

Why is it important that I participate in MESA?

If you are invited to participate in MESA and decide to join the study, you will be contributing to medical knowledge on how to prevent heart disease, stroke, and other serious diseases of the blood vessels. Medical knowledge can only advance if people like you are willing to participate in medical research.

How long will it take?

The clinic portion of the exam will take approximately half a day. The MRI and CAT scan portions of the exam will take another 2–3 hours. These parts of the exam can be divided over 2–3 appointments, and we will gladly work around your schedule.

What happens after that?

We will invite you to return to the clinic three more times (approximately two years apart) for a similar examination. We will call you once a year to check on your health status. The project will last 6 years.

Is the information I give you confidential?

Yes, all the information given by participants is held in strict confidence and will be used for statistical research purposes only. The information you provide will never be associated with your name, as provided by law.

What if I have questions?

You may call the MESA clinic at the number listed below anytime between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. If that is not convenient, please leave a voicemail message at that number, and we will call you back as soon as possible to answer your questions in person.

place label here

This study is authorized under Legal
Authority Public Law 99-158



What is MESA?

MESA (Multi-Ethnic Study of Atherosclerosis) is an important medical research study that involves more than 6,000 men and women from six communities in the United States. Participants in MESA come from diverse race and ethnic groups, including African Americans, Latinos, Asians, and Caucasians.

MESA is sponsored by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute of the National Institutes of Health. The study is conducted through the following six universities:

- Columbia University, New York, in collaboration with the 1199 National Benefit Fund
- Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore
- Northwestern and Loyola Universities, Chicago
- UCLA, Los Angeles
- University of Minnesota, Twin Cities
- Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem

What is the purpose of MESA

The MESA study will investigate the early stages of a disease called atherosclerosis, also known as “hardening of the arteries.” This condition occurs when cholesterol and other substances in the blood form deposits on artery walls that slow down or stop blood circulation. When that happens, heart disease, stroke, and other diseases of the blood vessels might develop.



Who can join MESA?

Residents of the study communities between the ages of 45 and 84 are selected and invited to participate. About 1,100 individuals from your community will be enrolled over a two-year period.

What will happen?

If you are selected as a possible MESA participant, we will call you to find out if you are eligible for the study. We will ask you questions about your health and medical conditions. If you are eligible for the study, we will invite you to our clinics where you will undergo special tests. MESA uses modern techniques to examine the function of the heart and blood vessels.

These tests include:

- CAT scan of the chest (like medical X-ray) to measure the amount of calcium in the arteries of the heart.
- Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) to measure the size and function of your heart.
- Ultrasound (sound wave) examination of the arteries in your neck and your arm to see how flexible they are.

All these tests are painless.

Other study procedures include:

- Measurement of blood pressure in the arm and leg
- Electrocardiogram (EKG)
- Blood drawing to measure the levels of cholesterol, fats, and other substances in the blood
- Interviews about your health and related habits

How will I benefit?

We will send you (and your doctor, if you wish) results from medical tests that might be valuable to your health. All these results will be provided free of charge. We will reimburse you for any transportation costs associated with study-related exams.