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VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR LUNG FUNCTION, EXERCISE TESTS

DALLAS--How does mild to moderate lung disease affect exercise tolerance? Researchers are looking for volunteers, both smokers and former smokers, to help them find out.

Dr. Tony G. Babb, assistant professor of internal medicine at The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas, is conducting a study at the Institute for Exercise and Environmental Medicine at Presbyterian Hospital of Dallas designed to evaluate exercise capacity in people whose lung capacity may have been reduced mildly or moderately by smoking.

"Many may not know even mild to moderate lung disease impairs exercise tolerance," Babb said. "Patients with impaired lung capacity, about 60 to 70 percent of normal, usually won't even notice that they have a problem, but they may have a lower exercise tolerance than people of similar age who have normal lung function. What we will be doing is measuring how fast a person can move air into and out of his or her lungs during exercise."

In some of Babb's earlier studies, he and his colleagues observed that people with mild to moderate lung disease had reduced exercise capacity. They speculated that this was probably due to a reduction in fitness, secondary to lung function. However, in another study involving normal volunteers and those with moderate lung disease, they noted that

(More)

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those with reduced lung function did not improve as much in training as the normal group. In his new study, Babb will try to pinpoint exactly how breathing capacity is limited in patients.

Information from the study may help physicians conduct laboratory tests when they need to distinguish between pulmonary and cardiac limitations, Babb said. It may also provide another reason for smokers to kick the habit, he added.

Both smokers and former smokers are needed for the study. To participate, volunteers must be between 50 and 65 years old and have smoked for at least 30 years. Qualified volunteers will not have heart disease or hypertension, nor will they have engaged in a regular, vigorous exercise program. Those selected will receive free pulmonary and exercise tests and will be compensated after completing the study.

Participants will be required to make five or six visits to the institute for tests. Each visit will last two to four hours. Tests will include electrocardiograms, pulmonary function tests and riding a stationary bicycle.

The American Heart Association/Texas Affiliate is funding the study.

For more information about entering the study, call Dr. Anne Jacoby at 345-4684 or Joe O'Kroy at 345-4607.

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NOTE: The Institute for Exercise and Environmental Medicine is a collaboration between Presbyterian Hospital of Dallas and The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas, which comprises Southwestern Medical School, Southwestern Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences and Southwestern Allied Health Sciences School.