The mission of the CNPRC is to improve human health and quality of life through support of exceptional nonhuman primate research programs.

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Healthy Aging and Early Brain Development

The central role of Primate Centers and my program is to provide a unique avenue for research to improve human health that cannot be performed in any other way. This is because many aspects of physiology are species specific and require the most similar physiology, and this is found only in the nonhuman primate animal model.

Our research in reproductive physiology and gender difference in aging are examples of investigation areas that require the nonhuman primate animal model and range from menopause to dementia to heart disease and diabetes.

Estrogen Effects on Cognitive and Synaptic Health Over the Lifecourse
Hara Y, Waters EM, McEwen BS, Morrison JH
Physiol Rev. 2015 Jul;95(3):785-807. PMCID: PMC4491541

Ovarian Adrenal Interactions During the Menopausal Transition
Lasley BL, Crawford SL, McConnell DS
Vol. 65 - No. 6 Minerva Ginecologica 641–651

Our studies on gender-specific differences in development, aging and disease include parallel studies in mid-aged women and older female macaques and effects of phthalates on fetal development.

Adjusted Mean DHEAS (95% CI) by Menopause Status
SWAN Visits 00 - 09, 15371 Observations from 3069 Women

The bar graph above demonstrates a rise in circulating adrenal androgens as represented by circulating levels of dehydroepiandrosterone in 3,069 mid-aged women as they transition through the menopause. This rise does not occur in men or in any other non-primate species. This shift in contributes largely to the hormonal changes experience by most women between the ages of 45 to 55 and can only be investigated using the nonhuman primate animal model which the older females have a similar shift.