For the past 2 years, scientists from the Genetic Epidemiology of Lung Cancer Consortium (official name of the Family Lung Cancer Study!) have been hunting for the actual gene or genes that increase a person’s chances of developing lung cancer. We found that part of chromosome 6 is linked to lung cancer susceptibility and we are now trying to find the lung cancer gene(s) on this chromosome. We have discovered some very interesting findings but we have more work to do!

We are still working to recruit new families into the Family Lung Cancer Study. Adding more families gives us more information and a better chance of finding the gene(s) that may cause lung cancer. We also keep in touch with families who have already participated in our study. These families sometimes find out more information about the history of cancer in relatives. These updates are also important in helping us locate lung cancer genes.

We are thankful for your participation in the Family Lung Cancer Study. The time you have spent giving us information is an extremely important part of this study and gets us ever closer to finding a lung cancer gene. You have done a significant part of the work in giving us information on questionnaires, searching for records, and answering our many follow-up questions. We are very grateful!

Elena Ivanenkov at the University of Cincinnati isolates DNA from blood collected from Family Lung Cancer Study participants.
Information about Cancer

Telling loved ones and friends about your cancer diagnosis can be very difficult. Several organizations are dedicated to education and research on cancer and are excellent resources for cancer patients and their loved ones, including the National Cancer Society (www.acs.org or 1-800-228-2345), the National Cancer Institute (www.cancer.gov or 1-800-422-6237) Institute, and the Lung Cancer Alliance.

In this newsletter, we highlight the efforts of the Lung Cancer Alliance, formerly known as ALCASE.

ALCASE is now the Lung Cancer Alliance

The Alliance for Lung Cancer Advocacy, Support, and Education (ALCASE) has moved from its former headquarters in Vancouver, Washington to Washington, D.C., and has changed its name to the Lung Cancer Alliance (LCA).

The Lung Cancer Alliance is a national non-profit organization dedicated to support and advocacy for people living with or at risk for lung cancer. Its mission is to eradicate lung cancer. The LCA aims to educate policy leaders of the need for greater resources for research and reduce the stigma associated with the disease. It offers patient education and support programs that provide help to people affected by lung cancer:

⇒ Lung Cancer Hotline, a toll-free information/referral service for people with lung cancer and their caregivers
⇒ Phone Buddy program, a peer-to-peer support network
⇒ Lung Cancer Awareness Month, a national education and advocacy campaign
⇒ Spirit & Breath, a quarterly newsletter
⇒ Advocacy Alert, where advocates can receive alerts to participate in or respond to important lung cancer issues.

To contact the lung cancer alliance:
Phone: 202-463-2080
Lung Cancer Hotline: 800-298-2436
Email: info@lungcanceralliance.org
Website: www.lungcanceralliance.org/

INTRODUCING Stacy Kramer

Stacy Kramer joined the staff of the Family Lung Cancer Study at the University of Cincinnati in December 2005, after moving to Cincinnati from Atlanta, Georgia. She is originally from Ohio. Stacy has a Master’s degree in Public Health with a major in epidemiology from the University of Michigan.

For the Family Lung Cancer Study, Stacy recruits and interviews family members. With the information family members give her, she creates a pedigree or family tree for each family. Stacy also works with family members to schedule blood draws and get family medical records.

In her spare time, Stacy enjoys reading, hiking, playing tennis, and taking art classes. She loves to travel and has recently started scuba diving. It is incredibly tranquil 80 feet below the water’s surface. Cozumel and Belize are her favorite diving spots so far, but there are many more locations to visit!
Nicotine Vaccine

We know that the nicotine in cigarettes is addictive, making it very hard for smokers to quit. Scientists recently conducted studies to test a new nicotine vaccine that may help people who want to quit smoking. The vaccine prevents nicotine inhaled from cigarettes from reaching the brain. This means that smokers may experience fewer of the pleasurable effects of smoking and overcome their addiction to nicotine. The purpose of this study was to assure the safety of the vaccine for humans and to learn if participants experienced any side effects after receiving the vaccine. After researchers determine that the vaccine is safe, they can begin studying how well it actually works to decrease nicotine addiction.

Before any human clinical trials for this vaccine began, scientists studied how the nicotine vaccine worked in rats. They found that vaccinated rats had less nicotine in their brains and took in less nicotine than the unvaccinated rats. This positive result led scientists to begin testing the vaccine in humans.

Other nicotine vaccines are also being studied by different researchers.

--from Science Daily, November 29, 2005

(http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2005/11/051128194749.htm)

Anti-Smoking Drug

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recently approved a new drug to help people stop smoking. This drug affects receptors in the brain that take up nicotine and can help smokers fight nicotine cravings and the symptoms of nicotine withdrawal. Smokers will get less pleasure from smoking and have a greater chance of overcoming nicotine addiction. This new drug should be available by prescription by the second half of 2006.

--from the American Cancer Society, May 11, 2006

(http://www.cancer.org/docroot/NWS/content/NWS_1_1x_Anti-Smoking_Drug_Approved.asp)

According to the 2005 Report Card on Lung Cancer by the Lung Cancer Alliance, approximately 2,000 new “daily” smokers under age 18 become addicted each day. This is about 700,000 newly addicted smokers each year.

INTRODUCING Juwon Lee

Juwon Lee joined the Family Lung Cancer Study in April 2006. He has a Ph.D. in Human Genetics from the University of Tokushima, Japan. In Japan, he studied azospermia, a cause of male infertility. After completing his doctoral studies in Japan, Juwon joined the Department of Environmental Health in the University of Cincinnati School of Medicine. For the Family Lung Cancer Study, Juwon works in our laboratory, where he analyzes blood DNA samples from family members to look for lung cancer genes. Juwon has also worked in the UC Department of Internal Medicine to study therapies for prostate cancer. He is interested in the relationship between cancer and the environment.
The article “When Cancer Runs in Your Family” appeared in the May 23, 2006 issue of the Wall Street Journal. Written by Amy Dockser Marcus, this story discussed the importance of studying cancer in families.

This article highlighted the importance of families to cancer research. Because we have millions of genes in the DNA of our bodies, it is difficult for scientists to find the gene(s) that causes a specific cancer. By studying people with and without cancer who are related, researchers can more easily narrow their search to find cancer genes.

Looking for cancer genes in families also helps people with cancer in the general population. Understanding how genes play a role in cancer helps scientists develop new cancer treatments.

There are many studies of cancer in families (like The Family Lung Cancer Study) in the U.S, being conducted at cancer centers and universities. Most of these studies focus on other types of cancer, including cancer of the kidney, prostate, colon, breast, ovary, pancreas, and stomach. In fact, studying cancer in families in the mid-1990s led to the discovery of the two genes that greatly increased the risk of breast and ovarian cancer.

While it can be challenging to find families who are willing to participate in this type of research, it is extremely important in helping scientists understand the genetic causes of cancer. You can write to the author of this article, Amy Dockser Marcus, at amy.marcus@wsj.com.

As Amy Dockser Marcus’s Wall Street Journal Article discussed, working with families is a very important part of cancer research. Our closest contact with family members occurs when they first enter our study, but we always try to check in with our families from time to time. Family information can change and it is important that we always have the most accurate information on cancer diagnoses in family members. In this Family Lung Cancer Study newsletter, we have enclosed a form that you can use to send us any family updates.

GELCC stands for the Genetic Epidemiology of Lung Cancer Consortium. The Family Lung Cancer Study is a part of this consortium. This is a group of scientists from several U.S. universities, plus the National Cancer Institute and the Human Genome Research Institute. Looking for a gene is a complex process that has many steps. The members of GELCC have a wide range of scientific expertise, and each member contributes different skills to this study. By working together, we hope to find the “lung cancer gene” and understand more about the causes of lung cancer.
Family Updates

We always like to know that the families who have participated in the Family Lung Cancer Study are healthy and doing well. However, it is also important for our research to know if any new cases of lung, larynx (voice box) or throat cancer have occurred in any member of your extended family. We sincerely hope that no one else in your family has been diagnosed with cancer. But if that has happened, could you please let us know? You can mail this form with any family updates to us, or you can call or email us.

Dear Family Lung Cancer Staff,
Here is news about our family:

______________________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________________

Please send to:                To call or email:
Stacy Kramer                   Stacy Kramer
Family Lung Cancer Study-GELCC  (513) 558-3120
Department of Environmental Health
University of Cincinnati
PO Box 670056
Cincinnati, OH 45267