

Dear LiiRA community,

We are excited to share that our report of the main findings of LiiRA was accepted for publication in the *Journal of the American Heart Association (JAHA)*. I'd like to share some of our key take-away points below:

- Over 90% of participants had a normal cardiac stress test, however ~50% had some degree of dysfunction in the small blood vessels of the heart.
- The cardiac stress test is a routine clinical test. If abnormal, we know what to do, e.g., recommend statin therapy. However, the function of the small blood vessels is not routinely measured in clinical care and thus were measured as part of this research study. We were concerned that smaller blood vessels in the heart may not be functioning normally in RA.
- What to do about mild to moderate small blood vessel dysfunction is not clear. However from LiiRA we know that starting a tumor necrosis factor inhibitor (TNFi) did not lead to an improvement at 6 months.
- The TNFi and other RA treatments did appear to benefit participants with evidence of heart muscle injury at their first visit; heart muscle injury can be measured using a test called high sensitivity cardiac troponin.

The *JAHA* publication is in press and we anticipate seeing the study in print in a few weeks. Please reach out if you would like a copy.



We are now investigating what it means in the long term if the small blood vessels in your heart are not functioning at 100%. We have reached out to some of you both with and without findings of blood vessel dysfunction to get a better look at the arteries in your heart. A big thanks to those of you have agreed to be a part of this extension study, IMIRA, inflammation, subclinical myocardial injury and cardiovascular risk in rheumatoid arthritis.

Lastly, LiiRA recruited from 2017-2021, with a pandemic hitting in the middle of our recruitment period. I am grateful to all of you for working with us before, during and after this difficult period to get us to the finish line.

Thank you!

All the best,

Kat Liao



Team Spotlight



Mary is a Clinical Research Assistant at Brigham & Women's Hospital where she works on LiiRA and other RA studies. Mary joined the team about a year and a half ago. Prior to joining BWH, she was at UMass Amherst obtaining a Bachelor's Degree in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology and working as a Clinical Assistant at a family practice. Outside of work, Mary enjoys spending time with friends & family, working out, and being outdoors.

Meet the rest of the team here: <http://www.liira.org/the-team.html>

Would you like to see something in our next newsletter? Contact us!

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