The Robert M. Berne Cardiovascular Research Center Presents a Special Seminar

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Sex-Specific Aspects of CVD

Every single normal cell in our body has 23 pairs of chromosomes that carry our genetic material. The sex chromosomes differentiate men and women. Women have two copies of the X chromosome and men have an X and Y chromosome, and the genetic content of the X and Y chromosome differs greatly. The second X chromosome in women is biologically inactivated, yet a significant number of genes can escape this inactivation and may contribute to diseases that affect women.

From a large cohort study, we’re looking at patient vascular cells that line blood vessel walls. Using advanced imaging and sequencing techniques, we’re identifying molecular markers that can predict stiffness of the vessel wall. Early thickening or stiffening of blood vessels are an indication of pathophysiological changes that can influence the development of heart disease. Our deeper understanding of the molecular biology will help us develop good female-specific markers for improved diagnosis and treatment of heart disease.

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