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ABDOMINAL TRANSPLANTATION

The division is committed to clinical and basic research, in part funded through NIH grants, in areas such as adult and pediatric solid organ transplantation, liver disease, kidney disease, immunogenetics, bone marrow transplant and chronic hepatitis C. Led by Dr. John M. Vierling, professor and chief of hepatology, the Baylor St. Luke’s Advanced Liver Therapies Research Center gives patients access to clinical trials offering the latest therapies. Co-directed by Drs. Peter Jindra and Matt Cusick, the division-run Immune Evaluation Laboratory continues to expand its research activities while remaining the largest program of its kind in the Texas Medical Center.
Ronald T. Cotton, M.D.
Assistant Professor
Division of Abdominal Transplantation
Baylor College of Medicine

Keywords
• Hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC)
• Genomic differences of Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C

Research Interests

Dr. Cotton completed a 2-year research fellowship at the Liver, Kidney and Pancreas Center and the Human Genome Sequencing Center at Baylor. There, his research interest centered on developing a high-quality tissue repository, and using these samples to detect genomic differences between Hepatitis B-, Hepatitis C-, and non-viral associated hepatocellular carcinoma.

His research has resulted in numerous peer-reviewed publications as well as local, national and international presentations. Dr. Cotton has received numerous clinical accolades during his residency, including being named a 2012 Raleigh Ross Scholar by the Texas Surgical Society.

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Selected Publications


Research interests
Dr. Galván is the author of numerous articles in the areas of solid organ transplantation outcomes and surgical technique in transplantation. Her current interests include the economics of solid organ transplantation, and her research project on additive biomanufacturing and collaborative translational research was recently funded.

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Selected publications
Keywords
- Adult and pediatric liver transplantation
- Biliary resection/reconstruction
- Bile duct tumor
- Bile duct injury
- Cirrhosis
- Hepatobiliary surgery
- Liver disease
- Liver resection
- Liver tumors
- Portal hypertension
- Portosystemic shunts
- Radio frequency ablation
- Sugiura procedure
- Surgical management of liver tumors

Research Interests
Dr. Goss' primary research interests revolve around the genomic alterations that occur with hepatocellular carcinoma.

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Selected Publications


Keywords
- Autoimmune hepatitis
- Fatty Liver Disease
- Gastroenterology
- Hepatology
- Liver cancer
- Liver transplantation
- Viral hepatitis

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Selected Publications


Peter Jindra, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor of Surgery
Director, Immune Evaluation Laboratory
Baylor College of Medicine

Keywords
• Anti-HLA antibodies
• Hematopoietic stem cell transplantation
• microRNA in the immune system
• Transplant Diagnostics

Research Interests
The role of anti-HLA antibodies in transplant rejection, the effect of single nucleotide polymorphisms on bone marrow transplant outcomes, the expression and function of microRNA in lymphocytes and murine models of transplantation.

Contact Information
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Selected Publications


Keywords
- Hepatitis C
- Hepatocellular Carcinoma
- Liver transplant outcomes
- Portopulmonary HTN
- Project ECHO

Research Interests
Dr. Khaderi has research interest in liver transplant outcomes - specifically in patients transplanted with hepatitis C and hepatocellular carcinoma. She is also involved in Project ECHO ((Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes) - a telementoring program whose aim is to improve medical resources in rural and underserved communities in Texas.

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Selected Publications
Ayse Leyla Mindikoglu, M.D., M.P.H.
Associate Professor of Medicine and Surgery
Division of Abdominal Transplantation
Michael E. DeBakey Department of Surgery
Section of Gastroenterology and Hepatology
Margaret M. and Albert B. Alkek Department of Medicine
Baylor College of Medicine

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Dr. Ayse Leyla Mindikoglu is board certified in Internal Medicine, Gastroenterology and Transplant Hepatology with over 12 years of experience in academic clinical practice. In 2010, she received National Institutes of Health Mentored Patient-Oriented Research Career Development Award (NIH/NIDDK K23). Dr. Mindikoglu's research has been focused on renal dysfunction in cirrhosis and development of new biomarkers of glomerular filtration rate and altered renal hemodynamics in cirrhosis. Between 2010 and 2015, supported by NIH/NIDDK K23 award, Dr. Mindikoglu conducted several clinical studies to understand key concepts of altered renal hemodynamics in patients with cirrhosis. Dr. Mindikoglu's recent study published in Translational Research identified a unique metabolomic signature associated with hepatorenal dysfunction and mortality in patients with cirrhosis. Supported by 2017 Roderick D. MacDonald Research Award, her current research involves validation of several blood metabolomic biomarkers in patients with cirrhosis to detect hepatorenal dysfunction and predict mortality.

Dr. Mindikoglu's most recent study investigates the impact of 4 weeks of dawn-to-sunset fasting on gut microbiota, and metabolism on healthy volunteers.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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SELECTED PUBLICATIONS


Keywords
• Adult and pediatric liver transplantation
• Bile duct resections
• Hepatobiliary surgery
• Intraoperative RFA
• Kidney transplantation
• Liver resection
• Portosystemic shunts
• Surgical management of liver tumors

Research Interests
Dr. O'Mahony has research interest in clinical outcomes - specifically in kidney and liver transplant patients.

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Selected Publications


Abbas Rana, M.D.
Assistant Professor of Surgery
Division of Abdominal Transplantation
Baylor College of Medicine

Keywords
• Adult and pediatric liver transplantation
• Bile duct resections
• Hepatobiliary surgery
• Intraoperative RFA
• Kidney transplantation
• Liver resection
• Portosystemic shunts
• Surgical management of liver tumors

Research Interests
Dr. Rana is an accomplished outcomes researcher with numerous published articles in esteemed journals. He has an expertise in liver and kidney transplantation as well as surgeries for malignant and non-malignant conditions that affect the liver, gallbladder, and bile ducts.

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Selected Publications


Gagan K. Sood, M.D.
Associate Professor of Surgery and Medicine
Division of Abdominal Transplantation
Baylor College of Medicine

Keywords
• Ascites
• Cirrhosis
• Colonoscopy
• Endoscopy
• Esophagogastroduodenoscopy (EGD)
• Gastroenterology
• Hepatic encephalopathy
• Hepatitis B and C
• Hepatitis Hemochromatosis
• Hepatocellular carcinoma
• Non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD)
• Portal hypertension
• Varices
• Wilson's disease

Research Interests
Dr. Sood's primary research focuses on clinical aspects of liver disease, viral hepatitis, portal hypertension and outcome based research in cirrhosis and liver transplantation. His area of main interest is non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD/ NASH). He is particularly interested in studying spectrum of NAFLD in different ethnic groups, with focus on genetic and metabolic differences in Hispanic population. Dr. Sood is also interested in iron overload in patient with liver disease including patients with NAFLD. Studies are currently being conducted on non-HFE related genetic markers in patients with primary and secondary iron overload. He is also involved in clinical trials of new anti viral therapies in patients with hepatitis C.

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**Selected Publications**


Risë J. Stribling, M.D.

Associate Professor of Surgery
Division of Abdominal Transplantation
Baylor College of Medicine

Medical Director, Liver Transplantation - Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center
Medical Director, Liver Transplantation - Baylor St. Luke's Medical Center

Keywords
- Abdominal paracentesis
- Acute and chronic liver diseases
- Cirrhosis
- Gastroenterology
- Hepatitis
- Hepatocellular carcinoma
- Liver transplant

Research Interests
Dr. Stribling's primary research interests are in treatment of acute and chronic hepatitis C, hepatitis B, and liver failure.

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Selected Publications
Norman L. Sussman, M.D., FAASLD
Associate Professor of Surgery
Division of Abdominal Transplantation
Baylor College of Medicine

Medical Director, Project ECHO
CHI- St. Luke’s Medical Center

Keywords
• Assessment and management of acute liver failure
• Artificial liver support
• Complications of advanced cirrhosis
• New agents to treat viral hepatitis

Research Interests
Dr. Sussman is leading an effort to improve medical resources in rural and underserved communities in Texas using a videoconference outreach model. He is also continuing to refine methods of assessing risk in patient with acute liver failure.

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Selected Publications


**John M. Vierling, M.D., F.A.C.P., FAASLD**

Professor of Medicine and Surgery  
Division of Abdominal Transplantation  
Director of Baylor Liver Health  
Chief of Hepatology  
Director of Advanced Liver Therapies  
Baylor College of Medicine

**Keywords**
- Acute liver failure  
- Alcoholic and non-alcoholic fatty liver diseases  
- Alpha-1-antitrypsin deficiency  
- Autoimmune hepatitis  
- Cholangiocarcinoma  
- Cirrhosis  
- Clinical therapeutic trials  
- Drug-induced liver injury  
- Gastroesophageal varices  
- Genetic and metabolic diseases  
- Hemochromatosis  
- Hepatic encephalopathy pre and post liver transplantation care  
- Hepatocellular carcinoma  
- Primary biliary cirrhosis  
- Primary sclerosing cholangitis  
- Viral hepatitis  
- Wilson's disease

**Research Interests**

Dr. Vierling’s primary research interests are the immunopathogenic mechanisms involved in hepatobiliary injury caused by viral infection, autoimmunity, alloimmunity, and non-alcoholic fatty liver disease. Dr. Vierling’s basic science laboratory investigations have used murine models to study the immunopathogenesis of non-suppurative destructive cholangitis, which destroys bile ducts in primary biliary cirrhosis, an autoimmune liver disease, as well as in two alloimmune diseases, hepatic allograft rejection and chronic graft-versus-host disease.

By emphasizing a "laboratory bench to bedside" philosophy, Dr. Vierling has also been active in the design and execution of clinical therapeutic trials of antiviral agents for treatment of hepatitis B and C infections in patients before and after liver transplantation, trials of immunosuppressive drugs in liver transplantation and autoimmune liver diseases, trials of new therapies for hepatic encephalopathy and antifibrotic agents to prevent or reverse cirrhosis. Dr. Vierling is the author of numerous research publications, reviews and chapters on these topics.
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Selected Publications


A key area of Texas Heart Institute research involves using ventricular assist devices for patients with advanced heart failure. These devices can be implanted as a bridge to transplant, destination therapy, or bridge to recovery.

Texas Heart Institute/CHI Baylor St. Luke’s Medical Center has one of the largest experiences in the country with LVADs. Devices include the HeartMate II, HeartMate III, HeartWare HVAD, Jarvik, and the Syncardia Total Artificial Heart.
Research interests

Dr. Cohn is one of the leaders of the team of experts developing a total artificial heart that will deliver blood by means of continuous flow rather than pulsation. This research has grant support from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute; the John S. Dunn Research Foundation; the Alexander Family Trust; and the McIngvale family Trust. This new artificial heart is smaller, less expensive, and predicted to be more reliable than previous generations of artificial hearts.

William E. Cohn currently has 80 active or pending patents for his inventions and is the founder or co-founder of five venture-backed life science startups. In addition, Dr. Cohn is a venture partner at Santé Health Ventures, a venture capital firm focused on capitalizing early-stage life science technology.

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Selected publications


Keywords

- Ventricular assist devices


4. Gregoric ID, Cohn WE, Frazier OH. Diaphragmatic implantation of the HeartWare ventricular assist device. J. Heart Lung Transplant. 2011 April;30(4):467-70. PMID: 21211994


Research interests

Dr. Frazier’s interest in mechanical circulatory support began in 1969, when, as a student at Baylor College of Medicine, he wrote a research paper about the experimental total artificial heart, which was first implanted in 1969 by Dr. Denton Cooley. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, Dr. Frazier continued experimental work toward developing an implantable left ventricular assist device (LVAD) to aid the failing heart. He implanted the first LVAD in 1986 with the HeartMate I, followed in 2003 with the first HeartMate II. Since then, this device has become the most widely used implantable LVAD in the world. In 2011, Dr. Frazier implanted the first successful continuous-flow total artificial heart using two second generation HeartMate II LVADs to replace a patient’s failing heart.

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Selected publications

Pawel Jan Kolodziejski, M.D.
Instructor in Surgery
Division of Cardiothoracic Transplantation & Circulatory Support
Baylor College of Medicine

Keywords
- Pulmonary hypertension
- Proteasomes
- Nitric oxide

Research interests
Dr. Kolodziejski’s research interests center on the role of proteasomes in physiology and pathological conditions. Proteasomes are small organelles responsible for a very precisely regulated degradation of many proteins. He is broadly interested in their involvement in lung diseases, and especially in pulmonary hypertension. He is participating in a multi-center study – “Pulmonary Hypertension Breakthrough Initiative” since 2006. Previously Kolodziejski and colleagues were able to demonstrate the role of proteasomes in regulation of nitric oxide synthase, which has been implicated in the pathogenesis of several lung diseases. A potential therapeutic strategy for these diseases could be based upon devising methods to regulate the level of nitric oxide by proteasomal modulation.

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Selected publications

3. Kolodziejski PJ; Musial A; Koo Ja Seok P; Eissa NT. "Ubiquitination of inducible nitric oxide synthase is required for its degradation." Proc Natl Acad Sci USA.
6. Kolodziejski PJ, Williams TM, Eissa NT. "Interferon gamma augments nitric oxide (NO) production in macrophages by prolonging inducible nitric oxide synthase (iNOS) half-life; an effect mediated by induction of proteasomal regulatory unit PA28alpha." American J of Respiratory and Critical Care M.
Kenneth K Liao, M.D., Ph.D.
Chief, Division of Cardiothoracic Transplantation and Circulatory Support
Baylor College of Medicine
Chief, Section of Cardiothoracic Transplantation and Mechanical Circulatory Support
Baylor St. Luke’s Medical Center

Research interests

Dr. Liao has given numerous presentations both nationally and internationally. He has participated in over 20 clinical trials as a Principal Investigator or Co-Investigator. His work in the field of valve surgery, heart transplantation and ventricular assist device has been extensively published.

Contact information

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Selected publications


Gabriel Loor, M.D.
Division of Cardiothoracic Transplantation & Circulatory Support
Baylor College of Medicine
Surgical Director, Lung Transplant Program
Baylor St. Luke’s Medical Center

Keywords
- EVLP
- Lung injury
- Clinical outcomes

Research interests

Dr. Loor’s research interests include improved donor utilization and maximizing recipient outcomes. He is the national principal investigator on several trials using ex vivo lung perfusion platforms to increase donor yield and quality. He is credited with the first “breathing lung transplantation” in the Midwest performed in 2014. His translational lab focuses on the use of this technology to improve the quality and quantity of potential lung transplants. Dr. Loor has published several key papers on prolonged preservation of donor organs with an emphasis on reducing ischemic injury and the inflammatory response. He has also published several articles on blood conservation, safety checklists and surgical outcomes after adult cardiac surgery.

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Selected publications

2. Bahr N, Janssen K, Billings J, Loor G, Green J. Respiratory failure due to possible donor derived Sporothrix schenckii infection in a lung transplant recipient. Case Reports in


George P. Noon, M.D.
Professor of Surgery
Division of Cardiothoracic Transplantation & Circulatory Support
Meyer-DeBakey Chair in Investigative Surgery
Baylor College of Medicine

Research interests

Dr. George P. Noon has focused his surgical career in organ transplantation and cardiac assist devices. In 1968, Dr. Noon, Dr. Michael E. DeBakey, and their surgical team performed their first heart and later lung transplant.

In 1988, Drs. Noon and DeBakey met with engineers from NASA to develop a miniature axial flow blood pump. Ten years later, Dr. Noon participated in the care of President Boris Yeltsin, who needed a coronary bypass operation. In the same year, the first MicroMed DeBakey-Noon human implants were performed in Berlin, Germany. In 1999, Dr. Noon was inducted into the Space Technology Hall of Fame.

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Selected publications


Alexis Edward Shafii, M.D.
Director, Heart Transplantation
Baylor St. Luke’s Medical Center

Research interests

Dr. Shafii treats adult acquired cardiac diseases, including coronary artery disease, heart valve disease, and aortic pathologies. His research efforts focus on heart and lung transplantation, ventricular assist devices, and extracorporeal membrane oxygenation (ECMO).

Contact information

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Selected publications

Cardiothoracic Surgery

Under the supervision of Scott A. LeMaire, M.D., director of research for the Division and Vice Chair for Research in the Department, the cardiac surgery research team pursues several research projects and maintains one of the world’s most extensive and well-cataloged aortic tissue banks. This core resource facilitates investigations into the causes and progression of aortic disease pursued by our researchers, as well as researchers from other academic institutions.
Joseph S. Coselli, M.D.
Professor and Vice-Chair, Department of Surgery
Chief, Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery
Cullen Foundation Endowed Chair
Baylor College of Medicine

Keywords

- Aortic Valve Disease
- Heritable Aortic Disease (e.g., Marfan Syndrome)
- Aortic Aneurysm
- Aortic Dissection

Research interests

Mentored by the legendary aortic surgeon, Dr. E. Stanley Crawford, Dr. Coselli is today one of the world’s most experienced aortic surgeons and best known as the foremost expert in thoracoabdominal aortic aneurysm repair, having published the milestone paper describing results after 3309 such repairs. He has an extensive clinical database and encourages participation in clinical research by designing research projects based on specific interests within aortic surgery. With approval, access to de-identified data from the Aortic Surgery clinical database may be granted. Dr. Coselli routinely publishes on a wide variety of aortic topics, and several outstanding papers and presentations have been prepared by residents, fellows, and students. Key publications have influenced clinical practice trends by determining the best approaches towards preventing complications during aortic repair. Regarding thoracoabdominal aortic aneurysm repair, randomized clinical trials were conducted to establish the benefits of using cerebrospinal fluid drainage to protect the spinal cord (a technique now in widespread use in aortic repair) and renal perfusion as a protective measure against renal ischemia as well as performing retrospective analysis of left heart bypass as a protective measure against distal ischemia. Additionally, by routinely presenting informative academic lectures throughout the world, Dr. Coselli has disseminated the latest approach to surgical repairs of the aortic root (valve-sparing approaches, including those is patients with Marfan syndrome), aortic arch (Y-graft approaches, hybrid procedures), and thoracoabdominal aortic aneurysm repair (redo operations, modified repair in patients with Marfan syndrome). Dr. Coselli continuously seeks out new treatment paradigms and participates in numerous investigator-initiated and industry-sponsored research projects conducted at Baylor College of Medicine and the Texas Heart Institute; studies include the use of second-generation transcatheter aortic valves, hybrid frozen elephant trunk repairs, as well as holsingle-side branch and ascending aortic stent grafts.
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Selected publications


* Resident, fellow, visiting researcher, or student co-author
Lorraine D. Cornwell, M.D.
Assistant Professor of Surgery
Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery
Baylor College of Medicine
Section Head of General Thoracic Surgery
Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center

Research interests
Dr. Cornwell’s research focuses on optimization of clinical outcomes of cardiothoracic surgery, especially minimally invasive procedures, off-pump CABG, valve repair, and VATS lobectomy.

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Keywords

- Heart Failure
- Ventricular Remodeling
- Clinical Outcomes

Research interests

Dr. Ghanta’s laboratory focuses on ventricular remodeling in heart failure including restraint therapy, stem cell therapy, and tissue engineering. Dr. Ghanta is a member of the Southern Thoracic Surgery Association, Society of Thoracic Surgeons, American College of Surgeons, and the American Heart Association.

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Selected publications


Ernesto Jimenez, M.D.
Associate Professor of Surgery
Baylor College of Medicine
Chief, Cardiothoracic Surgery
Michael E DeBakey VA Medical Center

Research interests

Dr. Jimenez’s research on the effects of ischemia on myocardial intracellular calcium accumulation has helped to significantly improve the make-up of cardioplegia solutions in order to best ameliorate the effects of ischemia on the heart during cardiac arrest. Most recently, he has investigated the effects of both human umbilical stem cells and chitogen hydrogels on the ischemic myocardium. His clinical research has primarily focused on improving cardiac surgical outcomes within the veteran population.

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Scott A. LeMaire, M.D.
Professor, Departments of Surgery and of Molecular Physiology and Biophysics
Vice Chair for Research
Department of Surgery
Director of Research
Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery
Baylor College of Medicine

Keywords

- Aortic aneurysm
- Thoracic aortic surgery
- Aortic dissection

Research interests

The focus of Dr. LeMaire’s research program, which derives directly from his clinical interest in the surgical treatment of patients with thoracic aortic aneurysms and dissections, encompasses outcomes after thoracic aortic repair, strategies for preventing perioperative complications, genetic factors related to aortic disease, and the pathobiology of aortic wall degeneration. Dr. LeMaire’s clinical research team has had a long-standing interest in the analysis of outcomes following aortic surgery, and has conducted randomized clinical trials comparing the effectiveness of various techniques for preventing associated ischemic complications. Further, his research team has conducted several studies to evaluate the safety profile of surgical adhesives, which are an important adjunct for limiting bleeding complications during aortic repairs. In 2002, his research group initiated the Thoracic Aortic Disease Tissue Bank, which currently houses samples and corresponding phenotypic data from over 3,000 patients with thoracic aortic disease and has served as a core for the NHLBI supported Specialized Center of Clinical Oriented Research in Thoracic Aortic Aneurysms and Dissection, as well as a resource for numerous collaborative studies evaluating the genetic factors and molecular mechanisms involved in the development of thoracic aortic disease. Dr. LeMaire’s basic science laboratory is currently focusing on the role of various aspects of extracellular matrix metabolism in the development of aortic aneurysms and dissections. In particular, his group is studying the roles of destructive factors, such as inflammatory cells and proteases, as well as reparative mechanisms, such as stem cell recruitment and transformation, during the development of aortic aneurysms and dissections.
Selected publications


* Resident, fellow or student co-author
George V. Letsou, M.D.

Professor of Surgery
Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery
Baylor College of Medicine

Research interests

Dr. Letsou maintains active investigational programs in both clinical and basic science research. He was previously on the medical school faculties at Yale and the University of Texas, where he was tenured Professor of Cardiac and Vascular Surgery, before rejoining the Baylor College of Medicine as Professor of Surgery. He has published more than 100 articles concerning cardiothoracic surgery and speaks nationally and internationally on these topics.

Current projects include reviews of cardiac transplantation, mechanical cardiac assist, and the relative advantages and disadvantages of off-pump coronary artery bypass surgery. Interested students are encouraged to find their own areas of interest within these broader topics.

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Selected publications


Research interests
Heart failure is a leading cause of death in developed countries. Recent advances in interventional cardiology and cardiac surgery have made it possible to save numerous patient lives after myocardial infarction. However, those patients eventually develop end-stage heart failure since the loss of cardiac muscle is never replaced with new muscle. Our study focus is on regenerating cardiac muscle by transdifferentiating cardiac fibroblasts into cardiomyocytes. We reported that Gata4, Mef2c, and Tbx5 overexpression transdifferentiated cardiac fibroblasts into cardiomyocyte-like cells in vitro, and improved cardiac function in vivo. Our goal is to translate this in-situ cardiomyocyte regeneration into clinical therapy.

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Selected publications


Kenneth L. Mattox, M.D.

Distinguished Service Professor
Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery
Baylor College of Medicine

Chief of Staff and Surgeon-in-Chief
Ben Taub Hospital

Research interests

His reputation as an innovator in trauma care is known worldwide. Dr. Mattox is past President of the American Association for the Surgery of Trauma and Secretary-Treasurer of the Michael E. DeBakey International Surgical Society. He previously chaired the Mayor's Red Ribbon Committee to address Houston Fire Department Emergency Medical Services, and sat on the Hospital Subcommittee of the Mayor's Special Task Force on the Medical Aspects of Disaster.

Currently, Dr. Mattox serves as consultant to the Center for Biologic Evaluation and Research of the FDA. Dr. Mattox has served on the Board of Directors of the Rotary Club of Houston, Doctors' Club of Houston, Wayland Baptist University, the American Association for the Surgery of Trauma, the Southeast Texas Trauma Regional Advisory Council, the American College of Surgeons Board of Governors, and serves as Chairman of the Board of the John P. McGovern Museum for Health & Medical Science.

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Selected publications


Vicente Orozco-Sevilla, M.D.
Assistant Professor of Surgery
Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery
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Keywords
- Aortic aneurysms
- Valve disease
- Coronary disease

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Ourania Preventza, M.D., FACS, M.B.A.

Professor of Surgery
Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery
Baylor College of Medicine

Keywords

- Aortic Surgery
- Endovascular Technology
- Surgical Outcomes Research

Research interests

Dr. Preventza’s research focuses on the development of percutaneous techniques for valvular and thoracic aortic diseases, aortic root surgery and surgical outcomes. During the last few years, Dr Preventza has been very prolific in publishing clinical research which has been presented in national and international meetings.

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Selected publications


Todd K. Rosengart, M.D., F.A.C.S.
Professor
DeBakey–Bard Chair of Surgery
Professor of Heart and Vascular Disease
Texas Heart Institute

Keywords
• Gene therapy
• Cellular reprogramming
• Angiogenesis

Research interests

Basic and translational research have occupied a predominant position in his academic career beginning with his serving as a Clinical Fellow at the NIH, and continuing with appointments as an independent investigator with American Heart Association sponsored research support and NIH extramural funding. This effort has been highlighted by his role in the bench-to-bedside development of angiogenic therapy as a potential treatment for atherosclerotic coronary artery and vascular occlusive disease, and in our lab’s current, multi-year focus to study cardiac cellular reprogramming. This NIH-funded work includes the translation of early in vivo examinations of angiogenic growth factors in the mid-1980s and early 1990s into the (first in the US) adenovirus-mediated delivery of angiogenic vascular endothelial growth factor (VEGF) to the human heart, as part of a Phase I/II clinical trial in 1997-1999. Together with this experience, our current investigations of cellular reprogramming offer the exciting possibility of “bio-interventions” for the treatment of hundreds of thousands with advanced heart disease still not treatable by conventional therapies.

Congestive heart failure typically occurring as a result of myocardial infarction remains the leading cause of mortality from heart disease. Cardiac stem cell therapy has offered promise in animal and clinical studies, but remains inherently constrained by the logistical challenges of delivering and integrating exogenous cells into a host myocardium. The recent discovery that induced cardiomyocytes (iCMs) could be generated directly from somatic cells offers the exciting possibility of bypassing stem cell staging and, perhaps more importantly, converting scar fibroblasts in situ into iCMs, obviating entirely the challenges of cell implantation into a host myocardium. Rosengart and others have recently demonstrated that the administration of a cardiac transcription factor cocktail (e.g., GATA4, MEF2c and TBX5 [GMT]) results in as much as a 50% increase in ventricular function, reduced fibrosis, and increased iCM populations in small animal myocardial infarction models. Intriguingly, also demonstrating that reductions in infarct size appear to far exceed the extent of scar re-population with iCMs, and that GMT also appears to reduce the population of (scar-producing) myofibroblasts as well as the expression of...
key scar remodeling cytokines. These data, and our observation that GMT efficacy is enhanced by the angiogenic pre-treatment of myocardial scar with vascular endothelial growth factor (VEGF), suggest the existence of unexplored and non-optimized underlying mechanisms. Given his long-term goal to develop a potentially important new treatment for CHF, he is studying whether cellular reprogramming can be applied to improve cardiac infarct remodeling and function by testing the serial hypotheses that: a) inadequate up-regulation of requisite reprogramming genes limits cell transdifferentiation efficiency, which can be optimized beyond current thresholds via the comprehensive application of genomic activation strategies, b) that the density of (contractile) iCMs in infarct zones as well as indirect or paracrine (i.e., anti-fibrotic) mechanisms play critical roles in GMT/VEGF mediated infarct remodeling, and c) that cardiac fibroblasts can be made susceptible to reprogramming in a clinically relevant fashion. His team will use cutting edge molecular strategies and pre-clinical animal models to execute these aims.

**Contact Information**

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Ying H. Shen, M.D., Ph.D.
Professor of Surgery
Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery
Director, Aortic Diseases Research Laboratory
Baylor College of Medicine

Keywords
• Aortic aneurysms and dissections
• Diabetic vascular diseases
• Vascular biology and diseases

Research interests
My broad research interest is on vascular diseases. One of my main focuses is the molecular mechanisms of aortic aneurysms and dissections, highly lethal but poorly understood conditions. We have ongoing projects to investigate the signaling pathways that control aortic destruction, inflammation, healing and remodeling. The ultimate goal of my research is to use pharmacological treatment to prevent progressive aortic destruction and disease deterioration.

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Selected publications


Research interests
Dr. Vivek Singh’s research focuses on molecular and genetic mechanisms that mediate myocardial remodeling and heart failure, and the development of new drug and gene-based therapies for heart disease. The research Dr. Singh accomplished during his doctoral and post-doctoral tenures has significantly contributed to a better understanding of the biochemical, molecular, and genetic mechanisms that regulate cardiac function.

A significant amount of Dr. Singh work has focused on the renin-angiotensin system and its direct involvement in mediating cell growth in the heart. Dr. Singh has characterized an intracardiac intracellular renin-angiotensin system and has shown that the precursor genes of the system significantly modulate a number of pathological conditions such as diabetic cardiomyopathy. Recently, he identified the genetic biomarkers predisposing to sudden death in heart failure patients and studied the underlying mechanism of ventricular arrhythmias and increased risk of sudden cardiac death in dilated cardiomyopathy. More recently, Dr. Singh examined key developmental cardiac regulators, known as transcription factors GMT (GATA4, MEF2C and TBX5), that reprogram cardiac fibroblasts into functional, beating cardiomyocytes, a novel, promising gene therapy strategy to treat heart failure. Dr. Vivek has a vast experience working on cardiac myocytes and fibroblast both in vitro and in vivo, especially in cardiac electrophysiology. The overall summary of his work is to better understand the molecular signaling pathways, to identify genetic biomarkers and gene regulatory events that modulate cardiac function, and to better understand how these mechanisms may contribute to the development of interventions to modulate heart failure.

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Selected publications


Matthew J. Wall Jr, M.D.
Professor of Surgery
Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery
Baylor College of Medicine
Deputy Chief of Surgery
Ben Taub Hospital

Keywords

- Trauma
- Cardiac, Thoracic, Pulmonary, Vascular Trauma
- Resuscitation
- Trauma Systems

Research interests

His research interests include the management of the injured patient, novel resuscitation strategies, and injuries to the chest and the vascular system.

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Selected publications

Jianchang Yang, M.D., Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Surgery & Medicine
Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery
Baylor College of Medicine

Keywords
- Cardiac progenitor regulation and direct cellular reprogramming
- Epigenetic mechanisms of gene expression
- Normal and leukemic hematopoietic stem cell regulation
- Embryonic stem cells (ESCs)
- Generation of patient-specific pluripotent progenitor cells (iPS) for clinical therapies

Research interests

Jianchang Yang received his MD from XinJiang University of Medical Sciences, MS of Medical Biochemistry from Sun Yat-sen University in China, and his degree in Molecular Cardiology from Charite University Campus Benjamin Franklin (Berlin)-magna cum laude. His research interests include cardiac progenitor cell and cellular reprogramming, normal and leukemic hematopoietic stem cell regulation, epigenetic control of gene expression, ES cells, generation of patient-specific pluripotent progenitor cells for clinical therapies.

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Selected publications


Congenital Heart Surgery

The Division of Congenital Heart Surgery maintains an active research program across a broad spectrum. The division focuses specifically on congenital heart surgical outcomes and quality, pediatric heart and lung transplantation, mechanical circulatory support, neurodevelopmental protection, minimally invasive repair of congenital heart defects, aortic reconstruction, surgical repair of congenital coronary anomalies, and, in collaboration with Rice University, pediatric bioengineering.

The Pediatric Cardiac Bioengineering Laboratory within the Division of Congenital Heart Surgery is a joint effort between Baylor College of Medicine, Texas Children’s Hospital, and Rice University. Dr. Jane Grande-Allen of Rice University’s Department of Bioengineering and Dr. Sundeep Keswani, director of surgical research at Texas Children’s and associate professor of Surgery at Baylor, are the investigating the influences of biophysical cues such as stress, strain, shear, substrate stiffness, and electrical stimulation on the development and maturation of heart cells and tissues.

Dr. Iki Adachi conducts research in myocardial recovery and understanding what factors from both the child and the mechanical assist devices impact bridge to transplant or bridge to recovery. Dr. Adachi has the most US experience with implanting the HeartWare VAD in the pediatric population.

Texas Children’s Hospital has a long history of leading the way in finding new approaches to treating patients with congenital heart disease. Texas Children’s was the lead institution for the 17-center Berlin Heart study and implanted more Berlin Heart EXCOR® devices than any other center during the study. This team was instrumental in gaining FDA approval for the Berlin Heart to become the first and only long-term VAD solution approved for children in the United States.
Iki Adachi, M.D.
Assistant Professor of Surgery

Keywords
- Pediatric heart failure
- Mechanical circulatory support
- Myocardial recovery in children

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Selected publications

10. Adachi, I., Morales, D. S. L. Implantation of Total Artificial Heart in Congenital Heart Disease. J. Vis. Exp. (89), e51569
Ziyad Binsalamah, M.D., M.Sc., F.R.C.S(C)
Instructor in Surgery

Keywords
- Congenital Cardiac Surgery
- Nanotechnology in Cardiovascular diseases
- Aortic Surgery

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United States

Selected publications


Christopher Caldarone, M.D.
Professor and Chief
Division of Congenital Heart Surgery
Baylor College of Medicine
Chief, Congenital Heart Surgery
Texas Children's Hospital

Research interests
Dr. Caldarone’s research interests include the role of apoptosis related mitochondrial dysfunction and remote ischemic preconditioning as mediators of reperfusion injury. Most recently, Dr. Caldarone has focused on pulmonary vein stenosis and tissue engineering of pulmonary valves.

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Selected publications


4. Vanderlaan RD, Caldarone CA. "Decompressing extrinsic pulmonary vein obstruction." JACS.


Jeffrey S. Heinle, M.D.
Associate Professor of Surgery and Pediatrics
Baylor College of Medicine

Associate Chief, Congenital Heart Surgery
Surgical Director, Heart and Lung Transplant
Associate Director, Residency Program
Texas Children’s Hospital

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Selected publications:
Edward John Hickey, M.D.
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Division of Congenital Heart Surgery
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Surgical Director, Adult Congenital Heart Disease Program
Texas Children’s Heart Center

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Selected publications


Michiaki Imamura, M.D., Ph.D.
Professor of Surgery
Division of Congenital Heart Surgery
Baylor College of Medicine

Research interests

Dr. Imamura’s academic interests include clinical outcomes research and physiology/anatomy of congenital heart defects. Other academic interests include complex heart failure management, ventricular assist device implantation, and cardiothoracic and congenital surgical education.

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Selected publications


Emmett Dean McKenzie, M.D.
Professor of Surgery
Division of Congenital Heart Surgery
Associate Director, Congenital Heart Surgery Fellowship Program
Baylor College of Medicine

Associate Surgeon of Congenital Heart Surgery
Texas Children's Hospital

Research interests

Dr. McKenzie’s research centers on neurologic protection during cardiopulmonary bypass and the advancement of surgical and perfusion techniques to eliminate the use of deep hypothermic circulatory arrest (DHCA) during aortic reconstruction. He has extensive experience with and has developed innovative surgical techniques for repair of the aortic arch, including the ascending sliding arch aortoplasty.

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Lalita Wadhwa, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Surgery
Division of Congenital Heart Surgery
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Keywords
• Tissue banking
• Congenital heart defect genomics
• Pediatric developmental disorders

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Selected publications


The success of the individual programs is recognizable through research funding, publications, presentations, training and academic services, which significantly enhance the national and international reputations of the department.

In the areas of clinical and basic science research, individual programs have been recognized through research funding, publications, presentations, training, and academic services.

One five-year long study published in the prestigious journal *Nature* was the first to report 16 significantly mutated genes in actual human pancreatic cancer primary tumors, including genes not previously known to be associated with the disease.

As a result of the division’s clinical expertise and research programs patients receive a highly specialized assessment, the newest treatment modalities, including clinical trials for new medications and emerging surgical techniques, and coordinated follow up of their care.

Developing novel approaches for cancer gene therapy, immunotherapy, non-invasive radiofrequency field therapy to enhance tumor blood flow and produce modulated tumor-specific hyperthermia, use of nanotechnology to improve cancer detection, and robotic surgery are among the division's several basic science research pursuits. Areas of recent translational research focus have included the compilation of tissue-based databases that help track and understand patient outcomes in pancreatic, hepatobiliary, and colorectal cancers. Additionally, our clinical research initiatives include detecting genetic profiles and differences in circulating tumor cells in patients with primary and metastatic colorectal cancer, developing hyperthermic treatment programs for patients with peritoneal-based malignancies, and expanding neoadjuvant treatments in patients with pancreatic, hepatobiliary, colorectal, and breast malignancies.
Research interests

Dr. Fisher was awarded two NIH grants in 2015. One is focused on creating a consortium among 3 high-volume pancreas centers to study outcomes of pancreatic surgery. The other is composed of 10 centers studying the relationship between new onset diabetes, chronic pancreatitis, and pancreatic cancer.

Dr. Fisher has focused his entire career on pancreatic cancer and is internationally known for his clinical work as a pancreatic surgeon, basic science research and clinical research in pancreatic cancer. As Director of the Elkins Pancreas Center at Baylor College of Medicine (BCM) he has developed and coordinates clinical care for a large pancreatic cancer patient population as well as basic science and clinical research related to pancreatic cancer being performed at BCM. Dr. Fisher established a pancreatic cancer tissue resource and extensive clinical database which serve as a vital resource for research. Dr. Fisher’s lab has studied the influence of gastrointestinal hormones, particularly somatostatin and its receptors, on pancreatic cancer growth, and the relationship between diabetes and pancreatic cancer. Dr. Fisher has also collaborated on projects examining the role PDX-1 as an oncogene, gene therapy, oncolytic virotherapy, vaccination with virus-like particles, and adoptive T-cell immunotherapy for pancreatic cancer. Dr. Fisher is also actively collaborating with investigators in the Human Genome Sequencing Center at BCM on studies sequencing the genome of pancreatic cancer and the detection of circulating DNA in pancreatic cancer patients. Dr. Fisher leads a team of research clinicians dedicated to translating discoveries from the bench to the bedside and has served as principal investigator on more than 15 clinical trials for patients with pancreatic cancer.

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Selected publications


Ghanashyam S. Acharya, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Surgery and Ophthalmology
Baylor College of Medicine

Keywords
- Translational Nanomedicine
- Nanofabricated Drug Delivery Systems
- Ocular Drug Delivery
- Ocular Nanomedicine

Research interests
Dr. Acharya’s research program focuses on the development of translational nanomedicine by integrating nanofabrication, 3D-nanolithography, and controlled drug delivery strategies. He works at the interface of medicine, bioengineering, chemistry and pharmaceutics. He is currently working on developing controlled release nanowafer therapeutics, nanodrug delivery systems for wound healing and pain management, and theranostics for image-guided drug delivery. Dr. Acharya’s research program is funded by NIH, CPRIT, and Alkek award for the Development of Experimental Therapeutics.

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Selected publications


Samir S. Awad, M.D., M.P.H.

Professor and Chief, Section of Surgical Critical Care
Director, Surgical Critical Care Residency
Baylor College of Medicine

Operative Care Line Executive & Chief of Surgery
Medical Director Surgical Intensive Care Unit
Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center

Research interests

Dr. Awad has authored more than 100 peer-reviewed and invited publications, and is the recipient of numerous awards for surgical and research achievements. Dr. Awad is certified by the American Board of Surgery and Surgical Critical Care.

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Selected publications


Research interests
Dr. Barakat has developed new surgical techniques to minimize the complication rate and blood loss following pancreatic and liver surgeries. He utilizes image-guided therapies, such as radiofrequency ablation, microwave ablation, irreversible electroporation (Nanoknife system), trans-arterial chemotherapy, and selective internal radiotherapy (SIRT) with Yttrium-90 microspheres, to treat liver tumors while minimizing trauma to the patients.

Dr. Barakat's clinical and basic science research interests also include the study of neuroendocrine tumors and the development of off-the-shelf bio-artificial liver organs that can be suitable for liver transplantation in patients with end-stage liver disease.

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Selected publications


3. Barakat O, Ozaki CF, Wood RP. "Topically applied 2-octyl cyanoacrylate (Dermabond) for prevention of postoperative pancreatic fistula after pancreaticoduodenectomy."


5. Omar Barakat, MD, FRCS, Gabriela C. Rodriguez, MD, Isaac Rajman, MD, Paul M. Allison, MD, Javier Nieto, MD, Claire F. Ozaki, MD, FACS, Robert P. Wood, MD, FACS, and David A. Engler, PhD. "Clinical Value of Plasma Hepatocyte Growth Factor Measurement for the Diagnosis of Periampullary Cancer and Prognosis after Pancreaticoduodenectomy."


Elizabeth Bonefas, M.D.
Assistant Professor of Surgery
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Selected publications


Stacey Ann Carter, M.D.
Assistant Professor of Surgery
Division of Surgical Oncology
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Keywords

- Clinical outcomes in breast cancer
- Oncoplastic surgery
- Pre-menopausal breast cancer
- Geriatric breast cancer

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Selected publications


Christy Chai, M.D.
Assistant Professor of Surgery
Division of General Surgery
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Keywords
- Quality improvement
- Clinical outcomes
- Psychoneuroimmunology

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Selected publications
2. Chai CY, Szabunio MM, Cook C et al.. "Pre-SN Ultrasound-FNAC for Lymph Node Metastases in Melanoma Patients: Reply.." Annals of Surgical Oncology Online-Only 2012..
4. Vohra NA, Tejiram S, Chai CY et al.. "Multimodality therapy for pulmonary metastasis in sarcoma patients: Results of a single institution.." Journal of Clinical Oncology 30, 2012 (suppl;.
Research interests

His basic science areas of investigation included an NIH-sponsored grant for gene therapy in ischemia-reperfusion injury after myocardial infarction. He has participated and served as an investigator in a number of clinical trials. His clinical focus in research is in mechanical circulatory support, resource utilization, and critical care scoring systems for the care of cardiothoracic surgical patients.

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Selected publications


Louisa Chiu, M.D.
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Selected publications


Eugene Choi, MD
Associate Professor of Surgery
Division of Surgical Oncology
Michael E. DeBakey Department of Surgery

Keywords
- Metastasis
- Cell Signaling
- Pancreatic Cancer

Research Interests

Dr. Choi’s research interests include the signaling mechanisms of colorectal and pancreatic cancer metastasis and development of novel drug therapies.

Contact information

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**Selected publications**

Research interests

M. Andrew Davis, M.D. is an assistant professor of surgery in the Division of General Surgery. Born and raised in Richmond, Virginia, he attended the University of Virginia where he graduated with a B.A. in Mathematics. After spending a postgraduate year abroad in London teaching math, he then went on to attend medical school at the Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine/Medical College of Virginia. Upon graduation he pursued his general surgery residency at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia with a significant amount of time spent at Grady Memorial Hospital, one of the city's main trauma and indigent care facilities. After working in private practice at the completion of his residency, Dr. Davis then came back to Emory to complete a two-year fellowship in Trauma Surgery/Surgical Critical Care at Grady.

Prior research projects have included analysis and implementation of more efficient models of patient through-put in the emergency room setting. He enjoys the teaching and mentoring of residents and medical students, helping them gain an understanding of the complexities in treating surgical patients and fostering their growth within the discipline of surgery itself.

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Research interests

Dr. Feng’s research aims to elucidate the underlying mechanisms and interplays among protein modifications, signaling pathways, and gene transcription as well as understanding their roles in cell proliferation, tissue differentiation, and pathogenesis of human diseases.

His current research projects include:

**Phosphatome: genome-wide investigation of protein dephosphorylation**

Signal transduction pathways are often regulated by the dynamic interplay between protein kinases and phosphatases. Using all the human protein serine/threonine phosphatases available, we systematically investigate the effect of dephosphorylation on key proteins involved in cell signaling and cell functions. We are currently genetically disrupting individual phosphatases to elucidate their in vivo functions during development.

**SUMO, ubiquitin, and control of protein turnover and functions**

We examine the effect of post-translational modifications, particularly ubiquitination and SUMOylation of transcription factors, in normal and cancer cells. We attempt to understand the molecular mechanisms by which environmental and developmental cues regulate the ubiquitination/proteasome and SUMOylation systems. Our studies will provide insights into the relationships between protein deregulation and human cancers or abnormal development.

**TGF-β/BMP signal transduction**

SMADs are evolutionarily conserved signal transducers and transcription factors controlling TGF-β/BMP functions. A large number of mutations that inactivate SMADs have been linked to human cancers and genetic diseases. We address the molecular interactions, requirements, and functionality of SMADs in TGF-β/BMP responses using cellular, genomic, and proteomic
approaches. We investigate how SMADs mediate transcription and how their actions are terminated. We also use in vitro and in vivo model systems to study how SMADs as tumor suppressors interplay with oncogenic pathways, in particular with those involved in lymphoma and in pancreatic and breast cancer.

**Genetic screens, BMP/TGF-β signaling, and ES cells**
We are conducting genome-wide studies (e.g. genetic screens using lentiviral RNAi library) to identify novel TGF-β signal modifiers or regulators involved in stem cell differentiation. Novel molecules that control TGF-β/BMP signaling or participate in human ES cell self-renewal and differentiation will be further studied and in model organisms to define the molecules’ physiological roles in tissue differentiation and organ development.

**Immune suppression by TGF-β**
TGF-β is a major inflammatory and immune-regulatory cytokine, but the mechanisms by which TGF-β exerts its actions are unclear. We are interested in investigating the signaling interactions between the TGF-β pathway and other cytokine pathways (such as TNF-alpha, IL-1, and IL-6 pathways) in immune responses. This area of research may lead to the discovery of drugs to treat cancer and inflammatory diseases.

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**Selected publications**


Stephanie Gordy, M.D., F.A.C.S.
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Division of General Surgery
Director, General Surgery Residency Program
Department of Surgery
UME Clerkship Site Director
Ben Taub Hospital
Surgery Residency Site Director
Ben Taub Hospital

Keywords
- Surgical Sepsis
- Critical Care Nutrition
- Hemostatic Dressings
- Spinal Cord Trauma and Timing of Tracheostomy
- Advance Directives in the ICU
- Post Rib Fracture Disability

Research interests
Dr. Stephanie D. Gordy specializes in acute care surgery and surgical critical care. After completing her fellowship she was hired at Oregon Health and Science University as an assistant professor of surgery in the Department of Trauma, Emergency General Surgery and Surgical Critical Care. She now practices Acute Care Surgery and Surgical Critical Care at Ben Taub Hospital

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Selected publications


Raymon Grogan, M.D., MS
Associate Professor, Division of General Surgery
Baylor College of Medicine
Section Chief, Endocrine Surgery
Baylor St. Luke’s Medical Center

Keywords
• Parathyroid
• Thyroid
• Hyperparathyroidism

Research interests

Dr. Grogan runs a well-known translational research program. He has a Master of Science with a focus on epidemiology and biostatistics. He is the Principal Investigator and founder of the North American Thyroid Cancer Survivorship Study, which is a longitudinal cohort study that currently has nearly 3,000 participants enrolled and continues to expand. Through this work Dr. Grogan has published several novel findings related to thyroid cancer survivorship and has helped start a national discussion on ways to improve quality of life in these patients. In addition to this Dr. Grogan has published several papers on health outcomes related to endocrine surgery as well as translational papers on the genetics and epidemiology of endocrine diseases. Most recently Dr. Grogan has begun research on the relationship between the human microbiome and thyroid disease. In 2017 he was awarded the prestigious Paul LoGerfo Research Grant from the American Association of Endocrine Surgeons to study this relationship.

Contact information

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Selected publications


10. Michael G White 1, Megan K Applewhite 2, Edwin L Kaplan 1, Peter Angelos 1, Dezheng Huo 3, Raymon H Grogan "A Tale of Two Cancers: Traveling to Treat Pancreatic and Thyroid Cancer." J Am Coll Surg. 2017 May 1; : Pubmed PMID: 28473189
Marcus Hoffman, M.D.
Assistant Professor of Surgery
Division of General Surgery
Assistant Director, UME Simulation Programs
Department of Surgery Baylor
College of Medicine

Research interests
Dr. Hoffman’s research interests include frailty and debility of trauma and critical illness. Dr. Hoffman has a strong interest in medical student and resident education.

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Selected publications


Juliet Holder-Haynes, M.D.
Assistant Professor of Surgery
Division of General Surgery
Director, Surgery Core Clerkship
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Keywords
- Adult and adolescent obesity

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Weight Loss and Metabolic Center
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Selected publications

Research interests
Dr. Hsu earned a degree in Cellular and Molecular Biology at the University of Michigan and completed medical school at Temple University School of Medicine. He completed his residency at UCLA and a clinical fellowship at the National Cancer Institute. Dr. Hsu received fellowship training in surgical oncology at MD Anderson Cancer Center.

Dr. Hsu's clinical interest is in the multidisciplinary management of solid tumors. The multidisciplinary team at Ben Taub is committed to providing evidence-based, state of the art care for all cancer patients. Dr. Hsu is also engaged in the training of students and residents at the Baylor College of Medicine. Dr. Hsu's research interests include clinical outcomes in surgical oncology and cancer immunotherapy.

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Selected publications


3. Doorn JA, Sorenson RC, Billecke SS, Hsu C, and La Du BN. "Evidence that several conserved histidine residues are required for hydrolytic activity of human paraoxonase/arylesterase." Pubmed PMID: 10421457


Atif Iqbal, M.D.
Associate Professor of Surgery
Division of General Surgery
Chief, Section of Colorectal Surgery
Division of Surgical Oncology
Baylor College of Medicine

Keywords
• Health-science
• Outcomes
• Colorectal cancer

Research interests

His research interests focus on health services & outcome-based translational research in colorectal pathology with a focus on rectal cancer outcomes and institution of enhanced recovery programs after surgery. He has >130 research publications, presentations and posters.

Dr. Iqbal is a member of Alpha Omega Alpha medical honor society. He is recognized nationally as a colorectal cancer expert and is currently serving as an elected surgical expert on the NCI Rectal-Anal Task Force and the Colon task force of the GI steering committee. He is actively involved with the American College of Surgeons, American Society of Colon and Rectal Surgeons, and NRG Oncology. He has earned honors for his research presentations to the ACS, SAGES and the Commission on Cancer, as well as a medal of achievement in physiology by the Pakistan Physiological Research Organization.

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Selected publications


Xia Lin, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Surgery
Division of Surgical Oncology
Baylor College of Medicine

Keywords
- Cancer
- TGF-beta
- Diabetes

Research interests
Dr. Lin’s research interest is on cell functions under physiological and pathological conditions. Currently, we are investigating several cell functions such as cell proliferation, differentiation, and metabolism by focusing on protein phosphatase. Specifically, we are trying to identify protein phosphatases that regulate protein signaling transduction pathways such as BMP, TGF-β, insulin pathways, and gluconeogenesis. By doing this, we hope to understand better the signaling pathways that regulate normal cellular functions, and the deregulation of them leads to human diseases such as cancer, which is our main focus, bone disease, and diabetes. Eventually, we hope to provide the rationale for protein phosphatases as potential therapeutic targets.

Another major focus of her research is on the functions and regulation of TGF-β signal transduction pathway. We also investigate the crosstalk of TGF-β signal with other signaling pathways such as oncogenic pathway and hormone receptor pathway, and the role of protein posttranslational modifications (e.g. phosphorylation, ubiquitination and sumoylation) in TGF-β functions. By using cell-based assays and animal models, we seek to determine the role of TGF-β in normal cellular functions, cancer initiation, and cancer progression. Ultimately, our studies will advance our knowledge on understanding the molecular mechanisms of cancer initiation and progression, and on the identification of potential targets for cancer therapy.

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Selected publications


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Selected publications

S. Julie-Ann Lloyd, M.D., Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Surgery
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Research interests
Dr. Lloyd is a dedicated researcher and educator. Her research interests include understanding the pathophysiology of obesity and improving patient outcomes through optimization of perioperative care.

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Selected publications


cleavage requires Cdc48 and Dsc5, a ubiquitin regulatory X domain-containing subunit of the Golgi Dsc E3 ligase." *J Biol Chem.*

Michele Loor, M.D.
Assistant Professor of Surgery
Division of General Surgery
Baylor College of Medicine
Medical Director, Surgical Intensive Care Unit
Baylor St. Luke’s Medical Center

Research interests

Dr. Loor’s research interests include surgical critical care, surgical infections, preoperative optimization, and enterocutaneous fistulas.

Contact information

Jamail Specialty Care Center
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Selected publications

Research interests

Dr. Konstantinos (Kostas) Makris graduated cum laude from the University of Athens Medical School in Greece. He received his General Surgery training at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN and Creighton University Medical Center in Omaha, NE and has been certified by the American Board of Surgery. He pursued fellowship training in Advanced Laparoscopy and Surgical Endoscopy at Legacy Health in Portland, OR, as well as further training in Endocrine Surgery at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, MD. He has received awards and acknowledgements by the American College of Surgeons for his participation in the contest of surgical knowledge and in the competition of surgical trainee essay, as well as a traveling fellowship award by the Society of American Gastrointestinal and Endoscopic Surgeons.

He joined Baylor College of Medicine and the Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center in November of 2013, where he proudly serves the veterans as a staff surgeon. His clinical practice includes all aspects of General Surgery with emphasis on Minimally Invasive Surgery, benign foregut diseases and endocrine surgery. He is the author of numerous articles, scientific abstracts and book chapters in the fields of his clinical and research interests.

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Selected publications


Jian-Ming Lü, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Surgery
Division of Surgical Oncology
Baylor College of Medicine

Keywords
• Cardiovascular disease
• Drug discovery and development
• Enzyme inhibitors, mechanisms
• Gout and hyperuricemia
• Natural substances and structure modification
• Organic synthesis, characterization
• Oxidative stress, free radicals, and antioxidants
• Pancreatic cancer
• Polymer nanoparticle drug/gene delivery

• Xanthine oxidase, HIV protease, cyclooxygenase, arginase

Research interests
My research is focused on several basic science and translational research projects that are highly relevant to clinical diseases and pancreatic cancer. I have a strong background and research experience in organic chemistry, medicinal and synthetic chemistry, and biochemistry, including enzyme activities and mechanisms.

In recent years, I have been studying the fields of translational medicine and medicinal chemistry, working with cell-free, well-established *in vitro* as well as *in vivo* models. The primary goal of my projects is to develop new, safe, and effective therapies using natural or naturally-derived substances. For example, I have been developing medicines for hyperuricemia-related diseases, such as gout, using natural substances and by modifying their structure to enhance their effects. Currently, I am also screening naturally-derived substances for inhibitors of enzymes such as myeloperoxidase, HIV protease, and arginase, key enzymes in the development of diseases.

Another focus of my research is the delivery of nanoparticle gene/drug complexes targeted to cancer cells as well as to vascular cells by using antibodies or other specific proteins conjugated to PLGA (poly(lactic-co-glycolic acid)-based nanoparticles. I am developing a new PLGA-based material for molecular imaging and specific drug and gene delivery, which has great potential clinical applications such as molecular diagnostics and targeted therapies.

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Selected publications

1. Jian-Ming Lü, Qizhi Yao, Changyi Chen. 3,4-Dihydroxy-5-nitrobenzaldehyde (DHNB) is a Potent Inhibitor of Xanthine Oxidase: A potential therapeutic agent for treatment of hyperuricemia and gout. Biochem Pharmacol. 2013, 86(9):1328-37


10. Lü JM, Rosokha SV, Neretin IS, Kochi JK. (2006), Quinones as electron acceptors. X-ray structures, spectral (EPR, UV-vis) characteristics and electron-transfer reactivities of their reduced anion radicals as separated vs contact ion pairs. J Am Chem Soc, 128(51), 16708-16719
Research interests

Dr. Massarweh’s research interests include health services, health policy, and healthcare quality improvement work.

Contact information

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Selected publications


Claire F. Ozaki, M.D.
Division of General Surgery
Baylor College of Medicine

Keywords
- Liver Disease

Research interests

Claire F. Ozaki, M.D. was born in St. Louis, Missouri and grew up in Hawaii and Nebraska. In 1984, she received her M.D. degree from the University of Nebraska College of Medicine in Omaha. After completing a 6-year surgical residency which included one year of research, she stayed at the University of Nebraska and completed a two year transplant surgery fellowship, specializing in liver, kidney and pancreas transplantation.

Dr. Ozaki is board certified in general surgery and has been performing complex abdominal surgeries since 1990. She now specializes in acute care general surgery. Dr. Ozaki and the acute care surgery team apply the most innovative surgical techniques and evidence-based care delivery methods, work as a team to be readily available to our patients, and achieve the highest published standards of surgical outcomes.

Contact information

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Selected publications


Yesenia Rojas-Khalil, M.D.
Assistant Professor of Surgery
Division of General Surgery
Baylor College of Medicine

Research interests

Dr. Rojas-Khalil has authored and co-authored many original research publications, in addition to contributing to surgical textbook chapters in Current Surgical Therapy, Scientific American Surgery, and The SCORE Curriculum for resident education. She is also the Spanish Video Commentator and Contributing Abstract Translator for Diseases of the Colon and Rectum (DC&R), the official journal for the American Society of Colon and Rectum Surgeons (ASCRS). Dr. Rojas-Khalil is an active member of the American College of Surgeons (ACS) and American Society of Colon and Rectum Surgeons (ASCRS).

Contact information

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United States
Bradford Glenn Scott, M.D.

Professor of Surgery
Division of General Surgery
Section Chief of Trauma Surgery
Vice-Chair for Education
Baylor College of Medicine

Director, Ginni and Richard Mithoff Trauma Center
Ben Taub Hospital

Research interests

Dr. Scott's clinical and research studies focus on resuscitation of the trauma patient, care for the open abdomen, and on methodologies for complex abdominal wall reconstruction, as well as surgery of the foregut.

Contact information

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bradford.scott@bcm.edu
Selected publications


4. Thoracoabdominal Shotgun Wounds: an evaluation of factors associated with the need for surgical intervention MM Carrick, CA Morrison, DA Jacob, MA Feanny, HQ Pham, FJ Welsh, MA Norman, BG Scott. The American Journal of Surgery 2008


10. Assessment and standardization of resident handoff practices: PACT projectTapia NM, Fallon SC, Brandt ML, Scott BG, Suliburk JW. Journal of Surgical Research 2013 September; 184(1):71-7
Crystal S. Shin, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Surgery
Division of General Surgery
Baylor College of Medicine

Keywords
- Biomedical engineering
- Biopharmaceutics

Research interests
Dr. Shin’s research focuses on the development of in vitro 3D tumor models using biopolymer scaffolds as tools to evaluate the cytotoxicity of anticancer drugs. Crystal then joined the Department of Ophthalmology at Baylor College of Medicine as a postdoctoral associate. During this time, she developed a novel ocular drug delivery system, nanowafers. Her current research interests focus on developing broadly applicable drug delivery systems with enhanced therapeutic efficacy by integrating nanotechnology and 3D bioprinting technology.

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Selected publications
7. Shin CS, Kwak B, Han B, Park K. "Development of an in vitro 3D tumor model to study
therapeutic efficiency of an anticancer drug." Mol Pharm.


Keywords

- Trauma
- Immune function
- Infection

Research interests

Dr. Southard’s research interests involve determining why critically ill and injured patients develop hospital-acquired infections.

Contact information

Neurosensory Center

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Selected publications


5. Perme CS, Southard RE, Joyce DL, Noon GP, Loebe M. "Early mobilization of LVAD recipients who require prolonged mechanical ventilation." Tex Heart Inst J.


James W. Suliburk, M.D., F.A.C.S.
Associate Professor of Surgery
Division of General Surgery
Chief, Endocrine Surgery
Michael E. DeBakey Department of Surgery

Keywords
- Mobile Technology
- Patient Engagement
- Safety & Quality in Surgery

Research interests
Dr. Suliburk’s research program offers opportunities in translational science, clinical outcomes and technology development/innovation. Research interests include clinical outcomes in endocrine surgery, outcomes in acute care and trauma surgery, surgical disparities and application of mobile technology to improve peri-operative surgical care, patient engagement and communication. The research comes from the establishment of a comprehensive and multidisciplinary treatment of endocrine surgical program at Ben Taub Hospital and Baylor St. Luke’s Medical Center. Translational research opportunities include development of novel molecular markers to predict outcome in endocrine surgical disease (thyroid cancer, hyperthyroidism, hyperparathyroidism, and adrenal tumors) as well as metabolic markers of the endocrine response in severely injured major trauma patients. Clinical research includes outcomes analysis of access to care for underserved populations undergoing endocrine surgery along with developing novel percutaneous surgical approaches to treat thyroid, parathyroid and adrenal disease and ongoing refinement of hemorrhagic shock resuscitation strategies to improve survival in our trauma patients. Exciting work recently begun in technology and innovation. Mobile technology has become an ever-present part of daily life and we have now begun to study and apply methods of utilizing automated mobile technology to improve communication with patients for detection of impending complications and to supplement peri-operative care for surgical patients. Finally and perhaps most importantly we have launched a program to enhance safety in surgery through the a human factors engineering based approach to analyze surgical complications across the entire adult hospital system of Baylor College of Medicine.

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suliburk@bcm.edu
Selected publications


Research interests

Research interests include the natural history of solid organ tumors as well as the multidisciplinary therapy of solid organ malignancy. Further interests include the education of residents and medical students by improving knowledge and skills through formal curriculum.

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Selected publications


Alastair Thompson, BSc, MBChB, MD  
Professor and Chief, Breast Surgery  
Division of Surgical Oncology  
Olga Keith Wiess Chair of Surgery  
Co-Director, Lester and Sue Smith Breast Center  
Dan L Duncan Comprehensive Cancer Center  
Baylor College of Medicine

Keywords
- DCIS
- Triple Negative Breast Cancer
- Clinical translational trials

Research Interests

Dr. Thompson has served as principal investigator on landmark breast cancer clinical trials, including SOLE, MA 32, MINDACT and KRISTINE trials. He currently chairs the Translational Medicine Breast Group of the Southwest Oncology Group (SWOG); co-chairs the Loco-regional Steering Group of the Translational Breast Cancer Research Consortium (TBCRC), is a member of the NCI BOLD taskforce and of the Early Breast Cancer Trialists’ Collaborative Group, is national co-investigator and correlative science lead for the Comparison of Operative to Monitoring and Endocrine Therapy (COMET) trial for low-risk DCIS, and co-chairs the NCI-Breast Cancer Steering Committee-proposed “no surgery” clinical trial planning committee. Dr. Thompson also continues to chair the Sloane Project (the NHS Breast Screening Programme non-invasive prospective cohort study of 13,000 women), which is the largest prospective study of screen detected DCIS in the world. He is co-author of over 350 publications.
Selected publications


postmenopausal women with breast cancer (SOLE): a multicentre, open-label, randomised, phase 3 trial." Lancet Oncol. Pubmed PMID: 29158011


Barbara Wells Trautner, M.D., Ph.D.
Professor of Surgery
Director of Clinical Research
Department of Surgery
Associate Professor of Medicine
Baylor College of Medicine

Keywords
- Urinary tract infections
- Healthcare-associated infections
- Antimicrobial stewardship

Research interests

Barbara W. Trautner, M.D., Ph.D., is an infectious diseases clinician-investigator at Baylor College of Medicine and the Michael E. DeBakey Veterans Affairs Medical Center, affiliated with the Center for Innovations in Quality, Effectiveness, and Safety (IQuESt). Her primary research interest is the development of new strategies for the prevention of catheter-associated urinary tract infection (CAUTI). She has worked in this area for the past 17 years, supported first by an NIH K23 award and then by a VA Career Development Award. While on career development award support, Dr. Trautner obtained her PhD in clinical investigation from Baylor College of Medicine Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences. Her interest in CAUTI prevention has led her to develop two productive branches of investigation, one in health services research and one in microbiology translational research.

Dr. Trautner’s outcomes research has focused on reducing antimicrobial overuse, particularly for the extremely common condition of catheter-associated asymptomatic bacteriuria. Her team completed a successful VA Health Services Research and Development merit review project utilizing guidelines implementation to decrease inappropriate treatment of catheter-associated asymptomatic bacteriuria and is now disseminating this intervention, both inside and outside the VA.

The overall goal of Dr. Trautner’s translational research has been to develop novel strategies for prevention of CAUTI in persons who have chronic bacteriuria, such as those with neurogenic bladders or chronic indwelling catheters. One area of investigation is bacterial interference, or using benign bacteria to prevent symptomatic infection with pathogens. In clinical trials Dr. Trautner’s group utilized urinary catheters coated with a biofilm of benign \textit{E. coli} to achieve bladder colonization and protection from CAUTI. This work has led to her current work with bacteriophages, or viruses specific for certain strains of bacteria, as a means to address the highly resistant pathogens often found in infections of indwelling medical devices.
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Selected publications


Research interests
Dr. Van Buren’s primary area of interest is pancreatic cancer and gastrointestinal malignancies. I am interested in development of clinical trials, analysis of clinical outcomes in pancreatic cancer patients, and genomic analysis of pancreatic cancer patients. Currently he is involved in a Clinical Trial of a Phase III Study of FOLFIRINOX With or Without HyperAcute®-Pancreas (algenpantucel-L) Immunotherapy in Subjects with Borderline Resectable or Locally Advanced disease. He is also involved with collaborations to perform genomic analysis of pancreatic cystic fluid and analysis of serum in pancreatic adenocarcinoma patients for circulating tumor cells. He also has an interest in evaluation of patients with pancreatic cancer and comparisons between various races.

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Selected publications


R. Mario Vera, M.D.
Assistant Professor of Surgery
Division of General Surgery
Baylor College of Medicine

Keywords

- Trauma surgery
- General surgery
- Acute care surgery
- Critical care

Research interests

Dr. Vera’s interests are trauma, emergency general surgery, and critical care.

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Selected publications

Jeremy Ward, M.D.
Assistant Professor of Surgery
Division of General Surgery
Program Director, Surgical Critical Care Fellowship
Baylor College of Medicine

Medical Director, Trauma Surgery ICU
Ben Taub Hospital

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Selected publications

Chad Wilson, M.D., MPH  
Associate Professor of Surgery  
Division of General Surgery  
Baylor College of Medicine  

Trauma Director  
Ben Taub Hospital  

Keywords  
• Trauma epidemiology  
• Global surgery  
• Healthcare disparities  

Research interests  
During surgical residency, Dr. Wilson he took a two year hiatus from clinical work to concentrate on research and completed the VA Outcomes Fellowship at the White River Junction VA in Vermont while simultaneously earning a MPH in 2006 from the Dartmouth Medical School’s Center for the Evaluative Clinical Sciences in Hanover, New Hampshire.

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Selected publications


Qizhi Cathy Yao, M.D., Ph.D.
Professor
Michael E. DeBakey Department of Surgery
Department of Molecular Virology and Microbiology
Department of Pathology and Immunology
Department of Pharmacology

Keywords
• Pancreatic cancer
• HIV

Research interests

My research programs include HIV vaccine development, pancreatic cancer pathogenesis, and therapy. Specifically:

Developing chimeric virus-like particle HIV vaccines

Understanding the functional roles of mesothelin and Trop2 in pancreatic cancer pathogenesis

Understanding the functional roles of miR-198 in pancreatic cancer pathogenesis

Understanding the functional roles of axon guidance gene Semaphorin 3E in pancreatic cancer pathogenesis

Developing targeted nanoparticle therapy in pancreatic cancer

Developing immunotherapy for pancreatic cancer

HIV Vaccines

My lab is interested in developing non-infectious HIV virus-like particles (VLPs) as candidate HIV mucosal vaccines for both preventive and therapeutic purposes. In preclinical studies, VLPs formed by structural proteins are highly immunogenic and capable of inducing protective
immunity against various viral infections. We have modified vaccine immunogens into chimeric HIV VLPs which contain influenza viral surface glycoprotein HA or other immunologically functional molecules. We have shown that the chimeric HIV VLPs can induce enhanced humoral and cellular immune responses against HIV in a mouse model.

We have also studied the basic mechanisms of VLP-induced humoral and cellular immune responses, and other factors that affect these responses. For example, we found that VLP vaccines activate conventional B2 cells and promote B cell differentiation to IgG2a producing plasma cells; that VLP vaccines travel to the lymph nodes upon immunization and can be directly visualized by optical imaging techniques; and that intradermal immunization generates improved responses and might be a preferable delivery route for viral and cancer immunotherapeutic studies involving VLPs.

Since dendritic cells (DCs) have long been known to be pivotal in initiating immune responses, we are also interested in how VLPs modulate DC functions and will evaluate the efficacy of VLP-pulsed DC vaccines. In addition, we are testing the efficacy of modified chimeric VLP oral-mucosal immunization with novel vaccine adjuvants in non-human primates.

Pancreatic cancer pathogenesis and therapy

Pancreatic cancer has one of the highest mortality rates and ranks as the third leading cause of cancer death in North America. Survival is poor because there are no reliable tests for early diagnosis and no effective therapies to treat metastatic disease. There is a need to better understand the molecular mechanisms of pancreatic cancer tumorigenesis and to develop effective treatments. My lab currently focuses on the study of key molecules in pancreatic cancer, including mesothelin (MSLN), trop2, and semaphorin 3E, and in their mechanisms of regulation. I am also interested in the involvement of microRNAs (miR-198) in pancreatic cancer, and how their dysregulation leads to pathogenesis. We are also currently exploring tumor-associated molecule targeted therapies and RNA interference delivery by liposomes and nanoparticles in vivo. Our group has shown that vaccinating mice with chimeric virus-like particles containing MSLN significantly inhibited tumor progression, suggesting a new therapeutic vaccine strategy whereby MSLN is targeted to attempt to control pancreatic cancer progression. We are also employing a K-ras mutation spontaneous pancreatic cancer mouse model, humanized tumor-bearing mouse model, and patient-derived xenograft (PDX) model to study prevention and the potential of our therapeutic regimens in pancreatic cancer.
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Selected publications


7. Bharadwaj U, Marin-Muller C, Li M, Chen C, Yao Q. (2011), Mesothelin confers...
pancreatic cancer cell resistance to TNF-α-induced apoptosis through Akt/PI3K/NF-κB activation and IL-6/Mcl-1 overexpression. Mol Cancer, 10:106.


GENERAL THORACIC SURGERY

The division's surgeons and staff are committed to providing outstanding clinical care, and in developing new treatments for thoracic disease through research and innovation. The surgeons perform surgical techniques and new therapies that are on the cutting edge. New technology drives their innovative techniques that lead to less pain after surgery and a speedier postoperative recovery. These surgeons are well suited to provide the best possible care available for patients stricken with lung cancer, esophageal cancer, mesothelioma and a host of other chest diseases. Together, these surgeons are leading the field of thoracic surgery forward.
Bryan Burt, M.D., FACS
Associate Professor and Chief
Division of General Thoracic Surgery
Director, General Thoracic Surgery Research
Baylor College of Medicine

Keywords
- Tumor immunology
- Non-small cell lung cancer
- Malignant pleural mesothelioma

Research interests
Dr. Burt’s research efforts concentrate on immunologic determinants of pleural mesothelioma and non-small cell lung cancer; he is currently focusing efforts on novel therapeutic intraoperative treatments of pleural mesothelioma.

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Selected publications

2. Burt BM, Kosinski AS, Shrager JB, Onaitis MW, Weigel T. "Thoracoscopic lobectomy is associated with acceptable morbidity and mortality in patients with predicted postoperative forced expiratory volume in 1 second or diffusing capacity for carbon monoxide less than 40% of normal." *J Thorac Cardiovasc Surg.*
Philip Worthington Carrott, M.D.
Assistant Professor of Surgery
Division of General Thoracic Surgery
Baylor College of Medicine

Research interests

Dr. Carrott’s research interests include peri-operative nutrition support, enhanced recovery after surgery (ERAS), and ischemic preconditioning of the stomach prior to esophagectomy.

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Shawn Groth, M.D.
Associate Professor and Associate Chief,
Division of General Thoracic Surgery
Baylor College of Medicine
Director of Esophageal Surgical Services
Baylor St. Luke’s Medical Center

Keywords
- Thoracic Surgery
- Outcome Assessment (Health Care)
- Translational Medical Research

Research interests

Dr. Groth’s clinical research focuses on thoracic oncology outcomes research, health care disparities research, and clinical trials. He has explored several topics directed towards improving the guideline treatment of cancer patients. His basic science and translational research efforts are directed towards advancing personalized oncology.

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Selected publications


Hyun-Sung Lee, M.D., Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Surgery
Division of General Thoracic Surgery
Baylor College of Medicine

Keywords
- Systems Immunology
- CyTOF
- Imaging Mass Cytometry (IMC)
- Malignant pleural mesothelioma
- Lung cancer
- Esophageal cancer
- Thymic epithelial tumors

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Alkek Building for Biomedical Research
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Selected publications


R. Taylor Ripley, M.D.
Associate Professor of Surgery
Division of General Thoracic Surgery
Baylor College of Medicine
Director, Mesothelioma Treatment Center
Baylor St. Luke's Medical Center

Keywords
• BH3 profiling
• Metabolomics
• Thoracic oncology

Research interests
Dr. Ripley was an associate professor of surgery in the Thoracic and Oncologic Surgery Branch of the National Cancer Institute (NCI). While at the NIH, Dr. Ripley was awarded the NCI Director’s Innovation Award for targeting specific p53-mutations for the treatment of esophageal adenocarcinoma. He established the Foregut Team at the NIH Clinical Center for the management of patients with esophageal cancer. Additionally, he has been developing a novel assessment of thoracic cancers by profiling mitochondrial pathways, which he will continue with us. Dr. Ripley has lectured nationally and published extensively on his work in the field of thoracic oncology and tumor metabolism. Prior to his faculty appointment at the NCI, Dr. Ripley trained extensively in the care of patients with mesothelioma under world-renowned surgeons during his fellowship at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York.

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Selected publications


Pediatric Surgery

The Pediatric Surgery Division at Texas Children’s Hospital has the depth of expertise and specialization to provide optimal care across the surgical spectrum – from the most routine cases to the most rare and complex. Each child receives personalized care from the physician most suited to the case, ensuring the best possible outcomes. The range of surgical procedures performed by the division include fetal surgery, abdominal and thoracic surgery, minimally invasive surgery including laparoscopic and thorascoscopic diagnosis and treatment, endocrine and biliary surgery, and adolescent bariatric surgery. Our research programs are supported by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), private foundations, Texas Children’s Hospital and Baylor College of Medicine.

The Pediatric Surgery Clinical Research and Outcomes Program, in conjunction with the Texas Children’s Evidence-Based Outcomes Center and Outcomes and Impact Services, has developed and evaluated evidence-based protocols for the management of children with appendicitis. The team standardized broad-spectrum antibiotic monotherapy, the use of clinical discharge criteria and guidelines for antibiotic treatment duration in cases of advanced appendicitis. These initiatives have led to decreased resource utilization and costs and, most importantly, improved patient outcomes. Additionally, the creation of a patient and family education pamphlet has helped set expectations and shorten length of hospital stay. Future research directions include the implementation of clinical decision support tools and comparative effectiveness clinical trials.

Partnering with Texas Children’s Cancer Center, one of the largest pediatric cancer centers in the country, the Surgical Oncology Program within the Pediatric General Surgery Division performs more than 500 operations annually for children with solid tumors. Because of the volume of patients and the dedication of these surgeons to this particular population, we are able to achieve outcomes among the best in the nation.

Pediatric Surgical Oncology has an active research program. The team is studying neuroblastoma in their own basic science labs. They are also engaged in clinical research on neuroblastoma, Wilm’s tumors and hepatoblastoma, as well as leading a multidisciplinary study with Oncology, Radiology and Pathology to determine how the number of cycles of chemotherapy prior to surgery affects patient outcomes.
Swathi Balaji, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Surgery
Division of Pediatric Surgery

Keywords
• Mechanical tension
• Murine models
• Skin and lung fibrosis
• Endothelial and endothelial progenitor cells

Research interests

Dr. Balaji’s research interests are to understand the underlying mechanisms of how the fetus heals cutaneous wounds without scar and translate the findings to achieve postnatal regenerative tissue repair in various organ systems. Dr. Balaji received her doctoral degree in bioengineering from University of Cincinnati and did her postdoctoral training in the Department of Pediatric Surgery at Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center.

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Selected publications


Research interests

Dr. Hsu has a research background in defining cancer stem cell populations in neuroblastoma. Her current research interests include quality of care for cancer patients undergoing surgery. She is also part of a national consortium of centers caring for children with congenital colorectal disease.

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Selected publications


Sundeep Keswani, M.D.
Associate Professor of Surgery Pediatrics, and Obstetrics/Gynecology
Division of Pediatric Surgery
Baylor College of Medicine
Surgical Director of Research
Texas Children's Hospital

Keywords

- Fetal Diagnosis and Therapy
- Wound Healing
- Regenerative Medicine

Research interests

Dr. Keswani is a member of the pediatric surgery and fetal surgery team at Texas Children’s Hospital and the principal investigator for the Texas Children’s Laboratory for Regenerative Tissue Repair. Dr. Keswani completed his adult general surgery training at Louisiana State University in his hometown of New Orleans and completed his pediatric surgery fellowship at St. Louis Children's Hospital and the Washington University School of Medicine. He also completed a research fellowship and fetal surgery fellowship at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. Prior to coming to Texas Children’s, Dr. Keswani was an attending surgeon at Cincinnati Children’s Hospital. Dr. Keswani’s clinical interests are in fetal diagnosis and therapy, neonatal surgery, congenital diaphragmatic hernia, ECMO and pediatric wound care. His NIH-funded laboratory studies the molecular mechanisms of regenerative fetal tissue repair and is actively developing novel therapeutics to achieve postnatal regenerative wound healing.

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Selected publications

Alice King, M.D.
Assistant Professor of Surgery
Division of Pediatric Surgery
Baylor College of Medicine

Research interests

Prior to joining the fetal surgery team, Dr. King has done extensive research background in fetal regenerative wound healing. Her current research interests include fetal surgery to help treat life-threatening congenital abnormalities and to correct problems that would be too advanced to correct after the baby is born.

Contact information

Mark Wallace Tower
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Louis Le, M.D.
Assistant Professor of Surgery
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Keywords
- Pediatric Surgery
- Pediatric trauma

Contact information
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The Woodlands, Texas 77384
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Selected publications


Research interests
Dr. Lee’s primary focus is on improving clinical care and deriving protocol-driven patient care initiatives in the surgical neonatal ICU and within the Texas Children’s Fetal Center and in the colorectal and pelvic health clinic at Texas Children’s Hospital. Currently he is a collaborator in a randomized control trial on the benefit of early delivery of gastroschisis patients. Other areas of research interest include patients with congenital diaphragmatic hernia and the use of extracorporeal life support. Dr. Lee is pursuing a Masters in Clinical Research to develop expertise in management and initiation of clinical trials within the neonatal ICU and within the fetal center patient populations.

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Selected publications


Monica E. Lopez, MD, MS
Associate Professor of Surgery
Division of Pediatric Surgery
Baylor College of Medicine

Keywords
Surgical Outcomes
Value-based Surgical Care
Quality Improvement Science

Research Interests
My research is focused on the design and implementation of surgical clinical trials, evidence-based practice guidelines, quality improvement science, and value-based surgical care delivery, with the overarching goal of improving outcomes for children’s surgery. My training background in clinical research methodology includes participation in the American College of Surgeons Clinical Trials Methods Course, the Oregon Institute for Patient-Centered Comparative Effectiveness Annual Research Intensive, and a Master in Science degree in Clinical Research. I have attended the Strategy for Value Based Health Care Delivery workshop under Professors Porter and Kaplan. I have applied these skills in the development of institutional research protocols and clinical practice guidelines, which were aimed at standardizing the treatment of pediatric appendicitis. I have led a multidisciplinary team in building a population health analytics platform for tracking appendectomy outcomes and launching multiple hospital-wide quality initiatives that have generated value to appendicitis care. I am committed to expanding this approach to other common pediatric surgical conditions, utilizing clinical research and quality improvement as complementary strategies to achieve better outcomes.

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Selected publications


Mark V. Mazziotti, MD, MEd
Associate Professor of Surgery and Pediatrics
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Program Director, Pediatric Surgery Residency Program
Baylor College of Medicine

Keywords
- Minimally-invasive pectus excavatum repair
- Advanced minimally-invasive/robotic pediatric surgery
- Choledochal cyst laparoscopic excision

Research Interests
Dr. Mazziotti’s current focus is on the clinical practice of pediatric surgery in an educational setting. He has special interest and training in minimally invasive surgery, including thoracoscopic pectus excavatum repair. He has devised a novel technique for the minimally-invasive repair of pectus carinatum using conventional Nuss equipment with modifications. He has studied how various stabilization techniques have improved outcomes in pectus excavatum patients.

Dr. Mazziotti’s research interests are in clinical outcomes. He has interest in clinical outcomes for patients with biliary dyskinesia treated with laparoscopic cholecystectomy compared to patients with gallstones treated in the same fashion. He also has ongoing projects evaluating clinical outcomes in patients with perforated appendicitis, spontaneous pneumothorax, and in patients with ITP undergoing laparoscopic splenectomy.

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Selected publications


Research interests
Dr. Milewicz has extensive experience and expertise in the spectrum of pediatric surgery. He has specialized research training in liver transplant and cardiac surgery. Dr. Milewicz’s current focus is on the clinical practice of pediatric surgery in an educational setting.

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Paul K. Minifee, MD
Associate Professor of Surgery and Pediatrics
Division of Pediatric Surgery
Baylor College of Medicine

Research interests
Dr. Minifee, primarily a clinical pediatric surgeon, has a commitment to education. He routinely provides high school and medical school mentorship through programs such as the High School Mentorship Program at Texas Children’s Hospital, the Honors Premedical Academy, and the Longitudinal Ambulatory Clinical Experience (LACE) course at Baylor College of Medicine. Dr. Minifee combines education and technology as he mentors Baylor residents and medical students on clinical rotations in pediatric surgery.

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Selected publications
Bindi Naik-Mathuria, MD, MPH
Associate Professor of Surgery and Pediatrics
Division of Pediatric Surgery
Baylor College of Medicine
Trauma Medical Director
Texas Children’s Hospital

Keywords
Pediatric trauma and injury prevention
Pediatric surgical oncology
Outcomes following pediatric surgical procedures
Global pediatric surgery

Research interests
Dr. Naik-Mathuria’s research interest is primarily in pediatric trauma and finding ways to improve trauma care of children through prospective multi center studies, national database reviews, and system-based quality improvement. She is also interested in injury prevention, particularly firearm safety for children. Additionally, she performs outcomes studies on a variety of pediatric surgical problems, as well as solutions for global pediatric surgery. Residents who join our team would have a broad-based experience in clinical research. Obtaining a degree in public health concurrently with the research time would be an ideal complement, but is not a requirement.

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Jed G. Nuchtern, MD

Professor of Surgery and Pediatrics
William J. Pokorny Professor of Pediatric Surgery
Division of Pediatric Surgery
Chief, Global Surgery
Baylor College of Medicine

Keywords
- Neuroblastoma in infants
- Tumor progression
- Cancer target discovery

Research Interests
Dr. Nuchtern leads a collaborative research program that includes translational and clinical research on developing new treatments for pediatric solid tumors, particularly neuroblastoma. The primary focus in the laboratory is identifying new targets for neuroblastoma therapy. Bioinformatic studies have identified several proteins whose expression is increased in high risk neuroblastoma tumors; the laboratory has validated these findings and demonstrated that blocking expression of these targets decreases tumor growth and progression. Current research is directed toward identifying the pathways through which these molecules affect tumor progression. In addition to these translational studies, Dr. Nuchtern is involved in clinical research on neuroblastoma in infants. Through the Children’s Oncology Group, he designed and implemented a prospective international study investigating the safety and efficacy of expectant observation as the primary treatment modality for infants with low risk adrenal tumors.

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Selected publications


Kristy Lynn Rialon, M.D.
Assistant Professor of Surgery
Division of Pediatric Surgery
Baylor College of Medicine

Keywords
- Vascular anomalies
- Graduate medical education
- Surgical oncology

Research interests
During her residency, she was awarded a research grant from the National Institutes of Health to study pancreatic cancer. She also subsequently completed a research fellowship in Vascular Anomalies at Boston Children’s Hospital.

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Selected publications
Research Interests
Dr. José Ruben Rodriguez is a general pediatric surgeon whose research interests include improving outcomes and quality of care for pediatric trauma patients, and clinical trials to improve outcomes following general pediatric surgical operations.

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Selected publications


Sohail Rashmi Shah, M.D., M.S.H.A.
Assistant Professor of Surgery and Pediatrics
Division of Pediatric Surgery
Baylor College of Medicine

Keywords
- Pediatric surgery outcomes
- Patient-centered outcomes
- Healthcare delivery

Research interests
Dr. Shah’s research interests focus on enhancing pediatric surgical outcomes, improving healthcare delivery, and establishing evidence-based practice guidelines. He has authored numerous peer-reviewed articles, written book chapters, and given dozens of presentations to national and international audiences on a full range of pediatric surgery topics. He is currently a candidate for a Master of Science in Clinical Research from the University of Kansas Medical Center.

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Selected publications


Shawn Stafford, M.D.
Assistant Professor of Surgery
Division of Pediatric Surgery
Baylor College of Medicine

Keywords
Minimally invasive surgery
Congenital anomalies

Research interests
During his time at LSU he was involved in research looking at angiogenesis and its impact on malignancy and wound healing. Additionally, he was instrumental in the development of a novel injectable for sentinel lymph node dissection.

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Selected publications


6. Khan AR; Blackwell LM; Stafford SJ; Thompson AD; Romero RJ; Goodier CD; Kwan D; Khan IR; Schellack JV; Perkowski PE. "Femororenal arteriovenous graft: a viable option for hemodialysis access." Annals of Vascular Surgery. 2008 January
Research Interests
Dr. Vasudevan’s laboratory focuses on validation of potential therapeutic targets found in pediatric solid tumors and cancer, in particular neuroblastoma and hepatoblastoma. During his postdoctoral training in the Texas Children’s Cancer Center with Drs. Jed G. Nuchtern and Jianhua Yang, Dr. Vasudevan cloned two novel genes, NDSP and DUSP26, which were found to be specifically expressed in neuroblastoma and play critical roles in neuroblastoma tumor growth and chemosensitivity. Dr. Vasudevan is furthering this work as a principal investigator by focusing on the function and regulation of the p53 pathway in both neuroblastoma and hepatoblastoma. He is also helping to develop patient derived xenografts for these tumors in order to better study the biology and develop patient-specific therapies. Dr. Vasudevan's lab hopes to validate multiple targets in order to find novel and less toxic therapeutic agents to improve outcomes in neuroblastoma and hepatoblastoma.

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Selected publications

1. **Breast Malignancies in Children: Presentation, Management, and Survival.**
   Richards MK, Goldin AB, Beierle EA, Doski JJ, Goldfarb M, Langer M, **Nuchtern JG**, **Vasudevan S**, Gow KW, Javid SH.

2. **Effects of socioeconomic status on children with well-differentiated thyroid cancer.**

3. **Vascular invasion is a prognostic indicator in hepatoblastoma.**
   Shi Y, Commander SJ, Masand PM, Heczey A, Goss JA, **Vasudevan SA**.

4. **Dual targeting of MDM2 and BCL2 as a therapeutic strategy in neuroblastoma.**

5. **Local therapy to distant metastatic sites in stage IV rhabdomyosarcoma.**

6. **Socioeconomic disparities affect survival in malignant ovarian germ cell tumors in AYA population.**

7. **Indocyanine green fluorescence in second near-infrared (NIR-II) window.**


Adam Vogel, M.D.
Associate Professor of Surgery and Pediatrics
Division of Pediatric Surgery
Baylor College of Medicine

Keywords
- Goal directed hemostatic resuscitation
- Pediatric trauma
- Extracorporeal life support

Research interests
Dr. Vogel’s research focuses on improving clinical outcomes in critically ill children. He investigates the use of viscoelastic monitoring techniques in goal-directed hemostatic resuscitation and massive transfusion to improve outcomes in severely injured patients. His research focuses on the impact of nutritional adequacy on outcomes and techniques for optimizing systemic antiocoagulation and mechanical ventilation during ECLS. Dr. Vogel is an active participant in several multicenter collaborative research networks whose goal is to improve the care and outcomes of pediatric surgical patients.

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Selected publications


Keywords

- Pediatric trauma
- Pediatric injury prevention
- GI disorders

Research Interests

Dr. Wesson has been interested in research relating to pediatric trauma and pediatric injury prevention for over 30 years. For example, he participated in some of the earliest definitive studies on the non-operative treatment of solid organ injuries in children. This research helped to define the indications for operation in children with splenic trauma. This approach was very controversial when first described but it has since become the standard of care for children around the world, and more recently in all age groups. Dr. Wesson’s interest in pediatric injury prevention grew out of his experience in pediatric trauma care. This led to his research into the promotion of bike helmet use and the subsequent impact on the incidence of fatal bicycling injuries in a defined population of children. Dr. Wesson also played a role in the development of the trauma system in the City of Toronto and the Province of Ontario, Canada. His research into the incidence of preventable trauma deaths among children in Ontario documented a significant overall reduction in the incidence of fatal injuries and in the proportion of preventable deaths over the period from the late 1980’s to the early 2000’s. His research supported the hypothesis that these improvements were attributable to improvements in the system of care. Dr. Wesson has a variety of other research interests particularly in gastrointestinal disorders in children. He published one of the earliest studies of the results of restorative proctocolectomy in children with ulcerative colitis and familial polyposis. He also has a strong interest in the treatment of biliary atresia and entered many of his patients with this disease into the NIH funded study of this problem by the Biliary Atresia Research Consortium (BARC).
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Selected publications


10. Pediatric Trauma: Pathophysiology, Diagnosis, and Treatment, Second Edition by David E. Wesson (Editor), Bindi Naik-Mathuria (Editor) CRC Press, New York, NY
Plastic Surgery

Division faculty members pursue a wide variety of clinical and basic science research projects. The majority of this work focuses on improving the care of patients with facial injuries or congenital deficiencies.

The division, for example, is currently leading a large-scale study of outcomes in pediatric craniofacial surgery. Faculty members have also been studying new and better treatments for mandibular fractures, including studies evaluating the biologic response to resorbable plate and screw fixation, and a clinical study to determine the optimal method to stabilize mandibular fractures.
Research Interests

Dr. Hollier has a broad background in craniofacial reconstruction procedures. As the chief of the largest group of full-time, academic craniofacial surgeons in the United States, he believes he has an opportunity to substantially contribute to this subject.

He has undertaken an enormous research effort focused on quantifying outcomes in craniofacial surgery. He and other senior researchers in the department are currently applying for a new NIH funded project, which will allow them to take that effort to the next level by stratifying craniosynostosis patients according to their unique genetic background. By accurately defining the true underlying genetic causes, procedures can be custom tailored for each patient and patients can be properly educated regarding their expected course of treatment. Dr. Hollier feels that this is something that has been sorely lacking in plastic surgery. For too long, plastic surgery has been a specialty where outcomes are deemed acceptable so long as the patient and their family are happy. He believes plastic surgery should be elevated to the next level of scientific scrutiny, and is dedicated to leading the endeavor.

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Selected Publications


Edward Reece, M.D., EMBA
Professor and Chief, Adult Plastic Surgery
Josephine Abercrombie Endowed Professor
Michael E. DeBakey Department of Surgery
Baylor College of Medicine

Keywords
- Telehealth
- Nerves
- Reconstruction

Research interests

Educated at the University of Virginia, he graduated with distinction with a Bachelor of Arts. He has a passion for research enterprises from the cellular level to the clinical and societal levels which have led to peer reviewed publications and lectures. His completion of medical school at Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine produced both a Doctor of Medicine degree and a Master’s degree for applied anatomical sciences.

He is the founder of several biomedical companies which seek to find efficiency and cost savings for institutions while preserving the highest quality to patients. System analysis of Supply Chain in Hospitals has been another of his interests and he has served as a Healthcare Supply Chain consultant at Dignity Health, in Phoenix, Arizona.

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Selected publications


Edward Buchanan, MD, FACS, FAAP
Associate Professor and Chief,
Pediatric Plastic Surgery
Program Director Craniofacial Fellowship
Baylor College of Medicine
Chief, Division of Plastic Surgery
Director of Cleft Care
Texas Children’s Hospital

Keywords
• Cleft Lip and Palate
• Craniosynostosis
• Craniofacial syndromes
• Microtia Reconstruction
• Craniofacial Oncologic Reconstruction

Research Interests
Dr. Buchanan’s primary research interest is in the evaluation and analysis of surgical outcomes in patients treated for cleft and craniofacial conditions. These patients suffer from specific anatomical malformations that need to be addressed at specific time points with specialized procedures. The success of these interventions is important for long-term health and quality of life. Dr. Buchanan’s research focuses on understanding the best timing and types of operations for patients with cleft and craniofacial related issues.

As the head of the Cleft and Craniofacial Center at Texas Children’s Hospital, I take a specific interest in patient centered outcomes. One of my primary goals is to ensure that our patients receive the world’s best treatment. In order for me to do this, I must understand how the treatment experience affects them during every stage of their care. By thoroughly understanding the patient experience, their expectations, satisfactions and quality of life, our craniofacial team can truly take care of the whole patient. By studying patient centered outcomes, health care delivery can become more efficient and effective.
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Selected Publications

Claudia Harriehausen, D.D.S., M.S.D.
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Amy Dao Huynh-Tran, DDS
Assistant Professor of Surgery
Division of Pediatric Plastic Surgery
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Keywords
- Children with developmental differences
- Pediatric plastic surgery

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John C. Koshy, M.D.
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Keywords

- Cleft lip and palate
- Pierre Robin Sequence
- DiGeorge Syndrome
- Craniosynostosis
- Vascular Anomalies
- Breast Surgery

Research statement

Dr. Maricevich’s current research interests are in Morphology in Cleft, Pierre Robin Sequence and Craniosynostosis patients, speech outcomes on DiGeorge population, outcomes on Pediatric Breast Surgery as well as challenges in Vascular Anomalies.

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Selected publications


Laura Monson, MD
Assistant Professor of Surgery
Division of Pediatric Plastic Surgery
Baylor College of Medicine

Keywords
• Clinical outcomes
• Quality of life
• Cleft lip and palate

Research interests

Dr. Monson's current research focus is on investigating the clinical outcomes of our pediatric plastic and craniofacial patients, especially our cleft patients from infancy through adulthood.

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Selected publications


Shola Olorunnipa, M.D.
Assistant Professor of Surgery
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Keywords
• 3DMD
• Cleft
• Telemedicine

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Selected publications
Tuan Truong, M.D.
Assistant Professor of Surgery
Division of Pediatric Plastic Surgery
Baylor College of Medicine

Keywords
• Craniosynostosis
• Facial Fractures
• Cleft lip and Palate
• Virtual Surgical Planning

Research interests
His research interests are cranial vault remodeling, facial fractures, midfacial and mandibular distraction, orthognathic surgery, and virtual surgical planning.

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Selected publications
Sebastian Winocour, M.D., M.Sc.
Assistant Professor of Surgery
Division of Adult Plastic Surgery
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Research interests
Dr. Winocour’s research interests focus on breast reconstruction, aesthetic surgery and the treatment of pathological scarring.

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Selected publications


John Wirthlin, DDS, MSD
Assistant Professor of Surgery
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Keywords

- Craniofacial development
- Pre-surgical infant orthopedics
- Cleft lip and palate orthodontics

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Selected publications

Esther Yang, DDS
Assistant Professor of Surgery
Division of Pediatric Plastic Surgery
Baylor College of Medicine

Research interests

As a member of the cleft and craniofacial team, Dr. Yang helps treat patients born with a variety of facial abnormalities including, cleft lip and palate, hemifacial microsomia, Crouzon Syndrome, Pierre Robin, and a variety of other abnormalities. Treating these patients with a team-centered approach allows optimal treatment results as professionals from plastic surgery, speech pathology, orthodontics, pediatric dentistry, otolaryngology, and several other specialties can coordinate and optimize each step of the treatment.

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Selected publications


Our faculty physicians in the Division of Vascular Surgery and Endovascular Therapy at Baylor College of Medicine are widely recognized as leaders in the fields of vascular surgery and endovascular therapy at several institutions in the Texas Medical Center, including Baylor St. Luke’s Medical Center, the Texas Heart Institute, Texas Children’s Hospital, the Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center and Ben Taub Hospital.

Equipped with state-of-the-art resources and funded by the National Institutes of Health, the American Cancer Society, the Dan L Duncan Comprehensive Cancer Center, the National Institute of Neurology Disorders and Strokes, and the Department of Veterans Affairs, the research center conducts basic and applied science programs in limb salvage, vascular surgery outcomes, precision health, diabetic foot care, wound care, offloading, prevention of ulcer recurrence, dialysis interventions, dementia, personalized exercise therapy, vascular biology, pancreatic cancer research, surgical immunology, and cancer vaccination.

To ensure that the newest treatment options are available to patients with vascular disease, the division actively participates in several clinical trials that evaluate new devices for the treatment of abdominal aortic aneurysms and peripheral arterial disease.

Our research efforts in clinical outcomes following surgical or endovascular treatment of aneurysms, dialysis interventions, lower extremity occlusive disease, and carotid disease, have helped define standards of care in vascular disease management.

The division hosts an interdisciplinary research infrastructure named Interdisciplinary Consortium on Advanced Motion Performance (iCAMP). iCAMP is an interdisciplinary research and development collaboration led by Bijan Najafi, Ph.D., between a host of productive, exciting, creative teams - from Vascular Surgery, Orthopedics, Podiatry, Nursing, Geriatrics, Neurology, Nephrology, Movement Science, and Engineering at the Baylor College of Medicine. The iCAMP lab houses many new technologies, many of which were developed in-house. iCAMP houses a state-of-the-art gait and human-performance laboratory equipped with innovative motion analyzer systems of both wearable and stationary systems. The facility is conveniently located near relevant resources for patient recruitment and patient follow-up and includes a HIPPA compliant patient recruitment facility.
Joseph L. Mills Sr. M.D., F.A.C.S.

Professor of Surgery and Chief
Division of Vascular Surgery & Endovascular Therapy

Michael E. DeBakey Department of Surgery
Baylor College of Medicine

Keywords
- Limb salvage/Diabetic Foot
- Peripheral artery disease (PAD)
- Vein graft stenosis
- Endovascular therapy
- AAA

Research interests
Dr. Mills has authored nearly 300 peer-reviewed journal articles and book chapters, focused on his clinical and research interests in noninvasive diagnosis, vein graft stenosis, intimal hyperplasia and limb-salvage in patients with diabetes mellitus. He has been the principal investigator for over 40 clinical trials, including a number of current investigations.

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Selected publications


Research interests
Dr. Barshes is an academic vascular surgeon who focuses on the treatment of foot infections and peripheral artery disease. His research activities have spanned the spectrum of care for this problem, including: foot ulcer prevention efforts; the microbiology of isolates involved in foot infections; patient selection for revascularization; the timing of soft tissue reconstruction after revascularization; and the cost-effectiveness of prevention and management strategies for peripheral arterial disease and non-healing foot ulcers. The clinical research methodologies used to investigate the research questions for these clinical topics have included randomized controlled trials, large database research, retrospective cohort studies with multivariate analyses and/or propensity scoring, and Markov model simulation with formal cost-utility analyses. Current efforts and plans for future direction include further studies are also focused on further optimizing the value of limb preservation efforts, especially through the improved coordination of multidisciplinary care within the context of a vertically-integrated health care system.

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Selected publications


Johnathan Braun, M.D.
Assistant Professor of Surgery
Division of Vascular Surgery and Endovascular Therapy
Baylor College of Medicine

Research interests

Dr. Braun’s areas of academic interest include cost-effectiveness in management of vascular disease, functional outcomes in peripheral artery disease treatment, and perfusion assessment in diabetic foot wounds. He has contributed articles to peer-reviewed journals such as Journal of Vascular Surgery and presented at national and regional meetings. He has also served as a co-author for Surgical CORE curriculum in carotid disease.

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Selected publications

Changyi (Johnny) Chen, M.D., Ph.D.
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Director, Basic Science and Translational Labs
Michael E. DeBakey Department of Surgery
Molecular Surgery Endowed Chair
Department of Molecular and Cellular Biology
Baylor College of Medicine

Keywords
• Angiogenesis
• Atherosclerosis
• Cardiovascular disease
• Endothelial dysfunction
• Endothelial nitric oxide synthase
• Hemodynamics
• Oxidative stress and antioxidant
• Pancreatic cancer
• PLGA-based nanotechnology
• Vascular tissue engineering

Research interests
Dr. Chen’s laboratory is actively conducting several basic science and translational research projects that are highly relevant to clinical cardiovascular disease and pancreatic cancer.

Cardiovascular risk factors and their molecular mechanisms in cardiovascular disease
We are investigating the effects and the molecular mechanisms of several cardiovascular risk factors, including HIV protease inhibitors, the adipokine resistin, soluble CD40L, and uric acid, on biochemical pathways associated with endothelial cell functions. Some of the biochemical pathways under investigation are the endothelial nitric oxide synthase system, the oxidative stress system, and signal transduction pathways. We are carrying on these investigations using several experimental models, such as myographies, organ cultures, mouse models, human tissue samples, and different types of endothelial cells. Based on the molecular mechanisms we uncover, we develop effective therapeutic strategies to treat endothelial dysfunction and atherosclerosis.

Endothelial cell differentiation and angiogenesis
We are studying the role played by and the molecular mechanisms of hemodynamic factors and several novel molecules on endothelial cells differentiated from embryonic
stem cells and from bone marrow-derived stem cells. We are identifying key regulatory genes that trigger endothelial cell differentiation and promote stable angiogenesis. These findings can potentially be applied to the design of novel therapeutic strategies to treat ischemic tissues using genetically engineered endothelial cells. In addition, these studies may provide useful information to genetically engineer novel tissues for vascular grafts.

Pancreatic cancer
We have been heavily involved in pancreatic cancer research programs for many years. We have several projects focusing on the role and on the mechanisms of several genes, such as microRNA 196a (miR-196a), X-inactive specific transcript (XIST), and Jude-2 in pancreatic cancer. Our comprehensive studies analyze human cancer specimens, clinical outcomes, established cell lines, a nude mouse model, and a genetically engineered mouse model of pancreatic cancer called the KPC model. We are developing PLGA [poly(lactic-co-glycolic acid)]-based nanotechnology for molecular imaging and for specific drug and gene delivery, which has great potential clinical applications, such as molecular diagnostics and targeted therapies.

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Selected publications


Jayer Chung, M.D., M.Sc.
Assistant Professor of Surgery
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Keywords
- Diabetic foot
- Lower extremity revascularization
- Chronic critical limb ischemia

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Selected publications


Ramyar Gilani, M.D.
Associate Professor of Surgery
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Chief, Vascular Surgery
Medical Director, Vascular Laboratory
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Keywords
- Vascular surgery and endovascular interventions
- New paradigms in hemorrhage control
- Blood vessel prosthesis implantation

Research interests
Dr. Gilani’s research interest is in the clinical outcome of vascular surgical reconstructions and endovascular interventions, specifically in endovascular treatment of aortic aneurysms, venous disease, and endovascular treatment of lower extremity occlusive disease.

Dr. Gilani has contributed numerous articles to scholarly and professional journals such as Journal of Vascular Surgery, Vascular and Endovascular Surgery, Vascular Journal, and Journal of Endovascular Therapy. He has written many book chapters related to vascular disease management.

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Selected publications

Selected publications

2. Hansraj N, Kavic S "Surgery for Crohn's Disease: An Emerging Surgical Specialty." Inflamm Bowel Dis. :
Dr. Kougias’s research interest focuses exclusively on clinical research within the following two areas:

1) Randomized controlled trials to answer critical clinical questions and address systems re-design issues

2) Observational studies utilizing large datasets from institutional or nationwide databases.

He currently runs two randomized controlled trials funded from a VHA Career Development Award and a VHA Merritt Review Award. Our group also runs more than 25 observational studies on topics that cover the areas of limb salvage, operating room time utilization, carotid disease and vascular infections, among others. He has mentored 12 students and/or residents over the past 3 years with a philosophy that emphasizes a progressive initiation of the mentee into the principles of clinical research; research question inception, data collection, data analysis, and scientific presentation/writing. Two of his current mentees are pursuing formal training in Clinical Research and/or Epidemiology as part of their research curriculum.
Selected publications


Brian D. Lepow, D.P.M.
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Keywords
- Diabetic foot
- Limb salvage
- Amputation prevention

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Selected publications
1. Lepow, BD, Bluthe, DB. "It Takes a Team." Podiatry Management.
2. Lepow, GM; Lepow, BD. "Emerging Insights on Fixation for Austin/Chevron Bunionectomies." Podiatry Today.
Bijan Najafi, PH.D., MSc.
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Director, Interdisciplinary Consortium on Advanced
Motion Performance (iCAMP)
Baylor College of Medicine

Keywords
- Wearable technology
- Movement science
- Digital health
- Exergame/Exercise Science
- Internet of Things (IoT)
- Motor Cognitive Performance
- Frailty

Research interests

Dr Najafi has over two decades of experience in designing bio-inspired sensors for objective evaluation of healthy state of patients with locomotor dysfunctions, over 200 scientific publications in peer reviewed journals or conference proceeding with more than 5000 citations, 20+ issued or pending patents, and have been PI or a key investigator on over 50 industrial, national and international grants ($50M+). He worked with a wide network of clinical and bioengineering collaborators across the globe primarily in the clinical areas of falls, frailty, gait, cognitive impairment, dementia, and diabetes and diabetic foot ulcers. He has assisted in successful translation of several innovative technologies for commercialization in the area of remote health monitoring, precision medicine, and movement assessment including several wearable and mHealth technologies for activities monitoring, gait analysis, balance assessment, automatic fall detection, patient adherence, smart home design for people with dementia, and various technologies for foot problems management including prevention of diabetic foot ulcers and wound management.
He has mentored over 200 postdoctoral, research fellows/interns, graduate, undergraduate, premed, and medical students - several of them received prestigious awards from their achievements while working in his team. He also serves as editor, associate editor, and guest editor for several scientific journals including as a section editor for Gerontology, ‘Regenerative and Technological Section’, PLOS One, Journal of Diabetes Science and Technology, and the Journal of American Podiatric Medical Association (JAPMA). He has served as the chair of research operation at the Southern Arizona Limb Salvage Alliance (SALSA), a collaborative clinical and research alliance dedicated to advancing care of the diabetic foot and preventing amputations in North America and worldwide.

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Selected publications


Research interests

Dr. Montero-Baker graduated with honors both from medical school and his residency in Vascular Surgery at the University of Costa Rica. After his residency training, he was awarded a DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) scholarship to further pursue his interest in interventional therapies in Leipzig, Germany and completed a peripheral vascular ultrasound fellowship, as well as an advanced peripheral endovascular interventions fellowship. Driven by his passion for research and development of new diagnostic techniques for ischemic limbs, Dr. Montero-Baker completed an Integrated Vascular Surgery Residency at the University of Arizona and went on to join the faculty as an assistant professor.

Dr. Montero-Baker is author of numerous journal publications, has co-authored several textbook chapters and is a well-recognized opinion leader for the Latin American medical community. Dr. Montero-Baker’s main clinical interests are critical limb ischemia, implantable micro-technology and endovascular carotid disease management.

He is an active member of the Society for Vascular Surgery, the International Society for Vascular Surgery, the International Society of Endovascular Surgeons, Endovascular Surgeons of Latin America and the Latin America Society of Vascular Surgeons.

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Selected publications


Zachary Pallister, M.D.
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Keywords
- Vascular Ultrasound
- Hemodialysis Access
- Vascular Trauma

Research interests

Dr. Pallister’s research interests involve clinical outcomes research in peripheral vascular intervention.

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Selected publications


3. Rana, A; Pallister, ZP; Goss, JA; et al.. "Profiling risk for acute rejection in kidney transplantation: recipient age is a robust risk factor." *Journal of Nephrology*.

4. Rana, A; Pallister, ZS; Goss, JA; et al.. "Pediatric Liver Transplant Center Volume and the Likelihood of Transplantation." *Pediatrics*.

5. Rana, A; Pallister, ZS; Goss, JA; et al.. "Outcomes Following Pediatric Liver Transplantation (Pedi-SOFT) Score: A Novel Predictive Index." *Am J Trans*.

6. Pallister, ZS; Duran, MJ; Pressley, TJ. "Protein Kinase C regulation of the Na, K-ATPase 3 isoform in highly metastatic human prostate cells." *FASEB*. 
Jeffrey Alan Ross, D.P.M, M.D.
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Selected publications

The Office of Surgical Research in the Michael E. DeBakey Department of Surgery is pleased to offer you an opportunity to conduct clinical trials through our department representing 130+ faculty members, four major academic clinical centers, and 100,000+ patient visits per year. Our comprehensive clinical trial management services, provided by the dedicated research support team housed in our department, allow us to offer you, as our research partner, an efficient, cost-effective, and high-fidelity way of performing clinical trials under a single IRB platform.

1) Our team: Clinical trial coordinators, regulatory experts, grants and contract managers, research nurses, a biostatistician, a database expert, and a medical editor are available to assist with performing clinical trials and preparing the results for presentation.

2) Clinical research support: Our pool of research coordinators can help with clinical trials by working with a research partner to convey proposals all the way from IRB submission to enrollment of the final subject at one or all our 4 major clinical sites of Baylor College of Medicine. Our team includes research nurses, a physician assistant, and five trials management research assistants who are available to support clinical studies. These individuals are skilled at IRB submission, informed consent, clinical monitoring, completing case reports, regulatory compliance, and final report submission.

3) Budget planning: In addition to the support with IRB preparation and actually carrying out the trial, our budget specialists stay on top of the invoicing process and keep the projects financially on track.

4) Our clinical sites: Baylor College of Medicine currently has four potential sites for clinical studies, covered under one IRB: the Michael E. DeBakey Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Ben Taub Hospital, Texas Children’s Hospital, and the Baylor St. Luke’s Medical Center. Our coordinators are credentialed to enroll subjects at all these sites.

Our experienced research core team can be a resource to you in getting your products tested. Please, consider the Department of Surgery at Baylor College of Medicine as a potential partner in your next trial. For more information about our core or conducting a trial with us, feel free to contact Dr. Barbara Trautner, at surgicalresearch@bcm.edu.

For more information about our surgical research faculty, please see our website: www.bcm.edu/departments/surgery/research