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UC HEALTH LINE: Genetic and Environmental Links to Cancer Explored at March 28 Public Forum

CINCINNATI—People who want to understand how diet and environmental exposures may affect pubertal development in young girls are invited to attend the fifth annual public forum on the environment and cancer offered by the [Cincinnati Breast Cancer and the Environment Research Center](#) (BCERC).

The event—“Looking Upstream for Environmental Links to Breast Cancer”—is a resource for anyone who wants to understand how environmental exposures early in life may impact development and risk of breast cancer later in life.

It takes place Saturday, March 28, from 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the University of Cincinnati’s (UC) Genome Research Institute, 2180 E. Galbraith Road.

The program includes an update on the health effects of bisphenol A, a component of many consumer plastics that mimics estrogen in the body. It will be presented by [Scott Belcher](#), PhD, UC associate professor of pharmacology and cell biophysics, whose research on this chemical has received international attention.

Recent findings from Cincinnati BCERC laboratory and field studies will be presented by center director Robert Bornschein, PhD, professor and former director of the UC department of environmental health, and Frank Biro, MD, director of the division of adolescent medicine at Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center. Other study findings will be highlighted in a poster session featuring BCERC researchers.

Also featured is a panel discussion on how mothers can talk with their daughters about breast health as they grow up. Panelists include breast cancer survivor and nurse Banita Bailey; Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center genetic counselor Erin Miller; and local breast surgeon Jennifer Manders, MD.

Established in 2003, the Cincinnati BCERC—one of only four such centers in the nation—is a joint research effort between the UC College of Medicine and Cincinnati Children’s. The BCERC research focuses on potential links between environmental factors, diet, puberty and breast cancer risk, and on educating the community about its findings. The center is funded by a seven-year grant from the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences and the National Cancer Institute.

The center has three primary projects: a laboratory research study looking at the effects of diet on mammary gland development and cancer susceptibility; “Growing Up Female,” a local epidemiologic (population) study that focuses on environmental and genetic factors that might contribute to early onset puberty (a known risk factor for breast cancer); and a community education program that translates the research findings for the non-scientific public.

Registration for the event is \$15 and includes a buffet breakfast, educational materials and parking. Nurses may apply for continuing education units. Space is limited and registration is required by March 20. For more information, visit www.eh.uc.edu/growingupfemale or call (513) 558-0854.

