



# Intergenerational Blood Pressure (InterGEN) Study: High Blood Pressure Among African American Mothers & Children

January 2017 Newsletter

Hypertension, also called high blood pressure (HBP), impacts 1 in 3 American adults and causes problems like stroke, heart attack, kidney failure, and vision loss.

African American women are at the highest risk of developing HBP: **46% of African American women have HBP compared to 32% of white women.** African American children also are more likely to have HBP than any other racial/ethnic group.

Healthcare professionals desperately need better tools to prevent and treat HBP among African Americans, that's why we recruited you to help identify what about our genetics and personal experiences lead to HBP.

## Study Progress

- ⇒ **168 families** of our 250 goal have enrolled in InterGEN
- ⇒ **92%** of our enrolled families are sticking with the project
- ⇒ **350 interviews** have been completed
- ⇒ **3 articles** have been published, with more on the way

All enrolled mothers are Black or African American, at least 21 years old, and have a child between 3 through 5 years old. As part of the study, families complete 1 interview every 6 months, for a total of 4 interviews. At each interview mothers and children:

- Provide DNA samples (saliva), blood pressure readings, and height and weight measurements.
- Complete a computer-based survey with questions about: their background/health history, parenting-related behaviors, experiences of racial discrimination, and mental health status.
- Receive a **\$25 Visa gift card** (mothers) for each completed interview, for a total of \$100, and a **book** (children).

## Who are the InterGEN mothers?

In the U.S., about 7% of all women ages 20-34 years are diagnosed with HBP. **InterGEN mothers are reporting 2.5 times that rate – 17% to be exact.** This shows that women in our study have higher rates of HBP than the national average. Here's some more info about InterGEN mothers:

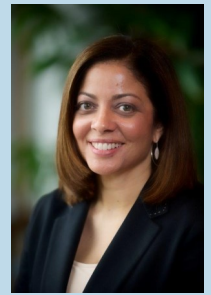
- 91% have health insurance
- Average age is 31
- 95% are high school grads
- Most have 1-2 biological children
- 74% live in permanent housing



## MEET THE CORE INTERGEN TEAM



**Dr. Jackie Taylor** Dr. Cindy Crusto  
Co-Principal Investigators

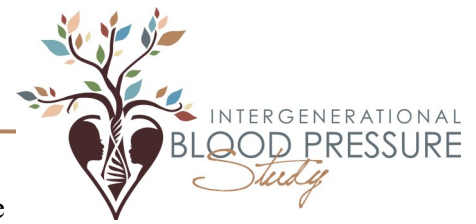


**Comfort Agaba** Laura Prescott  
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## What are we learning from our participants?



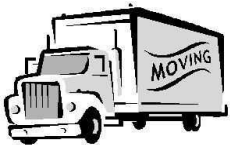
The InterGEN team looks at how what we inherit from our family (DNA) and mother's unique experiences work together and on their own to influence blood pressure in children and mothers. We know that DNA and life experiences are important for healthy child development, that's why we collect DNA and ask so many interview questions, some that may feel sensitive or hard to answer.

So far, we are learning that mothers have experienced a lot of stress and that this stress impact how mothers feel and how they interact with their children. We all experience a range of emotions each and every day and most InterGEN mothers reported what doctors would consider a "normal" amount of sadness.

However, mothers who have experienced extremely stressful events, such as assaults, natural disasters, and traffic accidents, report more symptoms of sadness or depression than other mothers and may not be as active in discipline and structure for their children. This makes a lot of sense and shows just how important mothers' health is. **Remember, you can always call your doctor if you find that you're not feeling yourself and want help.**

**61% report at least one experience of racial discrimination**

**76% report at least one extremely stressful life event**



Keep us informed if you are moving or changing contact information so we can get in touch!  
203.737.3843 or toll free at 844.288.2344

## Next Steps

The team has been busy but we still have a long way to go! Here's what we are planning to work on next:



**DNA Analysis:** We are preparing DNA for analysis. The team plans to look at how genes (pieces of our DNA) impact mothers' and children's blood pressure on their own and in combination with mothers' stress, mental health, and parenting styles.

**Recruitment:** Our goal is to enroll 250 mother/child families for a total of 500 participants and we have about 80 families to go! The team will also be working hard to help families complete all 4 study sessions over the course of their involvement with InterGEN.

**Congratulations to our raffle winners: Brittany A., Danielle W., Chazlyn J., Stephanie W., & Windy C.**

**Look out for the next raffle for a \$50 Visa gift card this spring!**

