

UAB MWCCS NEWSLETTER

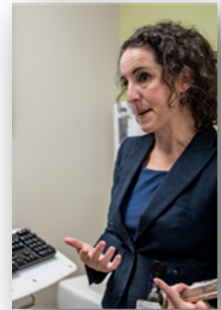
UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA AT BIRMINGHAM



Welcome!

Since 2013, the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) in collaboration with the University of Mississippi Medical Center (UMMC) became a part of the longest longitudinal Women HIV Cohort Study (WIHS). As of 2019, the WIHS combined with the Multicenter AIDS Cohort Study (MACS) to create the MACS/WIHS Combined Cohort Study, or in short **MWCCS**. MACS began in 1984 in Baltimore, Chicago, Pittsburgh and Los Angeles to enroll over 7,000 gay and bisexual men who were living with HIV or at risk of HIV. While WIHS started in 1993 when women started to come to the clinic, beginning the women study. Both studies have enrolled over 5,000 women and men who were living with HIV or at risk of HIV. In it's new phase as **MWCCS**, we are now located in Atlanta, Birmingham, Jackson, Miami, Chapel Hill, Brooklyn, Bronx, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Pittsburg, Ohio, Baltimore and Washington DC. With the expansion at UAB we added new faces to our **MWCCS** family.

“As the newest member of the leadership team for the **MWCCS** study, I want to say a big hello to all of our study participants out there and anyone who is new and interested in learning more about **MWCCS**! My name is Dr. Jodie Dionne and I am a specialist in Infectious Diseases and Women's Health. I have been caring for women and men living with HIV for 20 years and I am always impressed by how committed my patients are to improving their health, even in the face of difficulties and challenges that are tough as the COVID-19 pandemic!



Dr. Jodie A. Dionne
MD, MSPH,
Associate Professor
Infectious Diseases
UAB

We are grateful to each and every participant for the time you spend to share information (and samples!) about your life and your health. You are part of a very big team. We are all working together to understand better how to manage HIV successfully and prevent HIV infection and how help others out there live their best lives! We have an open door policy at **MWCCS** so please share any thoughts or questions you have about the study or suggestions for improvement. For my part, we will continue to let you know how your contributions to **MWCCS** end up leading to advances in our knowledge base and improvements in the health of people living in Alabama and around the world. Thank YOU for everything you do. It is incredible to be a part of this team.” **Dr. Dionne**

How can I be part of the study?

We are currently enrolling men living with HIV as well as who are at-risk for HIV. Study participants will seen yearly. **Eligibility:**

- Men between 30-70 years old
- Able to provide informed consent
- Participate in baseline visit
- Participants must consent to have specimens stored in MWCCS national repository
- Agree to be tested for HIV or provide documentation of status

We also want to welcome back the women who were in the WIHS study

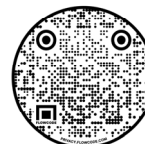
QUESTIONS? GIVE US A CALL

205-975-5101

205-975-9128

Need more information?
SITES.UAB.EDU/MWCCS

UAB UMMC MWCCS



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UAB MWCCS NCAB

What is NCAB? NCAB is short for National Community Advisory Board. It represents the participants in the **MWCCS** study!!!

What is the NCAB's mission?

- Provide on-going community, scientific, psycho-social, and policy information to the national **MWCCS** agenda
- Help design mechanisms to assure that **MWCCS** participants are representative of the community
- Help design mechanisms to assure access of HIV-positive women and men to **MWCCS** research sites and retention of these participants over time
- Advocate for adequate research funding and to allow the full **MWCCS** research agenda to be fulfilled
- Provide support for local community advisory boards and encourage involvement at local levels
- Help communicating **MWCCS**-related information to the community



- Represent and be accessible to community members for **MWCCS**-related concerns

The women and men of **MWCCS** represent the thoughts and cares of person's who are affected by HIV and those who are at risk.

The UAB **MWCCS** NCAB will be asked to meet regularly to discuss topics, matters and have some fun fellowship.

As we go forward to make progresses with HIV research, we need to be sure that the women and men of **MWCCS** are properly heard and represented. If anyone is interested in being part of UAB **MWCCS** NCAB please contact:

Mr. Henry Jones or Dr. Zenoria Causey-Pruitt

205-975-5101

Participant Perspective—Martha Williams



Ms. Martha Williams
UAB NCAB Representative.,
WIHS participants since
2013.

"My experience with WIHS has been for 8 years. I have been very grateful for the in-depth medical service. Research looks at a lot of different types of health issues.

I have learned that my immune system is very very strong. Through God's grace I was protected during my 20-year drug run.

In appreciation, I willingly participate in the WIHS study. In doing so I have had the opportunity to travel and meet other women affected by HIV. I have had the privilege to go to conferences with major players in the research arena such as Anthony Fauci.

I have met women from all over the country. WIHS has been active for many years. The women in the study have been battling HIV for up to 20 years.

I am sure that the research team is available to assist all of us understand this disease we are experiencing. Get to know them and learn about how they are working to help you." *Ms. Martha Williams*

WE MOVED! New address, same service!

UAB MWCCS

HOW TO GET BY BUS: The building is located on the MAX bus route #17; the nearest stop is at 4th Avenue and 32nd Street South.

HOW TO GET BY CAR: From Montgomery: Take I-65 North to Birmingham and exit at 8th Avenue South (also known as University Boulevard). Take a left on 20th Street and then turn right on 5th Avenue South. Go 1.1 miles. The **MWCCS** UAB / 1917 Clinic is on the left side.

From Huntsville: Take I-65 South to Birmingham and take left exit 261B for I-20 E/I-59 N toward Atlanta/Gadsden. Take exit 126A toward US-31. Keep left and follow signs for US-31 South. Take the exit toward US-78. Turn left onto 25th Street South, go 0.1 mile and turn left on 5th Ave South. Continue about 0.7 miles. The **MWCCS** UAB / 1917 Clinic is on the left side.

**3220 5th Avenue South,
2nd Floor**

Birmingham, AL 35222



FREE PARKING



About COVID-19 Vaccine

To stop this pandemic, we need to use all of our prevention tools. Vaccines are one of the most effective tools to protect your health and prevent disease. Vaccines work with your body's natural defenses so your body will be ready to fight the virus, if you are exposed (also called immunity). Other steps, like wearing a mask that covers your nose and mouth and staying at least 6 feet away from other people you don't live with, also help stop the spread of COVID-19. Studies show that COVID-19 vaccines are very effective at keeping you from getting COVID-19. Experts also think that getting a COVID-19 vaccine may help keep you from getting seriously ill even if you do get COVID-19. These vaccines cannot give you the disease itself.



The vaccines are safe. The U.S. vaccine safety system makes sure that all vaccines are as safe as possible. All the COVID-19 vaccines that are being used have gone through the same safety tests and meet the same standards as any other vaccines produced through the years. A system in place across the entire country that allows CDC to watch for safety issues and make sure the vaccines are safe.

Different types of COVID-19 vaccines will be available. Most of these vaccines are given in two shots, one at a time and spaced apart. The first shot gives you some protection. The second shot is given at least three weeks later to make sure you have full protection. If you are told you need two shots, make sure that you get both of them.

The vaccines may cause side effects in some people, like sore muscles, feeling tired, or mild fever. These reactions mean the vaccine is working to help teach your body how to fight COVID-19 if you are exposed. For most people, these side effects will last no longer than a day or two.

Having these types of side effects does NOT mean that you have COVID-19. If you have questions about your health after your shot, call your doctor, nurse, or clinic. As with any medicine, it is rare but possible to have a serious reaction, such as not being able to breathe. It is very unlikely that this will happen, but if it does, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room.



Questions about COVID19 vaccination?

**Hotline is available to answer questions.
Call 205-858-2221**

Information from www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/vaccines

Healthy Relationships During Valentines

Healthy relationships are so important, especially during COVID-19!

Can you get COVID-19 from having sex? Yes, if you have sex or close contact with someone who is sick with COVID-19. People sick can have no symptoms and still be infectious. So even if someone has no cough or temperature, they can still have the virus and pass it on to you - and you can pass it on to them too. Condoms do not protect against COVID-19.

Struggling with relationship? If you're living together, life during COVID-19 can be really stressful. A healthy relationship involves good communication, mutual respect, trust, honesty, equality and the ability to be yourself. A relationship is unhealthy when it involves controlling or threaten-

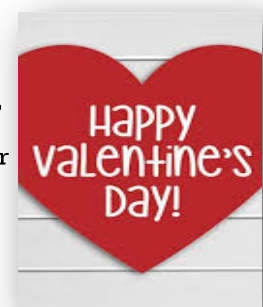
ing behavior. This can be physical, sexual, emotional, financial or psychological. If your partner makes you feel scared in your relationship, it's important to get support.

Remember during Valentines to continue to stay healthy, and prevent getting sick:

- Wear a mask
- Stay at least 6 feet away from others
- Avoid contact with people who are sick
- Wash your hands often, with soap and water, use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available
- Stay home if you are not feeling well

Let's take care of yourselves & be kind to each other!!!

(adapted from youngscot.net)



Keep a Healthy Valentines!