

# medicine minute

Tuesday, April 23, 2024

## kudos

### RECOGNITION

#### HELP Program Honors Volunteers



**Jessica Voit, M.D.**, an Assistant Professor in the Division of Geriatric Medicine, and **Patricia Reyher, M.S.N., RN**, an elder life nurse specialist, co-leaders of UT Southwestern's **Hospital Elder Life Program (HELP)**, recently hosted a banquet honoring and recognizing the efforts of Comets HELP, a group of UT Dallas pre-med students who engage in weekly volunteer activities at Clements University Hospital.

Nationally recognized, HELP is a reference standard model that aims to improve the quality and effectiveness of hospital care for older persons. In 2018, the Division of Geriatric Medicine teamed with the UT Dallas Hobson Wildenthal

Honors College to educate and train students in geriatric principles.

“As part of the program, the students learn about delirium-prevention strategies,” Dr. Voit says. “They engage in activities and interventions with older adults who are admitted to the hospital, which can help reduce the rates of delirium and functional decline.”

This year, 60 student volunteers dedicated more than 1,650 hours caring for patients in the geriatric unit and in the emergency department.

## research roundup

### REVIEW & ANALYSIS

#### Researchers Examine Disparities in Alcohol-Associated Liver Disease



**Thomas Cotter, M.D.**, an Assistant Professor in the Division of Digestive and Liver Diseases, and colleagues recently published their findings about racial and ethnic disparities in alcohol-associated liver disease in *Hepatology Communications*, a journal of the American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases.

“There are concerns with racial and ethnic disparities in alcohol-associated liver disease (ALD), however, the extent of these disparities are very poorly defined,” Dr. Cotter says. “This is important from a public health perspective in order to design effective treatments for populations most in need to maximize

benefits.”

To this end, the researchers conducted a comprehensive systemic review and meta-analysis defining the prevalence and outcomes of patients with ALD stratified by racial and ethnic groups. They found that Hispanics had the highest prevalence of ALD while Blacks had the lowest. Interestingly, Native Americans had the highest mortality rate from ALD.

“Importantly, our study highlighted the low quality of the existing literature on ALD prevalence and prognosis and provided the impetus to call for higher-quality epidemiological studies in this area,” Dr. Cotter says. “We provided a pathway forward for the ALD field aimed at improving future study quality and helping to target interventions.”

At UTSW, the findings prompted the next iteration of research from the Cotter research group, the Dallas Dionysus Study, which will soon start enrolling participants prospectively at UTSW and Parkland, and will also include a cohort from Choctaw Nation aimed at understanding the important prognostic factors in ALD.

*Additional UTSW authors were Ahmad Anouti, M.D., Karim Seif El Dahan, M.D., Nicole Rich, M.D., Jeremy Louissant, M.D., William Lee, M.D., Bill Zhang, B.S., Mausam Patel, M.D., Chanattha Thimpittaya, M.D., Julia Kozlitina, Ph.D., Sarah Lieber, M.D., Dyanna Gregory, Lisa VanWagner, M.D., Mack Mitchell, M.D., and Amit Singal, M.D., M.S.*

*Dr. Lee holds the Meredith Mosle Chair in Liver Disease in Honor of Dr. William M. Lee.*

*Dr. Mitchell holds the Nancy S. and Jeremy L. Halbreich Professorship in Gastroenterology.*

*Dr. Singal is a Dedman Family Scholar in Clinical Care and holder of the Willis C. Maddrey, M.D. Distinguished Chair in Liver Disease.*

To access the article, click [here](#). To learn more about Dr. Cotter’s research, visit the [Cotter Research Group](#) lab site.

## PUBLICATIONS

### Zigman Lab Expands Understanding of Ghrelin’s Impact on Islet Physiology



New research findings published in *Endocrinology* about the hormone ghrelin’s impact on islet size in non-pregnant and pregnant female mice could provide a platform for potential new treatments for type 1, type 2, and gestational diabetes.

“This research expands our understanding of how islet size and insulin levels are regulated in the setting of pregnancy as an adaptive strategy,” says **Jeffrey Zigman, M.D., Ph.D.**, a Professor in the Center for Hypothalamic Research and the study’s lead author. “This research reveals clues regarding differential roles for the related hormones ghrelin and LEAP2 in regulating the islet size enlargement associated with diet-

induced obesity versus pregnancy.”

*Dr. Zigman holds the Kent and Jodi Foster Distinguished Chair in Endocrinology, in Honor of Daniel Foster, M.D.; the Mr. and Mrs. Bruce G. Brookshire Professorship in Medicine; and the Diana and Richard C. Strauss Professorship in Biomedical Research.*

Read the full interview transcript on the [Medicine Matters](#) site. To learn more about Dr. Zigman’s research, visit the [Zigman Lab](#) site.

## CLINICAL RESEARCH

### Seminar on PCORI’s Available Resources Scheduled for April 30

The Clinical and Translational Science Award (CTSA) Program will sponsor a one-hour virtual seminar on **Tuesday, April 30, at 11 a.m.**, detailing the resources and funding opportunities available from the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) to multisite research investigators. Participants will gain access to guidance and tools to navigate every stage of research while fostering collaboration with colleagues across disciplines. Presenter **Danielle Riley, Ph.D.**, will conduct a question-and-answer session to address participants’ specific research questions and challenges.

To register, click [here](#).

## in case you missed it

### NEWSROOM

## Drug Combo Shows Promise in Restoring Cardiac Function



Patients who experience heart failure may one day be able to restore cardiac function with medications that revive the body's ability to regenerate heart muscle, a novel study at UT Southwestern Medical Center suggests.

In a study [published in \*Nature Cardiovascular Research\*](#), a team led by **Hesham Sadek, M.D., Ph.D.**, a Professor in the Division of Cardiology, demonstrated that two FDA-approved drugs, paromomycin (Paro) and neomycin (Neo), improved left ventricular systolic function and decreased scar formation in both small and large animal models after a cardiac injury. The medications, when given in combination, target two proteins

that regulate the heart muscle's regeneration capabilities.

"Our study suggests that pharmacological targeting of the transcription factors Meis1 and Hoxb13 can be a viable therapeutic option for patients with heart failure," Dr. Sadek says. "Heart muscle regeneration is present in mammals in utero and for a brief window of time after birth but is lost shortly thereafter because it is blocked by Meis1 and Hoxb13. By inhibiting the transcriptional activity of these proteins with a combination of Paro and Neo, we can induce cardiac muscle replication and stimulate heart regeneration."

To read full news release, click [here](#).

### Articles and Videos Featuring Internal Medicine Colleagues

- [Hundreds of Lives Saved as UTSW Transplant Program Reaches New Heights](#) (Via *CenterTimes Plus*, with **Maryjane Farr, M.D., M.Sc.**)
- [Medicare's Push to Improve Chronic Care Attracts Businesses, But Not Many Doctors](#) (Via NPR, with **Namirah Jamshed, M.D.**)
- [UT Southwestern Leaders Deliver Empowering Words at Women's History Month Celebration](#) (Via *CenterTimes Plus*, with **Josephine Thinwa, M.D., Ph.D.**)



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## hot jobs in internal medicine

Looking to advance your career? Want to refer a friend? Check this job opening:

- [Department Facilities Administrator](#)

## this week

## Foster Fellows to Present Grand Rounds Lecture on April 26



The 2024 Foster Fellows will deliver oral presentations of their Seldin Research Symposium work during [Internal Medicine Grand Rounds](#) on **Friday, April 26, at 8 a.m. in D1.502**. Afterward, the Seldin Scholar will be selected by the audience.

Presenters (pictured, from top left) and topics:

**Karim Seif El Dahan, M.D.**, will present “Multicenter Comparison of Abbreviated MRI versus Ultrasound for Detecting Early-Stage Hepatocellular Carcinoma in Patients with Cirrhosis.” He was mentored by **Amit Singal, M.D., M.S.**

**Emily Decicco, M.D.**, will present “Blood Donations: An Opportunity to Identify Hypertriglyceridemia.” She was mentored by **Zahid Ahmad, M.D.**

**Ruchi Desai, M.D.**, will present “Reduction in the Concomitant Ordering of Erythrocyte Sedimentation Rate and C-Reactive Protein at an Academic Medical Center.” She was mentored by **Puneet Bajaj, M.D.**

**Niharika Neela, M.D.**, will present “Prescription of Teratogenic Medications for Reproductive-age Women with Heart Failure with Reduced Ejection Fraction in a Safety-Net Health System.” She was mentored by **Sandeep Das, M.D.**

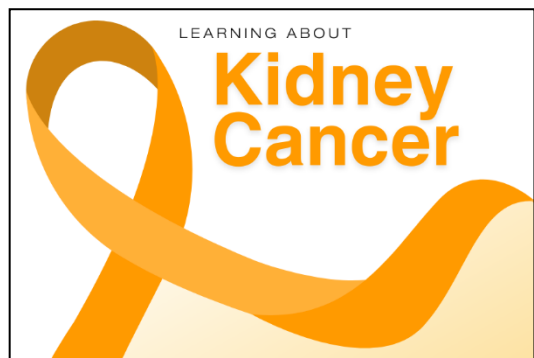
**Vinayak Subramanian, M.D.**, will present “Efficacy of an m-Health Cardiac Rehabilitation Program in Heart Failure with Preserved Ejection Fraction.” He was mentored by **Ambarish Pandey, M.D.**

**Haitao Xu, M.D., M.S.**, will present “PBRM1 as a Predictive Therapeutic Biomarker for Metastatic Renal Cell Carcinoma to the Pancreas.” He was mentored by **James Brugarolas, M.D., Ph.D.**

*To accommodate all presenters and to allow for selection of the Seldin Scholar, this event is expected to run up to 90 minutes.*

### KIDNEY CANCER PROGRAM

## Educational Event Scheduled for April 27



The Kidney Cancer Program will host an in-person educational event for patients, caregivers, and advocates on **Saturday, April 27, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.** in the Pickens Medical Education and Conference Center.

The conference is co-chaired by **James Brugarolas, M.D., Ph.D.**, and **Jue Wang, M.D.**, both Professors in the Division of Hematology and Oncology, and will include presentations on genetics, oncometabolism, radiotherapy, immunotherapy, surgical interventions, drug therapy, and the role of nurses and advocates.

“The event is open to all patients, regardless of where they’re receiving treatment,” says **Dr. Wang**. “We want these resources to be available to any patient experiencing a kidney cancer diagnosis, treatment, or survivorship.”

*Dr. Brugarolas holds the the Sherry Wigley Crow Cancer Research Endowed Chair in Honor of Robert Lewis Kirby, M.D.*

*To attend the event, click [here](#).*

### Noteworthy Lectures & Events



- **Wednesday, April 24, 8 a.m.:** [Geriatrics Grand Rounds](#) with **Dr. Raaga Bean** (Palliative Medicine) – “An Uncommon Complication in a Common Condition: Calciphylaxis, and its Copycats”
- **Wednesday, April 24, 4 p.m.:** [University Lecture Series](#) with **Dr. Simon Lebek** (Olson Lab) – “Precise Gene Editing as a Therapy for Cardiovascular Diseases”
- **Thursday, April 25, 8 a.m.:** [Infectious Diseases & Geographic Medicine Grand Rounds](#) with **Dr. Lenette Lu** (Infectious Diseases & Geographic Medicine) – “Dissecting Antibody Responses in Infectious Diseases”
- **Thursday, April 25, Noon:** [Pathology Seminar Series](#) with **Dr. Andrew Churg** (University of British Columbia) – “New Developments in Mesothelial Pathology”
- **Friday, April 25, 8 a.m.:** [UT Southwestern Health System’s Celebration of Excellence](#)
- **Friday, April 26, Noon:** [Hematology & Oncology Grand Rounds](#) with **Dr. Yazan Madanat** (Hematology and Oncology) – “Unlocking the Secrets: Revolutionizing our Approach with New Tools in the Lower-Risk MDS”
- **Friday, April 25, 1 p.m.:** [Endocrine Grand Rounds](#) with **Dr. Sasan Mirfakhraee** (Endocrinology) – “Cystic Fibrosis-Related Diabetes: Considerations in the Modulator Era”



## Internal Medicine Events Calendar

[Click to view additional events](#)

### on the horizon

#### INTERNAL MEDICINE RESEARCH CONFERENCE

### Patel to Present Research on Immunoregulation of Metabolism on May 7



**Suraj Patel, M.D., Ph.D.**, an Assistant Professor in the Division of Digestive and Liver Diseases, will present the Internal Medicine Research Conference on **Tuesday, May 7, at noon in E2.502**. His topic: “Immunoregulation of Metabolism.”

Originally from New Jersey, Dr. Patel holds a bachelor’s degree in mechanical and aerospace engineering from Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, where he graduated *magna cum laude*. He then received master’s and doctoral degrees in bioengineering and immunology from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Harvard Medical School in

Cambridge, Massachusetts, before pursuing his medical degree at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey. Dr. Patel then completed internal medicine residency training at UT Southwestern, before receiving advanced training through a fellowship program in gastroenterology at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, while simultaneously conducting a research fellowship in endocrinology, diabetes and metabolism at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center (BIDMC). Afterward, he remained at BIDMC to become a member of the clinical faculty.

Dr. Patel joined the UT Southwestern faculty in 2021.

Lunch will be provided to those who [register](#) in advance.

To attend virtually, click [here](#).

### reminders

LEADERSHIP LECTURE SERIES

## Smith to Speak on Accountability on May 2



The Leadership Lecture Series resumes on **Thursday, May 2, at noon** with a presentation by Lauren Smith, B.B.A., Senior Organizational Development Consultant. Her topic: "Accountability."

All lectures are virtual, informal, and brown bag. Faculty, APPs, administrators, and trainees are welcome to attend.

To attend the virtual event, click [here](#). Meeting ID: 953 1006 9878; Passcode: 094386

Look for the next *Medicine Minute* on **Tuesday, April 30**.

Share feedback and news items with us at [IMNews@UTSouthwestern.edu](mailto:IMNews@UTSouthwestern.edu)

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