

# Seattle Institute for Biomedical and Clinical Research

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## Feature



Suzanne Craft, PhD

Suzanne Craft, PhD, is Associate Director of the Geriatric Research, Education, and Clinical Center (GRECC) at the VA Puget Sound Health Care System (VAPSHCS), and a Professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, University of Washington. Dr. Craft is also the Director of the Memory Wellness Program located at the VAPSHCS.

The Memory Wellness Program (MWP) consists of a team of dedicated researchers at the VAPSHCS Seattle and American Lake divisions who are investigating the causes of Alzheimer's disease and effective treatments to slow or stop the disease. The MWP provides consultation for older adults who have concerns about their memory. Through presentations, lectures, work groups, networking and resource referral, the program helps to educate our community about the growing need for early detection and intervention in memory loss.

Dr. Craft's research focuses on the role of neuroendocrine abnormalities in the development and expression of Alzheimer's disease (AD). She is recognized as a leading authority on the role of insulin metabolism in Alzheimer's disease and aging and has received a National Institutes of Health (NIH) Method to Extend Research in Time (MERIT) award in recognition for her exceptional contributions to the field of aging research. Research from her laboratory has revealed that insulin (a glucoregulatory hormone) plays a role in normal memory processing and that defects in insulin metabolism characterize a large proportion of patients with AD. Her work has expanded to examine the role of insulin in the pathophysiology of AD. For example, she has demonstrated that insulin affects cerebrospinal fluid levels of beta amyloid (a protein strongly implicated in the pathogenesis of AD) *in vivo*. Dr. Craft's work also explores novel therapeutic approaches to the treatment of memory loss and Alzheimer's disease, including the use of insulin-sensitizing compounds and intranasally administered insulin. The results formed the basis both for an ongoing Phase III trial and for a successful NIH R01 research award to examine the therapeutic effects of insulin sensitizing agents in patients with amnesic mild cognitive impairment (MCI), which is widely believed to be a prodromal phase of AD. Her research program also examines factors involved in insulin's modulation of beta amyloid and inflammation in a variety of human, non-human primate, and rodent models. In addition to funding from the NIH, Dr. Craft's research is currently supported by grants awarded through SIBCR from the Institute for the Study of Aging and GlaxoSmithKline.

### Institutional Highlights

#### NIH News:

SIBCR recently completed the first round of NIH R01 electronic submissions with success. For updates on this process, the NIH and Grants.gov continue to provide helpful information on these sites:

<http://era.nih.gov/ElectronicReceipt>  
<http://grants.gov>

*New* on Grants.gov is a Google search mechanism for downloading grant opportunities.

#### Other News:

On May 16, 2007, the VAPSHCS R&D Research Colloquia will feature Geraldine [Ger] Dawson, PhD, who will discuss, "Recent Advances in Autism", 12-1 p.m. in BB108.

### Welcome!

SIBCR is pleased to welcome the following employees to our staff: Christopher Kahle, Stacy Kessler, Margaret Moroz, Lauren Smith and Ashley Stroud.

## IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please join us for SIBCR's annual employee appreciation on Wednesday, April 11th in BB108 at 10 am. Refreshments will be served.