For the past 20 years most of my research has been focused on investigating the potential health benefits of various dietary components or food patterns, which have been explored in the context of randomized controlled trials in free-living adult populations. Some of the interventions have involved vegetarian diets, soy foods and soy food components, garlic, omega-3 fats/fish oil/flax oil, antioxidants, Ginkgo biloba, and popular weight loss diets. These trials have ranged in duration from 8 weeks to a year, with study outcomes that have included weight, blood lipids and lipoproteins, inflammatory markers, glucose, insulin, blood pressure and body composition. Most of these trials have been NIH-funded. The most recent of these was an NIH funded weight loss diet study - DIETFITS (Diet Intervention Examining The Factors Interacting with Treatment Success) that involved randomizing 609 generally healthy, overweight/obese adults for one year to either a Healthy Low-Fat or a Healthy Low-Carb diet. The main findings were published in JAMA in 2018, and many secondary and exploratory analyses are in progress testing and generating follow-up hypotheses.

In the past few years the long-term interests of my research group have shifted to include two additional areas of inquiry. One of these is Stealth Nutrition. The central hypothesis driving this is that in order for more effective and impactful dietary improvements to be realized, public health professionals need to consider adding non-health related approaches to their strategies toolbox. Examples would be the connections between food and 1) global warming and climate change, 2) animal rights and welfare, and 3) human labor abuses (e.g., slaughterhouses, agriculture fields, fast food restaurants). An example of my ongoing research in this area is a summer Food and Farm Camp run in collaboration with the Santa Clara Unified School District since 2011. Every year ~125 kids between the ages of 5-14 years come for 1-week summer camp sessions led by Stanford undergraduates and an Education Director to tend, harvest, chop, cook, and eat vegetables...and play because it is summer camp! The objective is to study the factors influencing the behaviors and preferences that lead to maximizing vegetable consumption in kids.

A second area of interest and inquiry is institutional food. Universities, worksites, hospitals, and schools order and serve a lot of food, every day. If the choices offered are healthier, the consumption behaviors will be healthier. A key factor to success in institutional food is to make the food options to “unapologetically delicious” a term I borrow from Greg Drescher, a colleague and friend at the Culinary Institute of America (the other CIA). Chefs are trained to make great tasting food, and chefs in institutional food settings can be part of the solution to improving eating behaviors. In 2015 I helped to initiate a Stanford-CIA collaboration that now involves dozens of universities that have agreed to collectively use their dining halls as living laboratories to study ways to maximize the synergy of taste, health and environmental

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My long-term vision in this area is to help create a world-class Stanford Food Systems Initiative and build on the idea that Stanford is uniquely positioned geographically, culturally, and academically, to address national and global crises in the areas of obesity and diabetes that are directly related to our broken food systems.

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

• Professor (Research), Medicine - Stanford Prevention Research Center
• Member, Cardiovascular Institute
• Member, Maternal & Child Health Research Institute (MCHRI)
• Member, Stanford Cancer Institute
• Faculty Fellow, Stanford ChEM-H
• Affiliate, Stanford Woods Institute for the Environment

ADMINISTRATIVE APPOINTMENTS

• The Rehnborg Farquhar Professorship, Stanford University School of Medicine, (2017 - present)
• Director, Clinical and Translational Core, Stanford Diabetes Research Center, (2017-2022)
• Member, American Diabetes Association Dietary Guidelines Committee, (2017-2019)
• Scientific Advisory Committee, Culinary Institute of America, (2012 - present)
• Nutrition Committee, American Heart Association, (2008-2012)

HONORS AND AWARDS

• Outstanding Faculty Advisor, Program in Human Biology (2011-2012)
• Teaching Award, Stanford Prevention Research Center (2011)
• Teaching Award, Stanford Prevention Research Center (2005)
• Distinguished Honorary Award, San Jose State University Department of Nutrition (2003)

BOARDS, ADVISORY COMMITTEES, PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

• Scientific Advisory Board Member, Culinary Institute of America (2012 - present)
• Member, American Society of Nutrition (2011 - present)
• Member, Obesity Society (2008 - present)
• Member, American Heart Association: Nutrition Committee (2008 - 2012)
• Member, American Heart Association Council on Nutrition, Physical Activity and Metabolism (2003 - present)
• Member, American Heart Association Council on Epidemiology and Prevention (1994 - present)

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

• PhD, Univ Cal Berkeley , Nutrition Science (1993)
• B.A., Colgate University , Philosophy (1981)

LINKS

• Nutrition Studies Site: http://nutrition.stanford.edu
Research & Scholarship

CURRENT RESEARCH AND SCHOLARLY INTERESTS

For the past 20 years most of my research has been focused on investigating the potential health benefits of various dietary components or food patterns, which have been explored in the context of randomized controlled trials in free-living adult populations. Some of the interventions have involved vegetarian diets, soy foods and soy food components, garlic, omega-3 fats/fish oil/flax oil, antioxidants, Ginkgo biloba, and popular weight loss diets. These trials have ranged in duration from 8 weeks to a year, with study outcomes that have included weight, blood lipids and lipoproteins, inflammatory markers, glucose, insulin, blood pressure and body composition. Most of these trials have been NIH-funded. The most recent of these was an NIH funded weight loss diet study - DIETFITS (Diet Intervention Examining The Factors Interacting with Treatment Success) that involved randomizing 609 generally healthy, overweight/obese adults for one year to either a Healthy Low-Fat or a Healthy Low-Carb diet. The main findings were published in JAMA in 2018, and many secondary and exploratory analyses are in progress testing and generating follow-up hypotheses.

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CLINICAL TRIALS

• Contrasting Ketogenic and Mediterranean Diets in Individuals With Type 2 Diabetes and Prediabetes: The Keto-Med Trial, Recruiting
• The RAMP Study - Rejuvenation of the Aging Microbiota With Prebiotics, Recruiting
• Adding Sleep Intervention to Traditional Diet and Exercise Approach to Weight Loss, Not Recruiting
• Comparing Effects of 3 Sources of Garlic on Cholesterol Levels, Not Recruiting
• Comparison of Popular Weight Loss Diets, Not Recruiting
• DIETFITS Study (Diet Intervention Examining the Factors Interacting With Treatment Success, Not Recruiting
• Effect of Fish Oil on Plasma Triglycerides in Adults, Not Recruiting
• Effects of Dietary Antioxidants on Cardiovascular Risk Factors, Not Recruiting
• Effects of Glutathione (an Antioxidant) and N-Acetylcysteine on Inflammation, Not Recruiting
• Effects of Omega-3 Fatty Acids on Markers of Inflammation, Not Recruiting
• Effects of Raw Versus Other Milk Sources on Lactose Digestion, Not Recruiting
• Effects of Soy Compounds on Breast Cancer, Prostate Cancer, and Bone Health, Not Recruiting
• SWAP-MEAT: Study With Appetizing Plant Food - Meat Eating Alternatives Trial, Not Recruiting
• Weight Loss Diet Study: Low Carb vs Low Fat, Not Recruiting

Teaching

COURSES

2018-19
• Food and Society: Exploring Eating Behaviors in Social, Environmental, and Policy Context: CHPR 166, HUMBIO 166 (Win)
• Human Nutrition: CHPR 130, HUMBIO 130 (Spr)
• Understanding Connections between Food and the Environment: HUMBIO 14 (Spr)

2017-18
• Healthy/Sustainable Food Systems: Maximum Sustainability across Health, Economics, and Environment: CHPR 113, HUMBIO 113S (Win)
• Human Nutrition: CHPR 130, HUMBIO 130 (Spr)
• Service Learning Practicum: EDUC 98 (Win)

2016-17
• Food and Society: Exploring Eating Behaviors in Social, Environmental, and Policy Context: CHPR 166, HUMBIO 166 (Win)
• Human Nutrition: CHPR 130, HUMBIO 130 (Spr)

2015-16
• ASB The Cuisine of Change: Promoting Child Health and Combating Food Insecurity: MED 23 (Win)
• From Foodies to Freegans: Food Popular Topics in the Silicon Valley: MED 158A (Aut)
• Healthy/Sustainable Food Systems: Maximum Sustainability across Health, Economics, and Environment: CHPR 213, HUMBIO 113S (Win)
• Human Nutrition: HUMBIO 130 (Spr)

STANFORD ADVISEES

Doctoral Dissertation Reader (AC)
Anna Lee

Postdoctoral Faculty Sponsor
Anna Epperson, Kathleen Gali, Jenna Hua, Michele Patel, Ilana Raskind, Patricia Rodriguez Espinosa, Sparkle Springfield, Erin Vogel

Postdoctoral Research Mentor
Priya Fielding-Singh

Publications

PUBLICATIONS

• Nutrition Therapy for Adults With Diabetes or Prediabetes: A Consensus Report  DIABETES CARE
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Effects of a College Course About Food and Society on Students' Eating Behaviors AMERICAN JOURNAL OF PREVENTIVE MEDICINE
Hekler, E. B., Gardner, C. D., Robinson, T. N.
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Gardner, C. D., Kiazand, A., Alhassan, S., Kim, S., Stafford, R. S., Balise, R. R., Kraemer, H. C., King, A. C.
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2019

Preventing weight gain more important than weight loss and more realistic to study in cohorts than in randomized controlled trials. The American journal of clinical nutrition
Gardner, C. D.
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- Self-Reported Measures of Discretionary Salt Use Accurately Estimated Sodium Intake Overall but not in Certain Subgroups of US Adults from 3 Geographic Regions in the Salt Sources Study. *The Journal of nutrition*  
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- Trade-offs in rigor and generalizability in a diet trial of glycemic control in adults with type 2 diabetes using whole foods and dietary supplements. *The American journal of clinical nutrition*  
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