

Seattle Epidemiologic Research and Information Center (ERIC)
VA Cooperative Studies Program (CSP) Epidemiologic Center
Nicholas L. Smith, PhD, Director



Mission

To support and promote scientific research, to safeguard the Registry's members and resources for future research, and to maintain a secure and updated data repository and biospecimen repository.

Registry

Composed of 14,760 identical and fraternal male twin pairs both of whom served in the military during the Vietnam conflict (1964-1975); and from a subset of Registry twin members, 2,251 presumed biological offspring and 1,336 biological, adoptive, and stepmothers of these offspring.

Data Repository

Curated and documented health and disease data from twins and their family members.

Biospecimen Repository

DNA, plasma, and serum specimens from selected VET Registry members are banked at the CSP Massachusetts Veterans Epidemiology Research and Information Center (MAVERIC) Core Laboratory.

Operations

VA and non-VA investigators are eligible to use the Registry and its resources to conduct high-quality, genetically-information research on twins and their family members. Below are 4 selected studies that make use of this valuable resource.

Selected Studies

CSP #569: A Twin Study of the Course and Consequences of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in Vietnam Era Veterans: Seattle ERIC (Goldberg and Magruder)

The goal of CSP #569 is to better understand the physical and mental health of Veterans as they grow older. This 2-phase data collection included a 21-page mail survey (first phase) and a semi-structured psychiatric telephone interview (second phase) that collected information on the diagnoses of PTSD, depression, anxiety, and substance abuse.

Vietnam Era Twin Study on Aging: University of California San Diego & Boston University (Kremen and Lyons)

The Vietnam Era Twin Study of Aging (VETSA) is a large-scale investigation of cognitive aging from middle to later age. VETSA employs a multitrait multimethod approach to cognitive assessment to focus on the genetic and environmental contributions to cognitive processes over time, as well as the relative contributions to cognitive aging from health, social, personality, and other contextual factors.

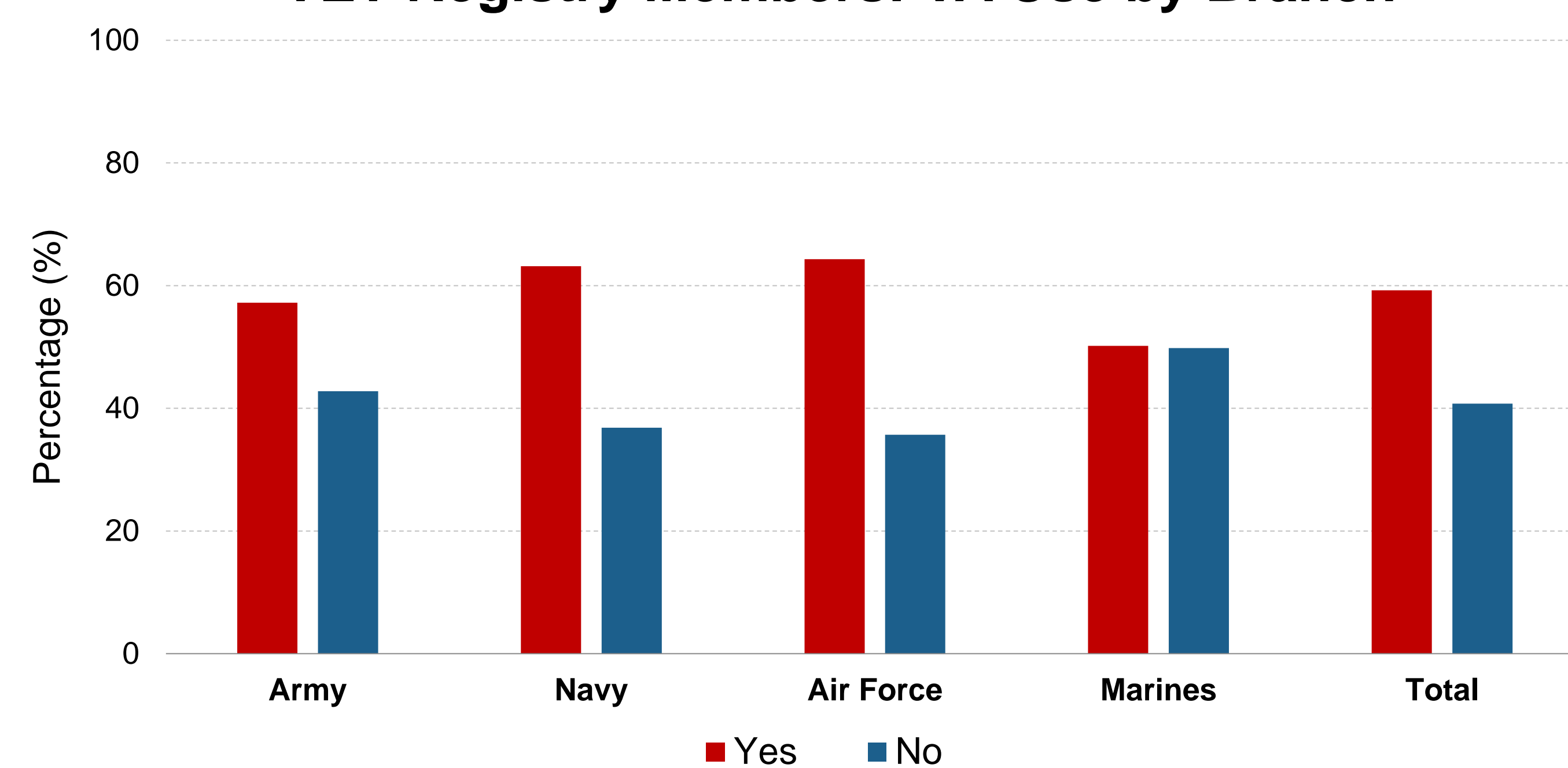
Twin Heart Study 2: Mechanisms Linking Depression to Cardiovascular Risk: Emory (Vaccarino)

The objective of the THS-2 study is to better describe the role of emotional depression on heart disease. This study looks at heart disease progresses and the relationship between depression and heart disease.

Family Studies of Health and Behavior: VA Palo Alto (Jacob)

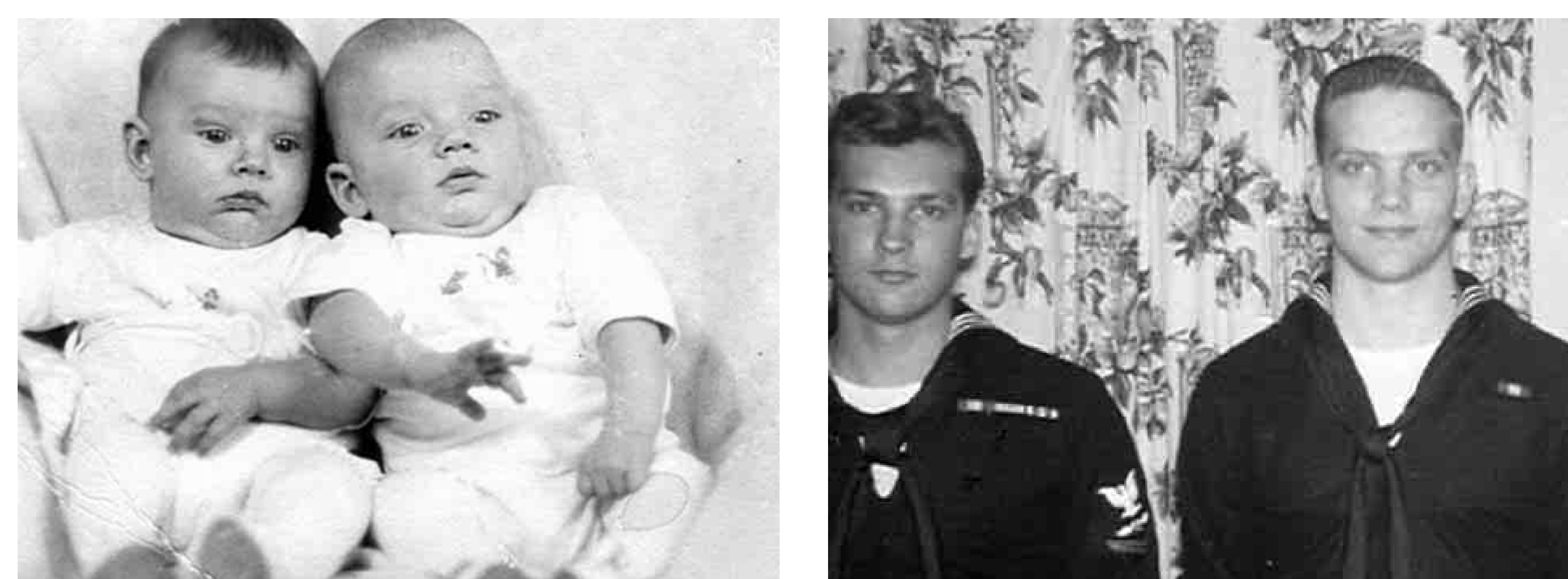
Studies at the VA in Palo Alto, CA focus on the mental and physical health of Veterans and their families with an interest in determining how genes and experiences affect smoking, drinking, drug use, and depression.

VET Registry Members: VA Use by Branch



Genetic clustering map for 12-cluster solution. 1, motor-premotor cortex; 2, dorsolateral prefrontal cortex; 3, dorsomedial frontal cortex; 4, orbitofrontal cortex; 5, pars opercularis and subcentral region; 6, superior temporal cortex; 7, posterolateral temporal cortex; 8, anteromedial temporal cortex; 9, inferior parietal cortex; 10, superior parietal cortex; 11, precuneus; and 12, occipital cortex. Views shown from left to right are, respectively, left hemisphere lateral, right hemisphere lateral, left hemisphere medial, and right hemisphere medial.

Source: VETSA Hierarchical Genetic Organization of Human Cortical Surface Area



Twin A and Twin B, age 6 months and age 20 years.

Source: VETSA Genes, Environment, and Time: The Vietnam Era Twin Study of Aging (VETSA)