

Seattle Institute for Biomedical and Clinical Research

October 2011 - December 2011

www.sibcr.org

Feature



Laura Baker, PhD

Laura Baker, PhD, is a clinical researcher in the Geriatric Research, Education and Clinical Center at the VA Puget Sound Health Care System, and Assistant Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at the University of Washington. Dr. Baker's work focuses on the relationship between hormones and memory changes in healthy and memory-impaired older adults. Dr. Baker is also interested in lifestyle interventions that could improve cognitive function for adults at high risk of developing Alzheimer's dementia.

Dr. Baker has studied the link between type 2 diabetes and memory impairment in older adults as well as the benefit of estradiol on cognition and the impact of increased levels of stress. More recently, Dr. Baker has been studying the effects of aerobic exercise for older adults at increased risk of cognitive decline and Alzheimer's dementia. She has completed two randomized controlled exercise studies thus far, both of which showed improved cognition following 6 months of aerobic exercise. At present, Dr. Baker is conducting the sequel exercise study, a project that is administered by SIBCR and funded by the American Diabetes Association (ADA), that includes older adults with mild cognitive impairment (MCI) and prediabetes: adults with a 'double hit' of risk factors for continued cognitive decline. The goal of this study is to examine whether 6 months of aerobic exercise can improve cognitive function for this group of vulnerable adults, and to examine exercise-related changes in disease biomarkers in the brain. To examine these biomarkers, cerebrospinal fluid is being collected from the participants before and after the 6-month intervention. We are hopeful that this study will help us understand more about the link between MCI and diabetes, and the potential benefit of a readily accessible yet nonpharmacological intervention to stall disease pathology in these adults.

In the upcoming year, Dr. Baker will be the Principal Investigator of the sequel study to examine the effects of a 12-month trial of GHRH on cognition and brain function (and co-Director with Dr. Carl Cotman of the University of California – Irvine) of a large national multi-site exercise trial that will be conducted by the Alzheimer's Disease Cooperative Study. One day, the results of this trial will likely have a lasting effect on standard of care for older adults with MCI. We all know that exercise is good for our bodies, but in the near future we may also know whether it is also good for the brain.

BENEFITS FAIR!

Please attend our benefits fair on
November 16, 2011
10 AM

Bldg. 1 RM 236b
Come learn about your benefits and
enter to win door prizes.
We look forward to seeing you there!

Refreshments will be served.

INTRODUCING: ANNETTE CODER, PHR, HR MANAGER

I am very pleased to introduce myself as the new Human Resources Manager at SIBCR! Human Resources (HR) is one of my passions. I have over 10 years of experience and hold a Professional in Human Resources (PHR) certification. Previously, I was the HR Manager at Multi-Service Center where I was also in charge of Emergency Preparedness and Safety. I've studied at FEMA's Emergency Management Institute in Maryland, am a licensed General Technician for amateur radio, and in my spare time I host an emergency preparedness blog at www.ergeeks.com. Currently, I am a volunteer with the American Red Cross and the City of Federal Way. I've also been a sole proprietor and have learned a great deal about people through this experience. I am a good listener and when you ask me... "Got a Minute?"... please know that you are always welcome to come and talk.

New Employees

Please welcome: Katherine Allen, Emily Ashmore, Katie Bates, Marisa Benich, Phillip Bergquist, Dwight Calvert, Hwan Choi, Annette Coder, Selena Corbett, Kirstin Eastman, Daryl Hackney, Kimberly Hamilton, Jessica Graham, Andrew Gundel, Adrienne Holloway, Samuel Jewell, Heather Johnson, Alexandra Koizedub, Jordan Langsworthy, Lyn Mikesell, Kristin Murphy, Meredith Nichols, Ryan Pete, Ian Pocock, Manard Stewart, Nicholas Swenson, Tiffany Thompson, Sarah Waldherr, Jane Whetstone, Dora Yearout, and Phyllis Ying.