

New Epidemiology chair inspired by "freethinking, freewheeling, fearless" students



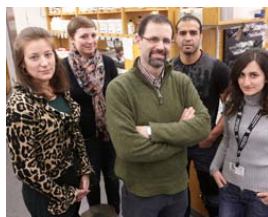
[Michelle Williams](#), SM '88, ScD '91, began as chair of the Department of Epidemiology and Stephen B. Kay Family Professor of Public Health at Harvard School of Public Health in August 2011. She hopes to continue her department's legacy of discovery and training scientists to change the world. [Read more](#)

Common chemicals linked to lowered immune response to childhood vaccinations



A new study finds that perfluorinated compounds (PFCs), widely used in manufactured products such as non-stick cookware, waterproof clothing, and fast-food packaging, were associated with lowered immune response to vaccinations in children. It is the first study to document how PFCs, which can be transferred to children prenatally (via the mother) and postnatally from exposure in the environment, can adversely affect vaccine response. [Read more](#)

Dietary changes before surgery may reduce risk of complications



L to R: Lauren Robertson, Jordan Gallinetti, James Mitchell, Pedro Mejia, Eylul Harputlugil

Limiting certain essential nutrients prior to surgery--either protein or amino acids--may reduce the risk of serious surgical complications such as heart attack or stroke, according to a new HSPH study. Although it may seem counterintuitive, lead author [James Mitchell](#), assistant professor of genetics and complex diseases at HSPH, said that "data indicate that the well-fed state is the one more susceptible to this kind of injury."

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Reducing risk of head and neck pain from tablet computer use

People worldwide have been buying up

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Event highlights

Next Forum webcast: Toxic stress in childhood



Speaker: HSPH's [Jack Shonkoff](#)

Webcast: Feb. 7 on [The Forum](#) website.

[Harvard](#)



tablet computers--small, thin devices such as Apple's iPad--in droves, partly because of their ease of use and portability. However, little is known about the potential for tablet users to experience the same kinds of ergonomic issues that have afflicted desktop computer users for decades, such as head, neck, and wrist pain. Now, HSPH researchers have begun quantifying the ways in which a person's posture, and also the design of the tablet and its case, affect comfort.

[Read more](#)

[Transdisciplinary Research in Energetics and Cancer Center \(TREC\) Annual Conference](#)
Feb. 13
Joseph B. Martin
Conference Ctr.
1:30-6:00 PM

Around the School

Faculty promotion



[Tianxi Cai](#), professor of biostatistics

Upcoming Wellness seminars

[Vipassana Meditation: Can it help you live a healthier life](#)
Jan. 31, 12:00-1:30 PM, Countway Library, Ballard Room

[Email Overload!](#)

Feb. 8, 12:00-1:30 PM, Countway Library, Minot Room

Opportunity for HSPH researchers

Courses open to HSPH affiliates of [Harvard Catalyst](#)

[Welcome to the Genetic Code: An Overview of Basic Genetics](#)

Feb. 16, 1:30-6:00 PM, Brigham and Women's Hospital, Bornstein Family Amphitheatre

[Genetic Literacy: An Intermediate Guide to Understanding the Language and Concepts of Modern Genetic Research](#)

Mar. 29, 12:30-5:00 PM, Brigham and Women's Hospital, Bornstein Family Amphitheatre

Registration is required. Contact [Lisa Horton](#) with questions.

Research news and interviews



[Coffee up, depression down](#)
(HHS HealthBeat)