

## **Cobalamin Absorption from Fortified Food in Older Adults with Atrophic Gastritis**

Dr. Allen's research group is investigating how well elderly people with gastric atrophy, or loss of gastric function absorb vitamin B12 from food and supplements. This is an important and relevant concern since vitamin B12 (cobalamin) deficiency is very common in the US and world-wide. The risk of deficiency increases with age, with an estimated 25% of persons in the US over age 65 being deficient or depleted. This may be due in part to gastric atrophy and low acid secretion by the stomach. One way to reduce the prevalence of B12 deficiency among elderly may be through fortification of flour with the vitamin, similar to what is done with folic acid. Before such public health measures are taken however, it is crucial to understand how well vitamin B12 is absorbed from fortified bread in elderly with and without gastric atrophy.