respects the concerns of the people who participate.**

Participants of this workshop included retired SHS staff, community health advocates, elders, doctors, and even tribal chairs of the seven SHS participating tribes. At this meeting, we asked the following three major questions and learned valuable lessons.

Whom in the community should we talk to? (Answer: groups and individual people)

What should we ask them? (only a couple of suggestions were listed due to limited space)

- ◆ "Are you big on privacy?"
- ◆ Questions about data ownership, meaning who is responsible for deciding how information is used.

When/where/how should we talk to them? (Only a couple of advice were listed)

- ◆ Speak with elders individually and in small groups because elders will talk and bounce things off one another.
- ◆ Always take culture(s) into account, research teams should schedule individual interviews for those folks who are more private or shy and be sure to request time on tribal councils' agendas...

What's next?

The researchers are now planning Phase 2 of the project based on advice received. Please share this article with your own communities. You may also contact me directly at bifletch@ucsd.edu or (858) 281-3898.

Thank you and stay safe and healthy during this uncertain time of COVID-19.

Burgundy Fletcher



THE POSITIVE IMPACT OF THE STRONG HEART STUDY (PART I)

The Strong Heart Study (SHS) is one of the longest-running studies of American Indians (AI). **Why is this important?** Studies that follow groups of individuals over time, such as the SHS, are called “longitudinal” studies. Longitudinal studies are the best way to identify the most important factors causing, preventing, or affecting disease. This means that more effective ways can be found to improve health.

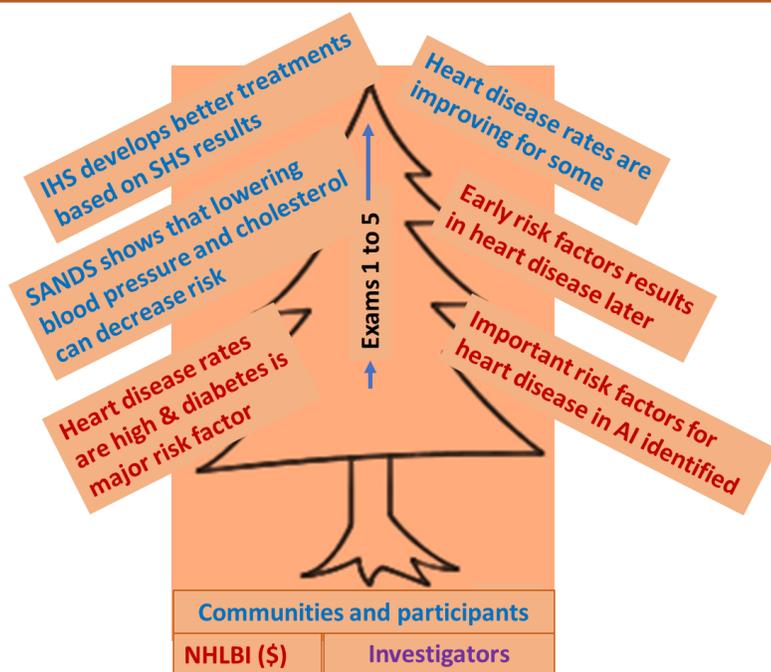
The SHS is no exception. To illustrate, we can use a tree to represent the SHS. **Its roots are its constant contributors: the communities and participants, the funders (National Heart Lung and Blood Institute), and the Strong Heart Study researchers.**

Working together, and depicted as the trunk of the tree, multiple rounds of exams have happened. **This represents the growth of the data and sample resource over time, with the generous participation of the Strong Heart participants.** Important results are shown as branches on the tree, along with findings about how to improve health. Some of those SHS results were not known before. They have helped to combat heart disease in Native communities.

Most importantly, new branches (discoveries and improvement) cannot happen without the roots and trunk still intact. Maintaining and being able to access past Strong Heart data are key to more progress. **Continuing to add new exams and medical record information are also key. The longer the collection of data, the stronger the evidence!** With more evidence, we can continue to make useful discoveries that help improve American Indian health.

In the next newsletter we will have Part II of this topic. We will describe how ancillary studies contribute to the importance of the Strong Heart Study.

We thank the participants for their invaluable past and continuing contributions to this effort.



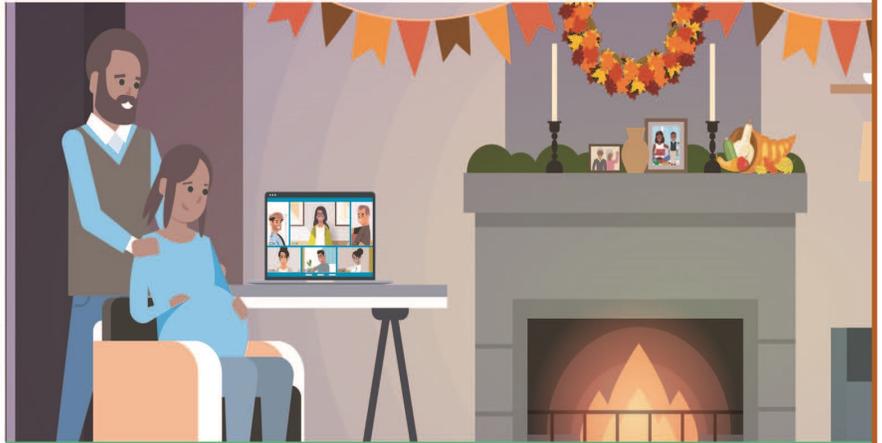
NEW TEAM MEMBERS

Shamla B. Smith is a research administrative professional with management and teaching experience. She finished her Master's in Business Administration from Southwestern Oklahoma State University in Weatherford, Oklahoma. She earned her undergraduate degree in Business Management from Wolverhampton University in United Kingdom. Her undergraduate research paper was 'study of Business and Management Issues in Impact of Cultural Diversity on Organizational Performance'. She was born and finished her schooling in India and Dubai, now she settled in Oklahoma. Shamla Smith first worked as a research management coordinator in the College of Nursing, University of Oklahoma Health Science Center (OUHSC). Currently, she is working as a **Project Coordinator for the Strong Heart Study Coordinating Center** in the Center for American Indian Health Research, Hudson College of Public Health, OUHSC.



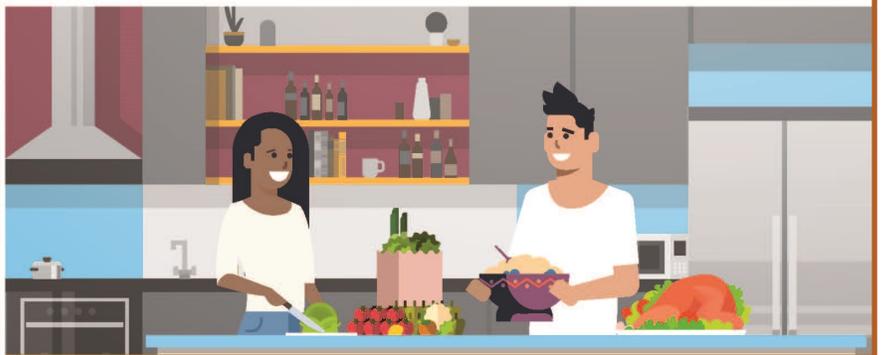
This holiday season do what's best for you and your loved ones

Being away from family and friends during the holidays can be hard.



When you talk with your friends and family about plans, it's ok if you decide to stay home and remain apart from others.

Hard choices to be apart this year may mean that you can spend many more years with your loved ones.



Doing what's best for you includes eating healthy foods and getting enough sleep.

Do what is best for your health and the health of your loved ones. This year spend time with those in your own household.



Make time to take care of your body and stay active to lessen fatigue, anxiety, and sadness.



Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
Disaster Distress Hotline: 1-800-985-5990 or text TalkWithUs to 66746

cdc.gov/coronavirus

321172-A

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Hudson College of Public Health

STRONG HEART STUDY COORDINATING CENTER
University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center
Center for American Indian Health Research
Hudson College of Public Health
P.O. Box 26901

Strong Heart Study Virtual Coffee Hour

You are invited to join the Strong Heart Study investigators for 1 or more of the 6 virtual, Saturday Coffee Hour Sessions. Each session will discuss different results from the Strong Heart Study. The sessions are scheduled for:

Saturday mornings at 8:30 PT / 9:30 MT AZ / 10:30 CT

You can join from your home via ZOOM or by phone



December 5	Mental Health & COVID – Lonnie Nelson
December 12	Environmental Health – Ana Navas-Acien
January 9	Cardio Vascular Disease in Youth – Jason Deen
January 16	Nutrition & Physical Activity – Amanda Fretts & Lyle Best
January 23	Chronic Kidney Disease – Jason Umans
February 6	Dental Care & Heart Disease – Lindsey Montileaux Mabbutt



The Coffee Hours are hosted by the 3 Strong Heart Study Field Centers. To RSVP or for more information contact your SHS Field Center.

Arizona Center - 602-277-0488  @ STRONGHEARTSTUDY

Dakota Center - 605-230-1507  @ SHSDAKOTACENTER

Oklahoma Center - 405-271-3090 Extension 6  @ SHSOKLAHOMACENTER

For more information on the Strong Heart Study go to: <https://strongheartstudy.org/>