2008

Meet Our Surgical Interns

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Meet Our Surgical Interns

Jefferson surgeons are currently assisted by an exceptional group of categorical interns, half of them Jefferson Medical College graduates. These doctors, who recently matched with Jefferson, started on June 20, 2008 (l to r):

Danielle Pineda, MD, Jefferson Medical College; Richard Burkhart, MD, Boston University School of Medicine; Aleksandra Policha, MD, SUNY/Syracuse; Daniel Relles, MD, Jefferson Medical College; Christina Khan, MD, PhD, University of Illinois; and Jason Walls, MD, Jefferson Medical College.

We are also pleased to welcome back two additional Jefferson Medical College graduates, Carrie Houssock, MD, and Jordan Goldhammer, MD, as preliminary interns in General Surgery.
Jefferson Pancreas Tumor Registry Opens for Enrollment

The Jefferson Pancreas Tumor Registry (Jeff PTR) has been approved by the Institutional Review Board of Thomas Jefferson University Hospital and is designed to help determine the links between familial genetic variations, environmental and occupational influences, and the development of pancreatic cancer.

According to Principal Investigator, Dr. Charles J. Yeo, “The purpose of the Jeff PTR is to determine whether pancreatic cancer occurs more frequently in families with a history of the disease, and to determine the environmental and occupational risk factors to which pancreatic cancer patients have been exposed.” Participants will complete a detailed questionnaire and may be asked to submit a blood sample and/or cheek swab. The questionnaire is designed to elicit the family health history of a patient with pancreas cancer or a non-affected family member, and to document exposure to occupational and environmental factors, such as residential radon, asbestos, and second-hand tobacco smoke. The Jeff PTR is a longitudinal study in which participants may engage in long-term follow-up and receive information regarding scientific and epidemiological breakthroughs in pancreatic cancer.

Research has shown that certain rare genetic conditions are associated with an increased risk of pancreatic cancer, including familial breast-ovarian cancer, familial melanoma, familial colon cancer, hereditary pancreatitis, and Peutz-Jegher's syndrome. Genetic Counselor Sarah Charles, MS, CGC of the Jefferson Kimmel Cancer Center Network (JKCCN) educates families about their risk of developing an inherited disorder.

Such high risk patients may be referred to Jefferson gastroenterologists such as Thomas Kowalski, MD and David Loren, MD to discuss the pros and cons of invasive surveillance. The goal is to diagnose pancreatic cancer early when it is easier to treat. For persons who do develop pancreatic cancer, Jefferson physicians may use the results of genetic testing to select the most effective therapy. Targeted therapy for pancreatic cancer is becoming a reality in part due to recent discoveries made in the laboratory of Jonathan Brody, PhD, Assistant Professor of Surgery, where molecular studies have clearly indicated survival advantages with the use of targeted chemotherapy treatment.

For more information about the Jefferson Pancreas Tumor Registry please visit www.jeffersonhospital.org/pancreasregistry

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