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Dear Colleague:

Thank you for completing the initial Health Professionals Follow-up Study Questionnaire. We deeply appreciate the time you have taken to complete the many detailed questions. We can assure you that this information will become even more valuable over the coming years. We plan to analyze it thoroughly to increase our understanding of diet and other factors in relation to long-term health among men. Over 45,000 men have completed the questionnaire, ensuring that initial research findings will be available within several years; thus most participants should themselves benefit from knowledge acquired. Our first newsletter containing descriptive information about the study is enclosed; future annual newsletters will provide you with summaries of findings as they emerge.

As we mentioned in our initial letter, we are now requesting a sample of your toenail clippings (one from each toe). Please put your clippings in the enclosed small brown envelope, record your ID from the top of the attached questionnaire and your date of birth. These objective biological measurements complement the questionnaire data and will yield information of direct public health importance. We plan to analyze selected samples of these specimens depending upon subsequent health outcomes. This way, we can gain important new knowledge about the role of trace elements.

Since the clinical relevance of these measurements is not yet known (hence the need to study them), we will not be reporting individual results. However, overall findings will be included in the newsletter.

Besides the nail clippings, kindly complete the few additional questions that could not be incorporated in the initial questionnaire. Please note that we ask for your waist and hip measurements; a paper tape measure has been included for this purpose. If these measurements cannot be taken, simply omit that question.

Again, we are grateful for your valuable contribution to this research. We plan to mail our next questionnaire in 1988.

Sincerely,

Walter Willett

Walter C. Willett
Principal Investigator

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**HEALTH PROFESSIONALS FOLLOW-UP STUDY
HARVARD SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH**

HPFS Newsletter No. 1

This is the first edition of our study Newsletter. We want it to become a useful mechanism to keep you informed and up-to-date on our progress and findings as they emerge. We plan to send you a newsletter every year, including it with our follow-up questionnaire on alternate years.

Participant Profile

The Health Professionals Follow-up Study is now the largest study of diet and health among men based on repeated assessment of dietary intake. As with the seminal Framingham Heart Study, we anticipate important and possibly unforeseen relationships between diet and the risk of cancer, heart disease, and other health outcomes will be discovered.

The group of health professionals who agreed to participate in this important study is nearly complete; we continue to receive responses to our third mailing. Nevertheless, we can give you a rough outline of who your co-participants are. Among the 154,000 health professionals invited to participate, 45,000 have returned completed questionnaires. Of the non-respondents, 20% could not be included due to insufficient or old address, ineligibility, or death.

Table 1 presents the breakdown of study members by professional organization. These percentages are due largely to differences in the number of eligible professionals in each group. Table 2 provides some general demographic information while Table 3 gives the prevalence among study members of common conditions, aggregated from study responses.

TABLE I

Professionals in Cohort

Dentists	57%
Optometrists	7%
Osteopaths	4%
Pharmacists	9%
Podiatrists	3%
Veterinarians	20%

TABLE II

Selected Characteristics

Mean Age	55 years
Age Range	40-75 years
Retired	11%
Live Alone	6%

We have received notes and letters from many thousands of participants and have answered over 4,000 comments and questions; regrettably, we are unable to answer or acknowledge all of your comments because of our limited resources. We do read and consider everything you send to us and your input has already influenced the phrasing and categories for our 1988 questionnaire.

TABLE III

Prevalence of Selected Health Problems and Conditions

	Age		
	40-50	51-60	over 60
High blood pressure	13%	23%	3%
Diabetes mellitus	1%	3%	5%
Elevated cholesterol	9%	14%	15%
Elevated triglyceride	8%	12%	12%
Gout	2%	6%	9%
Vasectomy	25%	25%	13%
Gall bladder removal	1%	3%	6%
Kidney Stones	0%	1%	1%
Colon Polyps	1%	4%	7%

Research News

We will keep you informed of study results as they are published. Annotated citations to research results from the study will be included in future annual newsletters. It will be a number of years before many of the major relationships between dietary factors and important health outcomes become clear.

A major sub-study is now underway in Boston among 150 of your fellow participants to standardize the dietary questionnaire completed by everyone. They have generously agreed to record their complete diets using dietetic scales for two 1-week periods and to allow us to take blood, aspirated subcutaneous fat, urine, and nail samples for biochemical analysis. This sub-study will provide important data on the validity of our questionnaire for measuring many dietary exposures. The complete sub-study will probably last two years, although each subject participates for only six months.

Address Changes

We want to keep you informed of study findings and need to stay informed about you. The validity of this study is highly dependent on complete follow-up. Please notify us about your address changes.

We welcome your comments and suggestions and look forward to your future participation.



Health Professionals Follow-up Study

1987 Questionnaire

Please see instructions on the reverse side.

Your ID number:

(used for maintaining confidentiality)

0	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2	2	2	8	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3	3	3	9	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4	4	4	10	4	4	4
5	5	5	5	5	5	5	11	5	5	5
6	6	6	6	6	6	6	12	6	6	6
7	7	7	7	7	7	7	87	88	7	7
8	8	8	8	8	8	8	R	N	8	8
9	9	9	9	9	9	9		9	9	9

1. Please begin by copying your ID number from this form on to the small brown toenail envelope.

2. Please write in your date of birth (example: June 1, 1946 is June 01 46).

Month	Day	Year
<input type="radio"/> Jan. <input type="radio"/> Feb. <input type="radio"/> Mar. <input type="radio"/> April <input type="radio"/> May <input type="radio"/> June <input type="radio"/> July <input type="radio"/> Aug. <input type="radio"/> Sep. <input type="radio"/> Oct. <input type="radio"/> Nov. <input type="radio"/> Dec.	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>

3. How often do you take . . .

	Never, or less than once per month	1-3 per mo	1 per week	2-4 per week	5-6 per week	1 per day	2-3 per day	4-5 per day	6+ per day
Aluminum antacids, 2 tps or tablets (e.g. Amphojel, ALternaGEL)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> W	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> D	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Calcium antacids, 1 tablet (e.g. Tums)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> W	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> D	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Magnesium antacids, 2 tps or tablets (e.g. Maalox, Mylanta)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> W	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> D	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Magnesium laxatives, 1 Tbs (e.g. Haley's M-O, Phillips)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> W	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> D	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Potassium supplements, 20 meq (e.g. K-lor, K-lyte)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> W	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> D	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4. Please indicate total hours of actual sleep in a typical 24-hour period:

5 hrs or less
 6 hrs
 7 hrs
 8 hrs
 9 hrs
 10 hrs
 11+ hrs

5. What is your usual sleeping position?

On back
 On side
 On front

6. Do you snore?

Every night
 Most nights
 A few nights a week
 Occasionally
 Almost never

7. Were any of these natural family members diagnosed with diabetes? Please mark all that apply:

	Before age 30:	Age 30 and after:
None	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Father	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mother	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sister	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Brother	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

8. How tall are you?

Feet: (4 5 6 7)
 Inches: (0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11)

9. Please record the total number of moles on both of your forearms between your elbow and your wrist, of this size or larger (3+ mm diameter):

None
 1-2 moles
 3-5
 6-9
 10-14
 15-20
 21 or more

10. Using the instructions found on the reverse side, please record the following measurements to the nearest quarter inch:

Torso:		Hip:	
inches	fraction	inches	fraction
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
0	0	0	0
1	1/4	1	1/4
2	2/4	2	2/4
3	3/4	3	3/4
4		4	
5		5	
6		6	
7		7	
8		8	
9		9	

Please do not forget to return your toenail clippings in the small brown envelope. Thank you.

Health Professionals Follow-up Study, Harvard School of Public Health, 677 Huntington Ave., Boston, Mass. 02115

INSTRUCTIONS

PLEASE DO NOT MARK ON THIS SIDE



Please use an ordinary pencil to answer all questions by completely filling in the appropriate response circle, or by writing the requested information if a space is provided. Because this form is meant to be read by optical-scanning equipment, it is important for you to make no stray marks and to keep any write-in responses within the provided spaces. Should you need to change a response, erase the incorrect mark completely. If you have comments, please write them on a separate piece of paper.

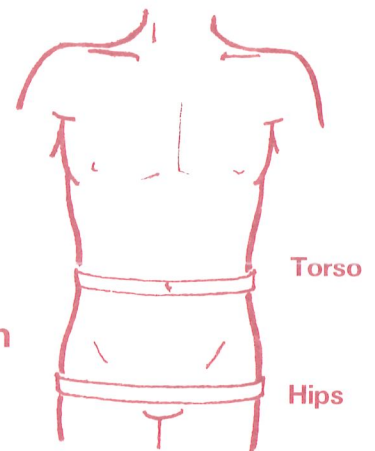
SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR QUESTION 10

The last item on this questionnaire asks about body measurements. We have enclosed a simple tape measure to help you. This information will be more accurate if you follow these suggestions:

- Make measurements while standing.
- Avoid measuring over bulky clothing.
- Try to record answers to the nearest quarter inch.

Torso: measure at the level of your navel.

Hips: measure around the largest circumference between your waist and your thighs.



Thank you for completing the 1987 Health Professionals Follow-up Study Questionnaire.

Please tear off the cover letter (to preserve confidentiality) and return the questionnaire and your nail samples in the postpaid envelope.