

The ODS Update

A Newsletter for Health Professionals



Winter 2022

ODS Staff News

Abby G. Ershow, Senior Nutrition Scientist, Retires: A Tribute



Abby G. Ershow's academic career started at Cornell University where she was a biology major, but several elective nutrition classes took her interests in a different direction. She enrolled in public health school at Harvard to pursue a doctoral degree in nutrition, and also met the man who became her husband. Initially she planned on a career in the lab—but analyzing monkey lipoproteins quickly helped her decide that epidemiology would be a more satisfying pursuit.

Dr. Ershow completed a clinical nutrition fellowship; became a Registered Dietitian; taught epidemiology at Howard University; was awarded a National Cancer Institute (NCI) staff fellowship, where she worked on projects in China and Japan; and realized she enjoyed project planning and design more than data collection and analysis.

After her NCI fellowship, she transferred to the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) and found a good fit in managing an extramural portfolio in lipid metabolism, atherogenesis, and cardiovascular nutrition. Initially she had no plans for a long-term government career, but she stayed at NHLBI for 25 years, enjoying interactions with the outside research community and helping investigators understand the National Institutes of Health (NIH) grants system. Key activities during that time included setting up the Dietary Effects on Lipoproteins and Thrombogenic Activity (DELTA) multicenter diet intervention trial; co-authoring a textbook on the conduct of controlled feeding studies; and developing the plan for the National Food and Nutrient Analysis Program, an interagency project involving the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), NHLBI and other NIH Institutes, and many other federal partners.

When a position opened at the Office of Dietary Supplements (ODS), she accepted it and was asked to take over the ODS iodine initiative. Mastering this trace element was a new challenge—one that turned out to be another excellent fit. She found iodine to be a complicated, and interesting topic, and an important public health concern. Dr. Ershow has been particularly involved with interagency collaborations for strengthening research on and developing data resources for iodine, including a USDA food composition database and a more thorough evaluation of U.S. population iodine intake through the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) program.

Dr. Ershow has enjoyed the scholarly and collegial atmosphere at ODS and is pleased to be retiring at a time she is happy with her work and the office. After a long career in the nutrition field, most of it spent in the federal government, Dr. Ershow has planned and designed her next challenges: serving as a volunteer Maryland Master Naturalist docent at several local nature centers and wildlife refuges, winning prizes in county and state fair jam and jelly competitions, singing with a local choral group, and traveling with her husband. And fortunately for us, she will continue to contribute to ODS projects as a consultant.

Patricia A. Haggerty, Director of Grants and Extramural Activities

Patricia A. Haggerty became the fulltime Director of Grants and Extramural Activities in December 2021. In this capacity, she actively engages and encourages partnerships with other NIH research Institutes and Centers to facilitate funding of extramural grants of high relevance to the ODS mission and goals. From 2008 to 2021, Dr. Haggerty was the Senior Advisor to the Director and Associate Director for



Operations in the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID). Prior to joining NIAID, she was at NHLBI, where she served as Branch Chief in the Office of Scientific Review and Executive Secretary of the NHLBI Clinical Trials Review Committee. Since joining NIH, Dr. Haggerty's primary research interests include the biology of nutrition and its relationship to the immune system, infectious disease, and cardiovascular disease.

Dr. Haggerty earned a master's degree in nutritional biochemistry and metabolism from Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and her doctoral degree in human nutrition from London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, University of London. Her graduate studies led to extensive research and field experience in international nutrition policy, program planning, implementation, and evaluation in lesser developed countries. For two decades, Dr. Haggerty worked with global nutrition entities including the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Health Organization, and U.S. private voluntary organizations, providing expertise on vitamin A supplementation; breastfeeding; child survival; water, sanitation, and hygiene; integrated management of childhood illnesses; demographic and health surveys; and the USAID Food for Peace program. She has lived in Burkina Faso and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Karen S. Regan, Nutritionist



Karen S. Regan joined ODS full time in December 2021. Ms. Regan oversees the administration of the Computer Access to Research on Dietary Supplements (CARDS) database, performs portfolio analyses, and supports extramural activities for ODS. She also represents ODS as a subject matter expert for the NIH Spending Categories "Dietary Supplements" and "Nutrition" and serves on the NIH Division of Program Coordination, Planning, and Strategic Initiatives (DPCPSI) Working Group to Promote Social Justice.

Prior to joining ODS full time, Ms. Regan worked in a position jointly funded by ODS and the NIH Office of Nutrition Research where her responsibilities included nutrition research portfolio analysis to support the development and implementation of the 2020–2030 Strategic Plan for NIH Nutrition Research.

Before joining NIH, Ms. Regan worked at the USDA National Agricultural Library's Food and Nutrition Information Center managing the Healthy School Meals Resource System database and acting as a Nutrition Information Specialist. She is a member of the American Society for Nutrition, has a master's degree in nutrition from University of Maryland, and is a Registered Dietitian.

News You Can Use



ODS Seminar Series

ODS hosts [seminars](#) by experts who conduct research on dietary supplements, nutrition, and related issues. The seminar series is available by webinar only. [Contact](#) ODS to receive viewing information.

Wednesday, March 30, 2022, 11:00 a.m. (ET)

Preclinical Evaluation of Interactions Between Dietary Botanicals and Drugs

Cassandra L. Quave, Ph.D.—Emory College of Arts and Sciences, Center for the Study of Human Health, and Curator of the Herbarium, Atlanta, GA

Wednesday, May 18, 2022, 11:00 a.m. (ET)

Slowing Down Fibrosis in the Aging Heart—Anti-Inflammatory Approaches with Supplements and Other Compounds

Mark Entman, M.D., Katarzyna A. Cieslik, Ph.D., George E. Taffet, M.D.—Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, TX

Resilience Seminar Series



ODS established and coordinates the [Trans-NIH Resilience Working Group](#) to bring together NIH Institutes, Centers, and Offices that have strategic priorities or funds for resilience programs. [Register](#) for the February 2022 WebEx seminar:

Wednesday, February 9, 2022, 11:00 a.m. (ET)

**The Science of Bouncing Back From Health Stressors:
Development and Application of the Duke Pepper Model of
Physical Resilience**

Heather E. Whitson, M.D., Professor of Medicine—Duke University,
Durham, NC

New/Revised ODS Dietary Supplement Fact Sheets

- **Zinc**, for [health professionals](#) and [consumers](#) (update)
- **Probiotics**, for [health professionals](#) and [consumers](#) (update)
- **Calcium**, for [consumers](#) (comprehensive revision)
- **Dietary Supplements in the Time of COVID-19**, for [consumers](#) (update)

Funding Opportunities

Learn about ODS's [funding opportunities and research programs](#).



ODS Staff Publications

ODS staff members regularly publish papers that address key issues in dietary supplement and related research. These are recent examples:

Dwyer JT, Saldanha LG, Bailen RA, Gahche JJ, Potischman N, Bailey RL, Jun S, Long Y, Connor E, Andrews KW, Pehrsson PR, Gusev PA. [Do multivitamin/mineral dietary supplements for young children fill critical nutrient gaps?](#) *J Acad Nutr Diet* 2021. Online ahead of print.

Hosbas Coskun S, Wise SA, Kuszak AJ. [The importance of reference materials and method validation for advancing research on the health effects of dietary supplements and other natural products.](#) *Front Nutr* 8:786261.

ODS in the Media

- **Adam Kuszak** discussed in a *Food Safety Matters* [podcast](#) the importance of ensuring dietary supplement product quality and safety and how to verify the authenticity and chemical composition of plant-based ingredients.
- **Patricia Haggerty** and **Carol Haggans** were interviewed for the *NIH News in Health* article titled [Do You Need Dietary Supplements?](#)
- **Paul Thomas** and **Carol Haggans** were quoted in the *NIH News in Health* article titled [Taking Dietary Supplements Safely.](#)



COVID-19

[Get the latest public health information from CDC](#)

[Get the latest research information from NIH](#) | [Español](#)

Get timely messages from ODS through Facebook and Twitter. Like us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter!



[Like us today](#)  on Facebook.



[Follow](#)  our tweets at @NIH_ODS.

About ODS

The [Office of Dietary Supplements \(ODS\)](#) is part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the nation's medical research agency—supporting scientific studies that turn discovery into health.

Contact Us

Office of Dietary Supplements
National Institutes of Health
6705 Rockledge Drive
Room 730, MSC 7991
Bethesda, MD 20817

Email: ods@nih.gov

Website: <https://ods.od.nih.gov>