

## **Dallas researchers seeking senior participants for breathing study**

*Institute for Exercise and Environmental Medicine receives green light for NIH scientific study*

DALLAS (March 14, 2022) – The National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the National Institute on Aging recently approved funding for a 2022 study by the [Institute for Exercise and Environmental Medicine](#) (IEEM), where a research team will look into how body weight – even extra weight gain like the kind recently resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic – may adversely affect breathing in seniors.

But with the good news of more science funding coming to local researchers, some are concerned that recruiting participants for the study may be like finding a needle in a haystack. The study hopes to recruit 65-75-year-old nonsmokers without asthma, diabetes, heart or lung disease who are mild-to-moderately obese.

“We know it may be difficult to recruit during a pandemic, but also, from a statistical standpoint, it will be challenging to find active seniors who fit our inclusion criteria,” said [Tony G. Babb](#), Ph.D., professor of internal medicine at UT Southwestern and director, [Cardiopulmonary Laboratory, IEEM](#).

Located on the campus of Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital Dallas, the IEEM is a joint program between Texas Health Dallas and UT Southwestern Medical Center.

The team is asking for people to help by talking to any seniors they know who may qualify and also live near Texas Health Dallas or the IEEM. (Walnut Hill and Greenville Avenue are the major cross streets.)

In addition to participants in the study being compensated for their time, they will receive study-related assessments and testing at no cost, including body composition, pulmonary function and exercise capacity.

“When it comes to how excess weight plus aging affects lung function, there is very little out there in the way of scientific studies,” [Babb](#) said.

As many people gained weight due to social distancing, a more sedentary lifestyle and other factors brought on by the pandemic, bodies – from youth to seniors – may be having to work that much harder to breathe properly.

Babb adds, “If you are overweight or gained weight during the COVID-19 pandemic, the time to find out how this may have affected your breathing is now – especially if you are a senior.”

### **About the IEEM Senior Breathing Study**

- The non-invasive study examines respiratory function and exercise tolerance in adult seniors, ages 65-75, who may be struggling with extra pounds as compared with seniors who have a normal body weight.

- Seniors will be selected for the study if they are nonsmokers and nondiabetic and have never been diagnosed with asthma, heart or lung disease.

### **Eligibility**

- Participants will be men and women ages 65 through 75, with an emphasis on those who struggle with extra weight.

### **How to join**

- Those who want to enroll in the study may call 214-345-6574 or email [IEEMLung@TexasHealth.org](mailto:IEEMLung@TexasHealth.org).
- Participants will be compensated for their time and receive body composition, pulmonary function and exercise capacity test results.

### **About UT Southwestern Medical Center**

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UT Southwestern, one of the nation's premier academic medical centers, integrates pioneering biomedical research with exceptional clinical care and education. The institution's faculty has received six Nobel Prizes, and includes 25 members of the National Academy of Sciences, 17 members of the National Academy of Medicine, and 14 Howard Hughes Medical Institute Investigators. The full-time faculty of more than 2,800 is responsible for groundbreaking medical advances and is committed to translating science-driven research quickly to new clinical treatments. UT Southwestern physicians provide care in about 80 specialties to more than 117,000 hospitalized patients, more than 360,000 emergency room cases, and oversee nearly 3 million outpatient visits a year.

### **About Texas Health Resources**

Texas Health Resources is a faith-based, nonprofit health system that cares for more patients in North Texas than any other provider. With a service area that consists of 16 counties and more than 7 million people, the system is committed to providing quality, coordinated care through its Texas Health Physicians Group and 28 hospital locations under the banners of Texas Health Presbyterian, Texas Health Arlington Memorial, Texas Health Harris Methodist and Texas Health Huguley. Texas Health access points and services, ranging from acute care hospitals and trauma centers to outpatient facilities and home health and preventive services, provide the full continuum of care for all stages of life. The system has more than 4,000 licensed hospital beds, 6,200 physicians with active staff privileges and more than 23,000 employees. For more information about Texas Health, call 1-877-THR-WELL, or visit [www.TexasHealth.org](http://www.TexasHealth.org).