

1st Annual Buck Reproductive Aging Summit

Sponsored by the Buck Institute Center for Healthy Aging in Women

Buck Institute for Research on Aging

Friday, August 21, 2026

8:30am–6:00pm

Event Organizers:

Francesca Duncan

Bikem Soygur

Malene Hansen

8:30 am **Breakfast and registration**

9:00 am **Welcome** – Eric Verdin, MD (Buck Institute)

Session I: Ovarian inflammaging
(Moderator: Francesca Duncan, PhD, Buck Institute)

9:10 am Berenice Benayoun, PhD (USC)
Single cell exploration of mammalian ovarian aging

9:30 am Michael Stout, PhD (Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation) mTORC1 hyperactivation in theca cells accelerates ovarian functional declines

9:50 am Sarai Badillo (Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation) Dynamic Remodeling of Ovarian Macrophages Across the Estrous Cycle (*Short talk*)

10:00am Group Q&A

10:20 am **Break and poster set up**

Session II: Endocrine actions
(Moderator: Bikem Soygur, PhD, Buck Institute)

10:45 am Pankaj Kapahi, PhD (Buck Institute)
The Reproductive Resilience Hypothesis and Evolution of Sex-Specific Differences

11:05 am David Pepin, PhD (Harvard Medical School/MGH)
AMH and persistence of ovarian endocrine function during aging

11:25 am Alison Kochersberger, PhD (Buck Institute)
Investigating inflammation-induced changes to hypothalamic MCH signaling as a mediator of ovarian aging (*Short talk*)

11:35 am Group Q&A

11:55 am **Lunch and poster preview**

Session III: Intracellular and extracellular mechanisms
(Moderator: Mark Watson, PhD, Buck Institute)

1:00 pm Birgit Schilling, PhD (Buck Institute)
Proteomic Signatures Specific for the Human Aging Ovaries

1:20 pm Neil Hunter, PhD (UC Davis)
A Cohesion Optimum Underlies Chromosome Segregation Fidelity in Oocytes: A Goldilocks Scenario

1:40 pm Jules Balough, PhD (University of Pittsburgh, MWRI)
Functional Vaginal Epithelial Stem Cells and Ovary-Dependent Regenerative Remodeling (*Short talk*)

1:50 pm Group Q&A

Session IV: Ovarian cellular dynamics
(Moderator: Malene Hansen, PhD, Buck Institute)

2:10 pm Diana Laird, PhD (UCSF)
Wiring and plumbing the ovary: neurovascular interactions and folliculogenesis

2:30 pm Bikem Soygur, PhD (Buck Institute)
3D Mapping of Ovarian Lymphatics as a Window into Ovarian Aging

2:50 pm Marcus Begley, PhD (Rutgers University)
Comparing MI and MII spindle forces in mouse oocytes during maternal aging (*Short talk*)

3:00 pm Group Q&A

3:20 pm **Coffee break**

3:50 pm **Women's Healthy Aging in Practice – Community Perspective Panel**

(Moderators: Francesca Duncan, PhD, Buck Institute and Jules Balough, PhD, University of Pittsburgh, MWRI)

Lizellen LaFollette, MD (MarinHealth, Founder Women's Lifelong Health and Wellness)

Jill Kinney (Active Wellness)

Marcelle Cedars, MD (UCSF, Center for Reproductive Health)

Afaf Meleis, PhD, FAAN, LL (University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing)

4:30 – 6:00pm **Reception with Poster Session**

Thank You for Attending!

We hope you enjoyed the event. Please take two minutes to complete the survey [linked here](#). Your feedback will help us improve future programs.

