

Take charge of your health today. Be informed. Be involved.

This month, the "Take Charge of Your Health Today" page focuses on research and why equity in research participation is important. Jennifer R. Jones, MPH, CTSI community engagement senior coordinator, and Esther L. Bush, president and CEO of the Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh, shared ideas on this topic.

JJ: Good afternoon, Ms. Bush. I hope your October has started well. I'm really glad that we can spend some time today talking about research and health equity—what it is, what ethics are involved in research and, especially, how important it is that current research is representative of all definitions of diversity.

EB: Yes, Jennifer. I am so passionate about this topic. The Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh has been partnering with CTSI for more than 10 years now. In that time, I've learned so much from CTSI leaders like Dr. Steve

Reis and my friend Dr. Elizabeth Miller. I'm extremely proud of the mutual trust and respect our organizations have built. I look forward to what we'll continue to do together. I'm proud to say that our Urban League supports research and research participation and that we all work together to create a "research-informed community."

JJ: Let's talk about that for a minute. That's the main part of our mission and work together. What does a "research-informed community" mean to you?

EB: To me, it means that all of our communities understand what health research done well looks like—that our communities understand the rigorous process that researchers must follow to ensure that risks are minimized

Research and Health Equity



ESTHER BUSH

for participants. It means that our communities are empowered to ask questions about research they may be interested in and to listen thoughtfully to learn how research has progressed over the years.

JJ: I do many talks in the community about research. CTSI participates in health events across the city to talk about Pitt+Me,

our CTSI research registry. We want community members to ask us questions and to know that research is always voluntary. We want people to understand the process of informed consent—to identify where to go to find studies that may be beneficial for them or their families. People also need to recognize that African Americans are underrepresented in health data.

EB: Underrepresentation is something I know we can improve. Historically, African Americans, and other underrepresented groups, have had good reasons not to want to participate in medical research. But it's important to me that more than white men are represented in health research data. I want Black folks, women, children, the elderly and the dis-

abled—all vulnerable groups—to be represented in research. Only then will those who treat us truly know they are providing the best possible care for each of us.

JJ: Providing the best possible care for each person is what we call "precision medicine," which is our November health topic. We'll explore all those points in greater detail in just a few weeks. Thank you for your openness and honesty, Ms. Bush. I always appreciate your time.

If anyone has questions or would like more information about the topics on this month's page, e-mail partners@hs.pitt.edu.

The Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh health education office staff members are also available to answer questions about research and to let community members know what research opportunities may be available. We're all more than happy to answer your questions.

Pitt+Me®—Improving Health Through Research

The Pitt+Me® initiative is a program of the University of Pittsburgh Clinical and Translational Science Institute (CTSI) that engages researchers, patients and volunteers from the Greater Pittsburgh community as partners in research.

Research plays an important role in advancing science and improving health for future generations. Conducting research requires participants of all backgrounds, races and gender orientation to move health forward. Together, we form a community committed to accelerating discoveries that improve health.

Thanks to local residents like you who participated in research studies, University of Pittsburgh researchers have improved the lives of people in our region and globally.

Pitt researchers, led by Jonas Salk, MD, developed the first polio vaccine, saving millions from the disease (1955).

Pitt researcher Bernard Fisher, MD, helped countless women with breast cancer avoid unnecessary surgeries and live longer lives (1950s).

Pitt surgeon Thomas Starzl, MD, developed techniques for donor/recipient surgeries when organ transplantation was deemed impossible (1984).

Attention, parents! Children can also play an



important role in research and clinical trials. When your children participate in studies, they can positively affect pediatric and adult health care.

At any time, there are more than 200 active studies that look at approximately 300 different conditions. We encourage you to join the more than 100,000 participants in the Pitt+Me Registry who have signed up to receive our newsletter and to learn more about research opportunities that may be of interest to you.

Are you interested in joining Pitt+Me® to access study opportunities and learn more? Go to www.pittplusme.org today to create your profile and browse research studies. Would you like to talk to someone on the phone?

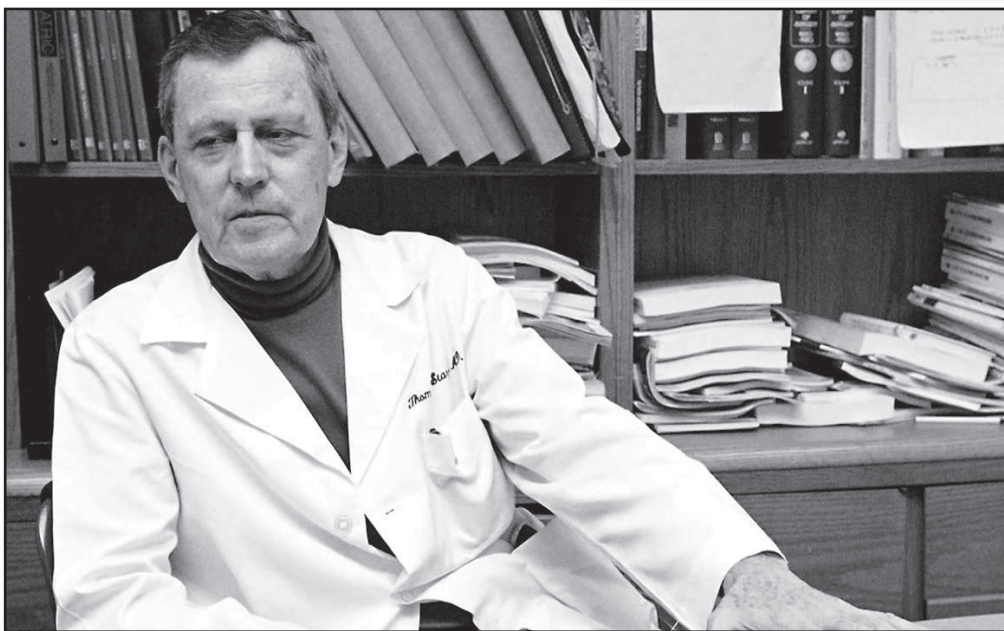
Contact our staff at **1-866-438-8230** or e-mail us at pittplusme@pitt.edu.

Pitt+Me® is on social media! Follow and like us to learn more about health and research opportunities.

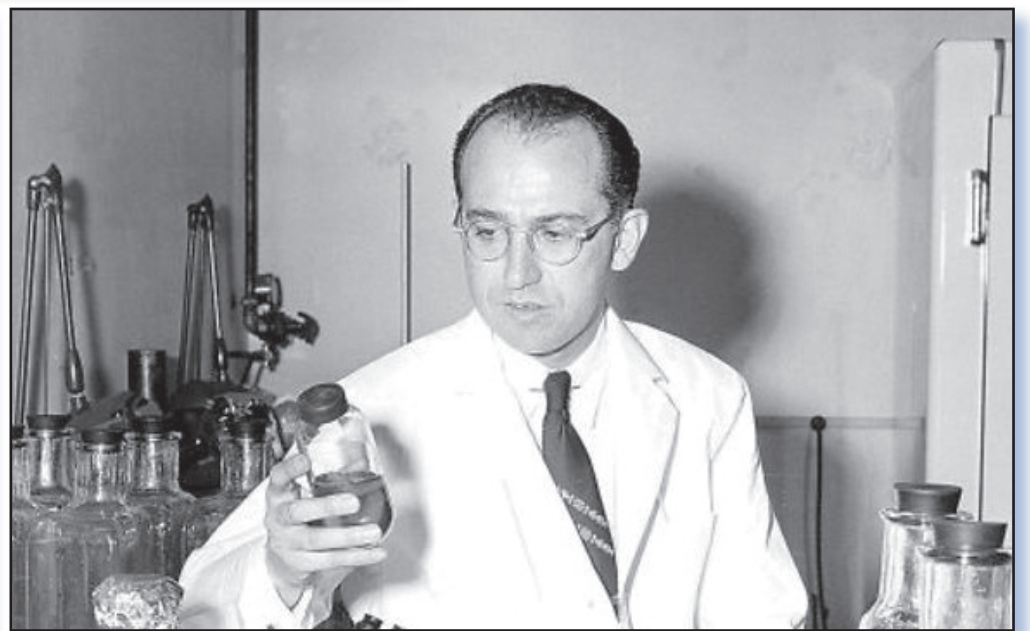
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Pitt surgeon Thomas Starzl, MD, developed techniques for donor/recipient surgeries when organ transplantation was deemed impossible



Pitt researchers, led by Jonas Salk, MD, developed the first polio vaccine, saving millions from the disease.

Visit the Urban League Health Education Office

The purpose of the Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh's Health Education Office (HEO) is to promote health awareness and health equity in the African American and other traditionally underserved communities. This is done through education and empowerment, developing research and practice partnerships, research promotion and health advocacy for communities of color in the greater Pittsburgh region.

HEO partners with the University of Pittsburgh Clinical and Translational Science Institute (CTSI) and the Carlow University School of Nursing. The health advocate, Erricka Hager, is available to assist staff members, clients and families with resources and research connections. Health and research "Lunch & Learns" are also held monthly and are open to the public.

HEO is staffed with Carlow University student nurses every Wednesday from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. The following health services are offered FREE of charge:

- blood pressure readings
- height and weight measurements
- BMI calculation
- body fat analysis
- health information (nutrition, diabetes, high blood pressure and sexual health—male and female condoms available)
- information on research studies of interest
- enrollment in Pitt+Me
- referral information for additional health services

No appointments are needed. Walk-ins are welcome! The Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh is located in downtown Pittsburgh at 610 Wood Street.



Pitt Center for Health Equity Community Research Advisory Board

The University of Pittsburgh Center for Health Equity's Community Research Advisory Board (CRAB) was established in 2001. It advises researchers on how to best engage under-

represented populations in research. It also fosters collaboration among those populations and researchers interested in advancing health equity and addressing health disparities. CRAB

is made up of community stakeholders, service providers and people in academics who have a shared interest in culturally appropriate community-oriented interventions and ethical

research. CRAB meets monthly throughout the academic year. If you are interested in learning more or being involved, e-mail healtheq@pitt.edu.