

## Why fast before LiiRA visits and why no coffee?



We know it is not easy to skip breakfast and perhaps even harder to skip your morning cup of coffee before the LiiRA study visits. We are very appreciative of you doing this! In this newsletter, we would like to explain why we ask this of you.

As you know, a goal of this study is to understand what happens to cholesterol when your levels of inflammation change. Everyone has some cholesterol in their blood. Your blood cholesterol naturally goes up and down during the day. One way cholesterol levels can get very high is after eating foods high in fat. I'm sure my blood cholesterol gets quite high after one of my favorite breakfast foods, an everything bagel with cream cheese piled on.

In order to know if controlling inflammation in RA impacts cholesterol levels, it is important to be able to measure your "baseline" cholesterol at every visit. The fasting level of cholesterol is considered your "baseline" cholesterol because we know that we are not catching you after a nice cream cheese bagel. This gives us confidence that when we are comparing your cholesterol levels across your 4 visits, the levels are your "baseline" levels. This way we know that if we see changes, it is likely to be due to better control of inflammation, rather than the cream cheese.

Want more information? Visit us at <http://www.liira.org>



Next I'd like to explain our no coffee request at your first and last visit. As you know, for the cardiac stress test, rather than walking on a treadmill, you received a drug that makes your heart feel as if you are exercising. Caffeine happens to directly block the drug's effect. In fact, for those who have side effects on the drug, a caffeine infusion is the antidote!

Thanks again for being a part of our study and for changing your routine, so that we can together learn more about RA and heart disease!

## What's new?

We added an additional study, an echocardiogram, to the baseline and final visit to examine the heart's function through a second imaging test. The echo will give us information regarding how well the heart is pumping.

## Would you like to see something in our next newsletter? Contact us!

Katherine P. Liao, MD, MPH  
Principal Investigator

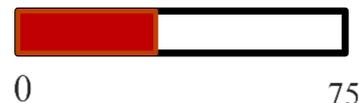
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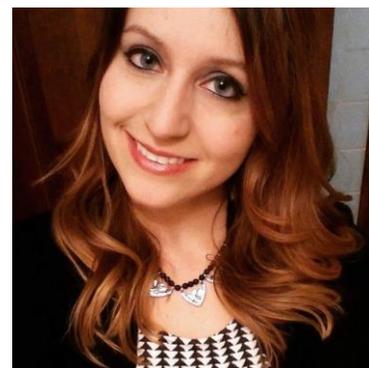
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## Enrollment Numbers

Enrolled: 29  
Completed: 20  
Target: 75 patients over 3 years  
(We have <2 more years to go)



## Team Spotlight



Laurel has been helping the team as the nuclear medicine research technologist since July 2017. She performs the research cardiac PET scans and has been full-time with BWH for almost 4 years. Laurel loves cooking, crafting, and volunteering at her local animal shelter. She can almost always be found in her natural habitat: either a Target or a Michael's.

Meet the rest of the team here:  
<http://www.liira.org/the-team.html>

## Our Sites

