



## Greetings from CoNECTR Director Dr. Gina Kruse

March 27th, 2025

In this time of uncertainty for federally funded researchers it was a treat to attend the Society for Research on Nicotine and Tobacco conference in New Orleans last week along with some CU colleagues (pictured are Myra Muramoto, Christine Sun, Carissa Sherman, Katrina Claw, and myself). It was a chance to focus on the science for a few days with some exciting new trials coming out about vaping cessation for youth, novel cessation treatments (the last FDA approval for a smoking cessation medication was 20 years ago), and new data on tobacco product health effects and policy impacts, among many other topics.

We'd love to help organize dinners or get together at other conferences that you attend, email us if you have a tobacco or nicotine relevant conference in mind that has CU attendees!

Also, mark your calendars for May 28 (details in Conferences and Events section below), we have an outstanding tobacco cessation speaker visiting from University of Kansas, Dr. Lisa Sanderson Cox, on May 28, hosted by the Colorado Cancer Center's Cancer Prevention and Control Program.

Gina Kruse, MD, MS, MPH  
Director of CoNECTR



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## CoNECTR Vision and Mission

**Vision:** To facilitate innovative transdisciplinary research, in partnership with clinical care and public health, to reduce inequity, illness, and death caused by tobacco and nicotine products.

**Mission Statement:** To cultivate innovative and impactful tobacco and nicotine research in our community of scientists, spanning disciplines from basic science to clinical and population-based research. We seek to grow a pipeline of scientists and practitioners partnered with our community. Our work is driven by the needs of all Coloradoans, with the overarching goal of reducing health inequity and harms of commercial tobacco and nicotine products.

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[Stay up to date on CoNECTR's initiatives and governance](#)

Visit CoNECTR Website

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# INVESTIGATOR SPOTLIGHT

## Dr. Jamie Studts Interviewed in How This Is Building Me

How This Is Building Me is a podcast hosted by world-renowned oncologist D. Ross Camidge, MD, PhD.

In the episode titled How Behavioral Science Informs Empathetic and Effective Lung Cancer Prevention Strategies, Dr. Camidge sat down with Jamie L. Studts, PhD, a professor of medicine–medical oncology, scientific director of Behavioral Oncology, co-leader of the Cancer Prevention and Control Program, and co-director of the Population Health Shared Resource at the University of Colorado Cancer Center in Aurora.

Dr. Studts emphasized the need for empathetic, supportive messaging to communicate the lung cancer risks associated with smoking cigarettes and spotlighted the ways that state-based initiatives have successfully reduced late-stage lung cancer diagnoses.

[Listen Here](#)



# NEWS AND POLICY

## **Opponents of Denver Tobacco Flavor Ban File Paperwork to Put the Question to Voters**

*Denverite*

John Daley

January 30, 2025

A group of opponents to Denver's ban on flavored tobacco has filed paperwork with the city clerk and recorder's office to try to overturn it.

[Read More](#)

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## **Summit County Towns Seriously Consider Ban on Flavored Nicotine Products**

*Summit Daily*

Kit Geary

February 20, 2025

Summit County Public Health officials have started pushing an initiative they are looking to get all of Summit's municipalities behind: new nicotine regulations and product bans.

[Read More](#)

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## **FDA Authorizes Marketing of 20 ZYN Nicotine Pouch Products After Extensive Scientific Review**

*FDA News Release*

January 16, 2025

U.S. Food and Drug Administration authorized the marketing of 20 ZYN nicotine pouch products through the premarket tobacco product application (PMTA) pathway following an extensive scientific review. This is the first time the agency has authorized products commonly referred to as nicotine pouches, which are small synthetic fiber pouches containing nicotine designed to be placed between a person's gum and lip.

[Read More](#)



# CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

## **Save the Date: Reducing Cancer Risk in Black Adults by Enhancing Tobacco Treatment**

**May 28, 2025, 12pm – 1pm**

[Lisa Sanderson Cox, PhD](#) is a Professor of Population Health at the University of Kansas School of Medicine, Associate Director of the Frontiers Clinical and Translational Science Institute at the University of Kansas, and a member of the Cancer Control Program at the University of Kansas Cancer Center. She is dedicated to improving tobacco use treatment for African American and Latino adults, cancer patients, and other underserved populations

This event is hosted by the [Cancer Control and Prevention Program](#). For more information contact [ryan.le@ucdenver.edu](mailto:ryan.le@ucdenver.edu)



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## Highlights from Special Lecture by Dr. Elyse Park: “Tobacco Treatment Across the Cancer Spectrum: From Prevention to Survivorship”

Dr. Park is a Professor of Psychiatry at Massachusetts General Hospital/Harvard Medical School and Director of Health Promotion and Resiliency Intervention Research (HPRIR) Center. She is a clinical health psychologist and health services researcher who spoke on her research focusing on developing and implementing behavioral interventions and tobacco cessation treatments across the cancer continuum.

[Watch the Recording](#)



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## Upcoming Conferences

[Society of Behavioral Medicine](#) (March 26 - 29, 2025, San Francisco, CA)  
[Nicotine Dependence Center Conference 2025](#) (March 27 - 29, 2025, Phoenix, AZ)  
[American Society of Preventive Oncology](#) (April 6 - 8, 2025, Philadelphia, PA)  
[American Society of Addiction Medicine](#) (April 24 - 27, 2025, Denver, CO)  
[Society for Prevention Research](#) (May 27 - 30, 2025, Seattle, WA)  
[Thomas L. Petty Aspen Lung Conference](#) (June 3 - 6, 2025, Aspen, CO)  
[American Thoracic Society](#) (May 16 - 21, 2025, San Francisco, CA)  
[Behavior Genetics Association](#) (June 25 - 28, 2025, Atlanta Georgia)  
[Society for General Internal Medicine](#) (May 14 - 17, 2025, Hollywood, FL)  
[Academy of Health Annual Research Meeting](#) (June 7-10, 2025, Minneapolis, MN)  
[National Conference on Tobacco or Health](#) (August 26-28, 2025, Chicago, IL)  
[Public Health in the Rockies](#) (September 9 - 11, 2025, Keystone, CO)  
[American Public Health Association Annual Meeting](#) (November 2 - 5, 2025, Washington, D. C.)  
[World Conference on Tobacco Control \(The Union\)](#) (June 23 - 25, 2025, Dublin, Ireland)  
[World Conference on Lung Health \(The Union\)](#) (November 18 - 22, 2025, Copenhagen, Denmark)  
[The European Conference on Tobacco or Health \(ECToH\)](#) (Spring 2026, Milan, Italy)  
[Society for Research on Nicotine and Tobacco](#) (March 4 - 6, 2026, Baltimore, MD)

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# RECENT PUBLICATIONS

To share the great work around campus we have created a search to identify the new tobacco and nicotine research published by University of Colorado researchers. Please send us additional papers to highlight, it will help us to refine our search.

- Fahsen N, Vidaña-Pérez D, Monzon J, Mus S, Davila G, **Barnoya J**, Thrasher JF. Longitudinal analysis of predictors of electronic cigarette trial among adolescents in Guatemala. *Addict Behav.* 2025 Mar;162:108233. doi: 10.1016/j.addbeh.2024.108233. Epub 2024 Dec 26. PMID: 39729777. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/39729777/>
- Dogar O, Amer Nordin AS, **Barnoya J**, Ayo-Yusuf O, Bullen C. Tobacco Cessation Research in Low- and Middle-Income Countries: A commentary on Challenges, Innovations and Opportunities. *Nicotine Tob Res.* 2025 Jan 22:ntaf019. doi: 10.1093/ntr/ntaf019. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 39842877. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/39842877/>
- Greteman BB, Cole A, Charlton ME, Shannon J, Kepka D, Paskett ED, **Borrayo EA**, **Studts JL**, Thompson HS, Scarinci I, Hinton LC, Chrischilles EA, Garcia-Auguste CJ, Christini K, Aker H, Plascak JJ, Harper FWK, Baskin ML, Bae S, Pandya V, Kim YI, Faseru B, Befort C, Kuo H, Dignan M, Canedo J, Champion V, Drake BF, Davis KL, Friedman DL, Elsaid MI, Mama SK, Cohn WF. Cancer-related health behaviors during the COVID 19 pandemic in geographically diverse samples across the US. *BMC Cancer.* 2025 Jan 9;25(1):50. doi: 10.1186/s12885-024-13373-5. PMID: 39789488; PMCID: PMC11721185. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/39789488/>
- Mills A, Dakhlallah D, Ranpara A, Goldsmith WT, Chantler PD, Huang YW, **Boyd J**, Olfert IM. Pregnancy and Postpartum Effects of Electronic Cigarettes on Maternal Health and Vascular Function in the Fourth Trimester. *Cardiovasc Toxicol.* 2025 Mar;25(3):325-340. doi: 10.1007/s12012-025-09961-x. Epub 2025 Jan 22. PMID: 39841346; PMCID: PMC11885370. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/39841346/>
- Romero Villela PN, Kelly KM, Balbona JV, **Ehringer MA**, Keller MC. Maternal Smoking during Pregnancy Interacts with Genetic Factors to Increase Risk for Low Birth Weight but not Harmful Offspring Smoking Behaviors in Europeans. *Nicotine Tob Res.* 2024 Dec 26:ntae310. doi: 10.1093/ntr/ntae310. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 39722218. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/39722218/>

- **Elf JL**, Lebina L, Motthaoleng K, Chon S, Niaura R, Abrams D, Variava E, Gupte N, Martinson N, Golub JE. A randomized trial for combination nicotine replacement therapy for smoking cessation among people with HIV in a low-resourced setting. *AIDS*. 2024 Dec 17. doi: 10.1097/QAD.0000000000004093. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 39693492. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/39693492/>
- Wichman ML, Wall DM, **Garcia Mota SS**, Killam SR, Brown KE, **Aagaard K**, Swaney J, Muzquiz LI, Corum BN, **Claw KG**, Woodahl EL. Perspectives on Using Pharmacogenomics to Guide Tobacco Cessation: Survey Results From an American Indian Community. *Clin Transl Sci*. 2025 Mar;18(3):e70194. doi: 10.1111/cts.70194. PMID: 40078094; PMCID: PMC11904310. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/40078094/>
- Fortis S, Strand M, Bhatt SP, Ten Eyck P, Wendt L, Parekh T, Han MK, **Hokanson JE**, Kinney G, Curtis JL, Bowler RP, Wan ES, Kunisaki KM, Wendt CH, Regan E, Dransfield M, Crapo JD, Silverman EK, Comellas AP. Respiratory Exacerbations and Lung Function Decline in People with Smoking History and Normal Spirometry. *Am J Respir Crit Care Med*. 2025 Feb 13. doi: 10.1164/rccm.202401-0023OC. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 39946437. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/39946437/>
- Sewpaul R, Olivier S, Ngubane H, Zulu T, Sithole M; Vukuzazi Team; Hanekom WA, **Kruse G**, Rigotti NA, Siedner MJ, Wong EB, Reddy KP. Initiation, cessation and relapse of tobacco smoking over a 3-year period among participants aged ≥15 years in a large longitudinal cohort in rural South Africa. *PLOS Glob Public Health*. 2025 Feb 25;5(2):e0004126. doi: 10.1371/journal.pgph.0004126. PMID: 39999138; PMCID: PMC11856274. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/39999138/>
- Nagawa CS, Selvamuthu P, Kumarasamy N, Balakrishnan FB, Rigotti NA, **Kruse GR**. Patterns and Correlates of Multiple tobacco Product use Among people With HIV in India. *Tob Use Insights*. 2024 Dec 9;17:1179173X241303587. doi: 10.1177/1179173X241303587. PMID: 39659298; PMCID: PMC11629409. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/39659298/>
- Kypriotakis G, Cinciripini PM, Green CE, Lawrence D, Anthenelli RM, Minnix JA, Beneventi D, **Morris C**, Karam-Hage M, Blalock JA. Effects of Varenicline, Bupropion, Nicotine Patch, and Placebo on Treating Smoking Among Persons With Current or Past Major Depressive Disorder: Secondary Analysis of a Double-Blind, Randomized, Placebo-Controlled Trial. *Am J Psychiatry*. 2025 Feb 1;182(2):174-186. doi: 10.1176/appi.ajp.20230855. Epub 2024 Dec 11. PMID: 39659160. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/39659160/>
- Jee Y, Shin SY, Ryu M, **Samet JM**. The effect of heated tobacco products on metabolic syndrome: A cohort study. *Tob Induc Dis*. 2024 Dec 16;22. doi: 10.18332/tid/194490. PMID: 39687080; PMCID: PMC11647454. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/39687080/>
- Lewis JA, Klein DE, Eberth JM, Carter-Bawa L, **Studts JL**, Tong BC, Smith RA, Kazerooni EA, Houston TP. The American Cancer Society National Lung Cancer Roundtable strategic plan: Provider engagement and outreach. *Cancer*. 2024 Dec 1;130(23):3973-3984. doi: 10.1002/cncr.34555. Epub 2024 Sep 20. PMID: 39302232. <https://scholars.duke.edu/publication/1646605>
- Golden SE, **Sun CJ**, Young A, Katz DA, Vander Weg MW, Mayeda MS, Gundle KR, Bailey SR. "We're on the Same Team": A Qualitative Study on Communication and Care Coordination Surrounding the

Requirement to Quit Smoking Prior to Elective Orthopedic Surgery. *Nicotine Tob Res.* 2024 Dec 23;27(1):28-35. doi: 10.1093/ntr/ntae140. PMID: 38826068.

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/38826068/>

- **Wisniewski BL**, Shrestha M, Bojja D, Shrestha CL, Lee CS, Ozuna H, Rayner RE, Bai S, Cormet-Boyaka E, Reynolds SD, Kopp BT. Secondhand vape exposure regulation of CFTR and immune function in cystic fibrosis. *Am J Physiol Lung Cell Mol Physiol.* 2025 Mar 1;328(3):L324-L333. doi: 10.1152/ajplung.00328.2024. Epub 2025 Jan 21. PMID: 39836014.  
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/39836014/>

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## Other Publications Worth Noticing

### Notes from the Field: Tobacco Product Use Among Adults — United States, 2017–2023

Arrazola RA, Husten CG, Cornelius ME, Armour BS. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep* 2025;74:118–121. DOI:

<http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm7407a3>

- Although adult cigarette smoking prevalence remains at its lowest level in 60 years, tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable death in the United States. Change in use of other commercial tobacco products by U.S. adults affects overall tobacco use.
  - During 2017–2023, the approximate 6.8 million-person decrease in the number of adults who currently exclusively smoke cigarettes was offset by an approximate 7.2 million-person increase in the number who currently exclusively use e-cigarettes.
  - While current cigarette smoking has decreased to the lowest level in 60 years, current tobacco product use among adults has not changed since 2017. Comprehensive strategies, such as price increases, smoke-free policies, high-impact media campaigns, and cessation support, are critical to preventing and reducing tobacco product use, nicotine addiction, and their associated adverse health outcomes.
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# CLINICAL CORNER

## Be Strong for Tomorrow: A Free Tobacco and Vaping Cessation Program through an App

Be Strong for Tomorrow Program is a free education and cessation program, offered by the Cancer Center Office of Community Outreach and Engagement. It is available to all Coloradoans age 13+, with a focus on reaching Colorado counties with high tobacco use rates (>20%).

The program is delivered via the 2Morrow Health app which is the commercially available version of the iCanQuit app developed and tested at Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center ([Bricker et al, 2014](#); [Bricker et al, 2020](#)). The app effectively assisted adults to quit cigarette smoking, including those from racial/ethnic minorities, of low-income backgrounds, and living in rural areas ([Bricker et al, 2020](#); [Santiago-Torres et al, 2022](#)). Using a behavioral model called “acceptance and commitment therapy” ([Hayes et al, 2013](#)) the app assists users to stay motivated, cope with withdrawal and cravings, and prevent relapse. The 2Morrow Health app offers modules for adults and pregnant women who smoke, and young people who vape.

**Read More:** [2Morrow Health App](#); [Be Strong for Tomorrow Program](#)

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## UCHealth’s Tobacco & Nicotine Cessation Support Groups

The [UCHealth Smoking Cessation Program](#) offers in-person support groups for people at any stage of their quit journey. Sessions are free. Attendees might have a prescription cost for cessation aids depending on insurance coverage. The next six-session cycle starts on April 29th, 2025.

Call Yesenia Trevizo at (720) 848-8770 or Aubrey Bush at (303) 724-8468 for more information



**Are you ready to reduce your nicotine or tobacco use?**

FREE in-person support groups are offered by UCHealth. There are six weekly sessions. Sign up today, space is limited!

For more information on tobacco and nicotine cessation, scan the QR code below.



AMC Nicotine Treatment Program





# FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

## **Accelerating the Pace of Substance Use Research Using Existing Data (R21 Clinical Trial Not Allowed)** [RFA-DA-26-056; NIDA](#)

This NOFO invites applications proposing innovative analysis of existing social science, behavioral, administrative, and neuroimaging data to study the etiology and epidemiology of substance using behaviors (defined as alcohol, tobacco, prescription, and other substances) and related disorders, prevention of substance use and HIV, and health service utilization.

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## **Pilot Health Services and Economic Research on the Treatment of Drug, Alcohol, and Tobacco Use Disorders (R34 Clinical Trial Optional)** [PAR-25-100; NIDA](#)

This NOFO encourages pilot and preliminary research in preparation for larger-scale services research effectiveness trials. Relevant trials may test a wide range of approaches, including interventions, practices, and policies designed to optimize access to, and the quality, effectiveness, affordability and utilization of tobacco or substance use disorder treatments and related services, as well as services for comorbid medical and mental disorder conditions.

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## **Use Pivot to Find Funding Opportunities Relevant to You**

[Pivot-RP | Pivot-RP \(proquest.com\)](#) is a comprehensive funding database representing funding opportunities from federal agencies, foundations, industry, etc. It is available to all CU Anschutz Faculty and staff. It allows users to develop automated searches base on criteria relevant to each researcher field.

1. Go to <https://pivot.proquest.com/session/login> and select your institution.
2. Find 'University of Colorado at Denver' in the drop down list.
3. You will then be prompted to log in through SSO and then you will just select your affiliation (CU Anschutz).
4. You will be able to conduct broad or advanced searches for funding opportunities customized to your interests.



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## Other ways to learn about funding opportunities

- [Funding Landscape | Research Development and Strategy \(cuanschutz.edu\)](#)
- [Funding Focus Newsletter | CU Anschutz](#)
- [Research Grant Process | American Cancer Society](#)
- [Tobacco Regulatory Science Program Funding Opportunities | ODP \(nih.gov\)](#)
- [Funding Opportunity Announcements | Smoking and Tobacco Use | CDC](#)
- [Tobacco education, prevention and cessation grant program | Department of Public Health & Environment \(colorado.gov\)](#)
- [Funding Opportunities, Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs \(health.mil\)](#)

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We want to hear your feedback. Let us know where you present your tobacco/nicotine research, suggest content for future newsletter or activities using the link below.

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