



Weill Cornell Medicine

Joan and Sanford I. Weill Department of Medicine

What's New In Medicine



Newsletter • November 2020

What's New in Medicine, the newsletter of the Joan and Sanford I. Weill Department of Medicine at Weill Cornell Medicine, provides the latest updates on the department's research breakthroughs, new faculty recruits, and honors and awards.

To submit information for consideration for future newsletters, please contact Suzanne Ross directly at suross@med.cornell.edu.

Message from the Chair



As we come upon Thanksgiving, it is clear that we have a few months of uncertainty ahead as infection rates have risen to the 3% level in the city and hospitalizations for COVID-19 have gone up significantly across the NYP system. We are still at a census that is 10 percent of our peak in the spring, and modelling suggests we will increase from current levels but to a much lower peak when compared to the spring. Still, any increases are difficult for all of us because of the intensity of care required for patients with COVID-19 coupled with our usual high-intensity clinical care for other patients.

With all of this in mind, I want to commend each and everyone's contribution through this uncertain time as the Weill Department of Medicine has continued its recovery from the spring and is growing substantially in each of its missions.

With the positive data we are seeing on vaccines, we can expect some significant relief in the early spring and then further into 2021; ideally, public health measures will allow us to flatten the new curve until then. Importantly, more than ever, it is clear that the strength of this department lies in its members. It is a privilege to work with all of you as we meet the next challenges in these few months ahead.

Wishing each of you a safe and Happy Thanksgiving!

Tony

Anthony Hollenberg, M.D.
Sanford I. Weill Chair

News



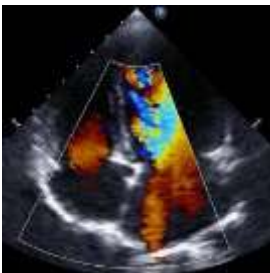
Dr. Scherl Receives Prestigious Rosenthal Humanitarian Award from the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation

Dr. Scherl's distinguished career and pioneering advances in IBD were celebrated in a virtual event with research collaborators, medical colleagues, the families of patients, and friends. [Read more](#)



Dr. Rafii Wins NIH Outstanding Investigator Award: A New Era in Modern Regenerative Medicine

The award, which will support Dr. Rafii's project to accelerate regenerative medicine technology, provides \$1 million per year (including direct and indirect costs) for seven years. [Read more](#)



Dr. Weinsaft and Dr. Kim Publish Critical Findings on Damage to the Heart's Right Ventricle from COVID-19

Published in the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology*, Drs. Jonathan Weinsaft and Jiwon Kim have shown that an echocardiogram is a useful tool in evaluating COVID-19 patients who have damage to the heart's right ventricle. [Read more](#)



Study on T-Cells from Recovered COVID-19 Patients Shows Promising Results: Dr. Jones and Collaborators Publish Findings in *Blood*

Dr. Brad Jones, Division of Infectious Diseases, began a collaboration several years ago involving T-cell therapy approaches to HIV that has played a key role in a breakthrough study on COVID-19. [Read more](#)



Dr. Sonnenberg Receives ICIS-LUMINEX John R. Kettman Award for Excellence in Interferon & Cytokine Research

Dr. Gregory F. Sonnenberg has been recognized for his "innovative research program which continues to make seminal scientific contributions at the interface of immunology and microbiology." [Read more](#)



Intercampus Team of Investigators Receive NIH Grant to Develop Method for Diagnosing Urinary Tract Infection Using Cell-Free DNA

A team of intercampus investigators has received a \$3.65 million grant from the NIH to develop an inexpensive method for accurately diagnosing UTIs in kidney transplant patients by carrying out molecular profiling of cell-free DNA in urine. [Read more](#)



Dr. Shen Receives NIH-funded R37 Award for a Study on Advance Care Planning at End-of-Life

To meet patients' reported need to incorporate loved ones into the advance care planning decision-making process, Dr. Shen will develop and test a mobile health (mHealth) application known as PACT (Planning Advance Care Together). [Read more](#)



Dr. Lee and Colleagues Publish Key Finding on Gut Commensal Microbiota and Urinary Tract Infection

In this paper, which reflected further analysis stemming from their previous paper published in *Nature Communications* (December 2019), 168 kidney transplant recipients, who provided 510 fecal specimens, were evaluated. [Read more](#)



CHAP Features Dr. August and Team as "Site of the Month" in The Pulse

The CHAP project is a large multicenter pragmatic randomized trial that is comparing two different strategies for managing hypertension during pregnancy in women who had elevated blood pressure prior to pregnancy. [Read more](#)

News Flashes

- Congratulations to WDOM faculty who recently received a promotion:
Dr. Giuseppe Giaccone, Professor of Medicine, Division of Hematology and Medical Oncology
Dr. Michael J. Satlin, Associate Professor of Medicine, Division of Infectious Diseases
- The WDOM is delighted to congratulate **Sarah Patel, DScPAS, PA-C, MBA**, Division of Gastroenterology and Hepatology, on being selected by ATPA as one of the top 10 PAs in the United States. Her division commends her on her outstanding clinical work and academic achievements. [Read more](#)
- **Dr. Darshana Dadhania** was invited to present at the international annual meeting of The Transplantation Society on the topic of “Sex and the Heart: Major Cardiovascular Events in Transplantation” on September 15, 2020. The presentation, which focused on the female transplant recipient, reviewed state-of-the-art information on cardiovascular disease complications post-transplant and analyzed current data on sex difference in cardiovascular health. The presentation highlighted the need for prospective studies focused on women’s cardiovascular health in the general population, as well as in the solid organ transplant population. Dr. Dadhania, Associate Professor of Medicine, Division of Nephrology and Hypertension, WDOM, is the Medical Director of the Kidney-Pancreas Transplant Program at NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital. [Watch presentation](#)
- Investigators at Weill Cornell Medicine and NewYork-Presbyterian are recruiting health care workers for a study on COVID-19 that seeks to answer the question: why do some people become severely ill, while others have no symptoms? The NYP-WELCOME study aims to recruit 1,000 asymptomatic health care workers. [Read more](#)
- The WDOM congratulates **Dean Augustine M.K. Choi** on being elected to the National Academy of Medicine. This honor recognizes Dr. Choi’s accomplishments in research and care in the field of pulmonology, and as a leader dedicated to mentorship and advancing diversity in academic medicine. Dr. Choi, a former Chair of the Weill Department of Medicine, is the Stephen and Suzanne Weiss Dean of Weill Cornell Medicine and provost for medical affairs of Cornell University.
- **Dr. Susana Morales**, Vice Chair for Diversity, WDOM, was interviewed on “A Different Kind of Leader.” She provided valuable perspective on opportunities involving diversity and health equity. She also reflected on her own early mentors and the mentoring models that she has developed. Dr. Morales serves as the Associate Director of the House Staff Training Program in Internal Medicine and is the Director of the Education Core for the Cornell Center for Health Equity. [Listen here](#)
- The WDOM Congratulates HRSA Health Equity COVID-19 Grantees at the Diversity Center of Excellence, Cornell Center for Health Equity:
Dr. Christopher Gonzalez, HRSA Health Equity Fellow, Division of General Internal Medicine
Dr. Peggy Bk. Leung, Assistant Professor of Medicine, Division of General Internal Medicine
Dr. Anyanate G. Jack, Assistant Professor of Clinical Medicine, Division of Endocrinology, Diabetes and Metabolism
Dr. Tracy Paul, Assistant Professor of Clinical Medicine, Division of Cardiology
- On the heels of receiving The Paul B. Beeson Emerging Leaders Career Development Award in Aging, **Dr. Parag Goyal’s** recent paper in *Circulation: Heart Failure* has been highlighted in the American Heart Association’s newsroom with the headline – “Ten or more medications, often prescribed to older heart failure patients, raises concerns.” Dr. Goyal is an Assistant Professor of Medicine with joint appointments in the Division of General Internal Medicine and the Division of Cardiology and is the Founding Director of the Weill Cornell Heart Failure with Preserved Ejection Fraction (HFpEF) Program. [Read more](#)

Research Paper Highlights

Endocrinology, Diabetes & Metabolism

Hajifathalian K, Mehta A, Ang B, Skaf D, Shah S, Saumoy M, Dawod Q, Dawod E, Shukla A, Aronne L, Brown R, Cohen D, Dannenberg AJ, Fortune B, Kumar S, Sharaiha RZ. Improvement in Insulin Resistance and Estimated Hepatic Steatosis and Fibrosis after Endoscopic Sleeve Gastroplasty. *Gastrointest Endosc.* 2020 Aug 27;S0016-5107(20)34733-7. doi: 10.1016/j.gie.2020.08.023. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 32861753.

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Gastroenterology & Hepatology

Han Y, Duan X, Yang L, Nilsson-Payant BE, Wang P, Duan F, Tang X, Yaron TM, Zhang T, Uhl S, Bram Y, Richardson C, Zhu J, Zhao Z, Redmond D, Houghton S, Nguyen DT, Xu D, Wang X, Jessurun J, Borczuk A, Huang Y, Johnson JL, Liu Y, Xiang J, Wang H, Cantley LC, tenOever BR, Ho DD, Pan FC, Evans T, Chen HJ, Schwartz RE, Chen S. Identification of SARS-CoV-2 Inhibitors using Lung and Colonic Organoids. *Nature.* 2020 Oct 28. doi: 10.1038/s41586-020-2901-9. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 33116299.

Hajifathalian K, Ichkhanian Y, Dawod Q, Meining A, Schmidt A, Glaser N, Vosoughi K, Diehl DL, Grimm IS, James T, Templeton AW, Samarasekera JB, Chehade NEH, Lee JG, Chang KJ, Mizrahi M, Barawi M, Irani S, Friedland S, Korc P, Aadam AA, Al-Haddad M, Kowalski TE, Smallfield G, Ginsberg GG, Fukami N, Lajin M, Kumta NA, Tang SJ, Naga Y, Amateau SK, Kasmin F, Goetz M, Seewald S, Kumbhari V, Ngamruengphong S, Mahdev S, Mukewar S, Sampath K, Carr-Locke DL, Khashab MA, Sharaiha RZ. Full-thickness resection device (FTRD) for treatment of upper gastrointestinal tract lesions: the first international experience. *Endosc Int Open.* 2020 Oct;8(10):E1291-E1301. doi: 10.1055/a-1216-1439. Epub 2020 Sep 22. PMID: 33015330; PMCID: PMC7508667.

Hajifathalian K, Sharaiha RZ, Kumar S, Krisko T, Skaf D, Ang B, Redd WD, Zhou JC, Hathorn KE, McCarty TR, Bazarbashi AN, Njie C, Wong D, Shen L, Sholle E, Cohen DE, Brown RS Jr, Chan WW, Fortune BE. Development and external validation of a prediction risk model for short-term mortality among hospitalized U.S. COVID-19 patients: A proposal for the COVID-AID risk tool. *PLoS One.* 2020 Sep 30;15(9):e0239536. doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0239536. PMID: 32997700; PMCID: PMC7526907.

General Internal Medicine

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Vilbrun SC, Mathurin L, Pape JW, Fitzgerald D, Walsh KF. Case Report: Multidrug-Resistant Tuberculosis and COVID-19 Coinfection in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. *Am J Trop Med Hyg*. 2020 Sep 25. doi: 10.4269/ajtmh.20-0851. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 32978934. **[Center for Global Health]**

Geriatrics & Palliative Medicine

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Hematology & Medical Oncology

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Pulmonary & Critical Care Medicine

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