



Mount
Sinai

inside

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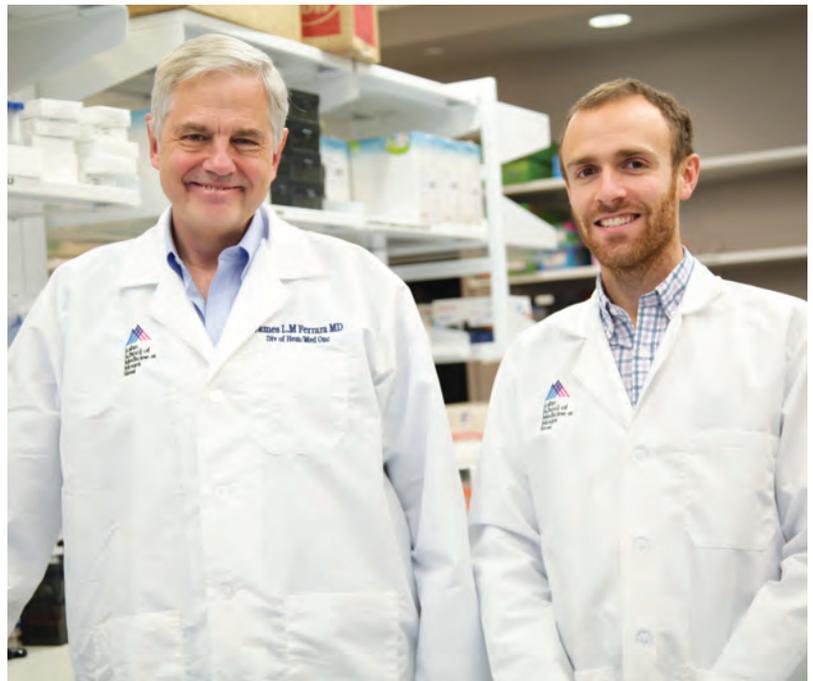
A New Era for Bone Marrow Transplantation

Seminal research led by James Ferrara, MD, DSc, Ward-Coleman Chair in Cancer Medicine, has produced a promising approach to treating patients with graft-versus-host disease (GVHD)—a sometimes fatal complication of bone marrow transplantation in which the donor’s immune cells attack the recipient’s body. Bone marrow transplants are often used to treat patients with leukemia, lymphoma, and other blood diseases.

At the core of this research is a new diagnostic test in the form of a scoring system that predicts each patient’s response to GVHD treatment and helps guide the physician. Using several cutting-edge proteomic techniques, Dr. Ferrara and his team discovered three plasma biomarkers (TNFR1, ST2, and Reg3 alpha), which led to a grading system to calculate patient responsiveness.

The new diagnostic vastly improves upon the traditional treatment that has changed little in 40 years, which calls for patients to be given high doses of systemic steroids that are effective only about half of the time.

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James Ferrara, MD, DSc, left, with Associate Researcher Austin Taylor

Transplant Surgeon Ron Shapiro, MD, Joins Mount Sinai



Ron Shapiro, MD

After completing his residency training at Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai more than two decades ago, renowned surgeon Ron Shapiro, MD, has returned to the Mount Sinai Health System as Surgical Director of the Kidney and Pancreas Transplant Program at the Recanati/Miller Transplantation Institute (RMTI).

In his new position, Dr. Shapiro will oversee the abdominal organ transplantation programs and services specific to adult and pediatric kidney transplantation, as well as adult pancreas transplantation. RMTI is among the most comprehensive transplantation centers in the world and includes one of the largest living donor programs in the United States.

“It is incredibly exciting to be returning to the center where I trained in general surgery,” says Dr. Shapiro. “I’m eager to work on developing new regimens that keep the immune system from rejecting transplanted organs without leaving people

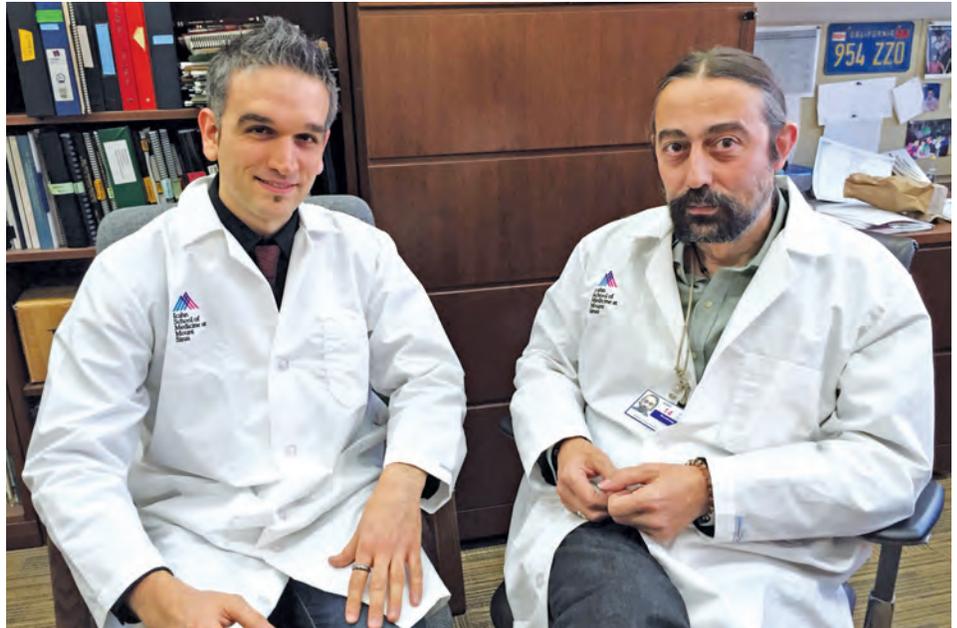
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Researchers Identify Potential Ebola-Fighting Drugs

Researchers at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai have identified 53 drugs approved for use in treating depression, cancer, heart disease, and other illnesses that may also be effective in fighting the Ebola virus. The findings appeared online in the December 17, 2014, journal *Emerging Microbes & Infections*.

The Mount Sinai researchers, working in collaboration with the National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS) at the National Institutes of Health, used viral-like particles (VLP) that mimic the Ebola virus to carry out an Ebola drug repurposing screen. By using Ebola VLPs, the team—that included scientists from Mount Sinai’s Department of Microbiology and the Global Health and Emerging Pathogens Institute—was able to study the entry mechanism of the virus without using the virus itself, which requires the highest biosafety-level conditions.

The 53 drugs were culled from a total of 2,816 drugs that were initially tested for their ability to block Ebola VLP entry without being toxic to humans.



From left, Carles Martínez-Romero, PhD, and Adolfo García-Sastre, PhD

“If some of these prove to be correct, it will be a fast way to find one or more compounds that can be used to treat Ebola,” says lead author Adolfo García-Sastre, PhD, Director of the Global Health and Emerging Pathogens Institute, and the Irene and Dr.

Arthur M. Fishberg Professor of Medicine (Infectious Diseases), and Professor of Microbiology at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai.

According to Carles Martínez-Romero, PhD,

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> A New Era for Bone Marrow Transplantation *(continued from page 1)*

“Our new scoring system provides for a personalized approach to transplantation so that each patient gets the right treatment at the right time,” says Dr. Ferrara, a leading authority on the immunologic complications of bone marrow transplantation, who is also Director of the Hematologic Malignancies Translational Research Center at the Mount Sinai Health System. “People with low-risk GVHD are often overtreated, exposing them to significant side effects. And those with high-risk GVHD are often undertreated, allowing the disease to progress.”

Equally important, the diagnostic scoring test is paving the way for a new generation of clinical trials that will also test investigative agents for the prevention and treatment of acute GVHD.

To advance the science, Dr. Ferrara recently created the Mount Sinai Acute GVHD International Consortium (MAGIC), comprised of 10 major stem cell transplant centers in the United States and Europe. Later this year, the consortium expects to launch a clinical trial approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, making it the first to treat GVHD using the biomarker grading system.

“We’re gathering a critical mass of investigators at Mount Sinai with the ability to push the boundaries of immunotherapy and immunobiology further than ever before.”

– James Ferrara, MD, DSc

In addition, Dr. Ferrara plans to actively collaborate with Mount Sinai researchers in the area of Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD), which has similar types of inflammation and disease pathways. He hopes to explore ways to genetically engineer bacteria to secrete proteins such as the GVHD biomarker Reg3 alpha, for example, to help protect the gastrointestinal tract.

“We’re gathering a critical mass of investigators at Mount Sinai with the ability to push the boundaries of immunotherapy and immunobiology further than ever before,” he says.

Around the Health System

Honoring Mount Sinai Nurses

Mount Sinai Health System nurses were recognized for extraordinary achievements in three of six categories in the 2014 “Tribute to Nurses” awards announced in a special advertising section in *The New York Times Magazine* on Sunday, December 7.

The Mount Sinai Hospital’s Medical Intensive Care Unit received the “Team Award” for its immediate and unified response last summer in treating New York City’s first patient to present with Ebola-like symptoms. Ultimately, an Ebola infection was ruled out. “I am proud that the nurses never stepped back,” says Amy Albano, MBA, BSN, RN, Senior Director of Nursing Operations, Finance, and Quality at The Mount Sinai Hospital. “It was a very supportive environment.”

Mount Sinai Beth Israel’s Robert (Robbie) Freeman, MSN, RN-BC, was the “Technological Innovations” winner. Mr. Freeman has developed an app aimed at helping nurses and nursing students stay current with the latest research and trends, among other applications, as well as a second app to help improve patient safety and communication during a shift change. “If you improve communication, you can improve patient care,” says Mr. Freeman.

Janet Mackin, EdD, RN, former Dean of the Phillips Beth Israel School of Nursing, was named the “Leadership” winner for her 14 years of service educating future nurses at the School of Nursing. Among her accomplishments: she established more flexible school hours to help those working full-time and led the school’s successful initiative to become a National League for Nursing Center of Excellence in Nursing Education.



▲ Team Award recipients include, front row, from left, Gayathri Sampath, MHA, MSN, RN; Ruby Lopez, BSN, RN; Brenda Gentile, BSN, RN; and Amy Albano, MBA, BSN, RN; with Natalie E. Herron, Account Manager, Recruitment and Talent Acquisition, *The New York Times*; and back row, from left: Fernando G. Rivera, MSN, RN; Francine Fakih, MA, BSN, RN; and Diana Gonsalves, RN; with Gibran Alvarado, Mount Sinai Recruitment Specialist in Nursing Talent Acquisition and Retention.



▲ Robert Freeman, MSN, RN-BC



▲ Janet Mackin, EdD, RN

› Transplant Surgeon Ron Shapiro, MD, Joins Mount Sinai *(continued from page 1)*

vulnerable to infections. I am thrilled to be collaborating with the fantastic transplant group already in place.”

Prior to returning to Mount Sinai, Dr. Shapiro served as Professor of Surgery and the Robert J. Corry Chair in Transplantation Surgery at the Thomas E. Starzl Transplantation Institute at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine.

“We are happy to welcome Dr. Ron Shapiro back to Mount Sinai to lead our kidney and pancreas transplantation program,” says Sander S. Florman, MD, Director of the Recanati/Miller Transplantation Institute

and the Charles Miller, MD, Professor of Surgery. “Dr. Shapiro is an internationally recognized expert and is currently the President of the International Pediatric Transplantation Association as well as the Editor-in-Chief of *Clinical Transplantation*.”

A leading surgeon with more than 30 years of experience in the field of transplantation, Dr. Shapiro obtained his medical degree from the Stanford University School of Medicine. He is board certified in Surgery with special expertise in Renal Transplant and Pancreas Transplantation. He conducted his clinical fellowship training at the University of

Pittsburgh under Thomas E. Starzl, MD, PhD, a pioneer in transplant surgery.

Dr. Shapiro is Vice President of the Transplantation Society and sits on the editorial boards of *Transplantation*, the *American Journal of Transplantation*, and *Pediatric Transplantation*. During his career, he has coauthored four books: *Atlas of Organ Transplantation*, *Renal Transplantation*, *Pancreatic Transplantation*, and *Living Donor Organ Transplantation*; published more than 380 articles and 65 book chapters; and has delivered more than 520 lectures.

Mount Sinai Receives STRIVE Award

The Mount Sinai Health System received the first Outstanding Employer Award from STRIVE (Support Training Results In Valuable Employees) on Tuesday, January 20, at the New York Yale Club, for its exceptional commitment to training and hiring graduates from the STRIVE program. The organization presents the award to employers who help individuals with high barriers to employment—such as recovering addicts, public assistance recipients, and the working poor—develop marketable skills and gain employment in living-wage jobs.

Says Philip Weinberg, STRIVE's President and Chief Executive Officer, "Mount Sinai is an incredible partner to STRIVE, allowing us to custom-build training to meet its hiring needs, providing meaningful internship opportunities to our young adults, and hiring our graduates into quality careers with good wages."



▲ Front row, from left: Jane Maksoud, Chief Human Resources Officer, Mount Sinai Health System; Linda Kilgore, Staffing Coordinator, The Mount Sinai Hospital; Jonathan Gohil, Senior Recruiter, Mount Sinai Health System; Rachael Ende, Senior Recruiter, Talent Acquisition and Retention, Mount Sinai Health System; Valerie Orellana, Senior Director, Talent Acquisition and Human Resources Operations, Mount Sinai Health System; Philip Weinberg; and Larry Jackson, Senior Director of Career Services, STRIVE. Back row, from left: John Winkleman, Trustee, Mount Sinai Health System; April Place, Junior Staffing Specialist, Mount Sinai Health System; Brad Beckstrom, Senior Director, Community and Government Affairs, Mount Sinai Health System; and Christian Bliss, Senior Recruiter, Mount Sinai Health System.

A Special Musical Performance for Staff

Mount Sinai Beth Israel Security Guard Will Parker, also a talented singer, actor, and composer, gave an informal vocal performance on Monday, February 2, at Mount Sinai Beth Israel Phillips Ambulatory Care Center. He sang a variety of tunes, including songs from Broadway musicals, jazz, spirituals, and a tribute to Nat King Cole. Joanne Loewy, DA, LCAT, MT-BC, Director, The Louis Armstrong Center for Music & Medicine, Mount Sinai Beth Israel, accompanied Mr. Parker on piano; and Andrew Rossetti, MMT, MT-BC, LCAT, Coordinator of Music Therapy, Radiation Oncology, Mount Sinai Beth Israel, backed him up on guitar. The event kicked off "Celebrating Black History Month" and was co-sponsored by Mount Sinai Beth Israel's Diversity Council and The Louis Armstrong Center for Music & Medicine.



▲ From left: Joanne Loewy, DA, LCAT, MT-BC; Andrew Rossetti, MMT, MT-BC, LCAT; and Will Parker entertain Mount Sinai Beth Israel staff.

› Researchers Identify Potential Ebola-Fighting Drugs *(continued from page 2)*

an instructor in the García-Sastre lab and a lead researcher in the study, compounds that have been identified as promising will require further testing before they can proceed to clinical trials in humans. They would also be used with other antiviral drugs to maximize potency. He says the researchers are planning to test the 400,000 compounds that comprise the NCATS' entire library of compounds to find even more Ebola-fighting candidates.

"NCATS is all about getting more treatments to more patients more quickly, and this is never more urgent than in the case of a public health emergency

"This remarkable team of scientists combined NCATS' expertise in drug screening and development with Mount Sinai's expertise in Ebola virology to rapidly identify candidate treatments for Ebola infection."

– Christopher P. Austin, MD

like Ebola," says Christopher P. Austin, MD, Director of the National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences. "This remarkable team of scientists combined NCATS' expertise in drug screening and development with Mount Sinai's expertise in Ebola virology to rapidly identify

candidate treatments for Ebola infection."

To date, more than 8,000 people in West Africa have died from the virus. The first large-scale trials of experimental Ebola vaccines from two U.S. drug companies recently began in Liberia.

Saluting a Career Devoted to Patient Care, Research, Education, and Advocacy

Kristjan T. Ragnarsson, MD, the Dr. Lucy G. Moses Professor and Chair of the Department of Rehabilitation Medicine for the Mount Sinai Health System, was recently honored by the American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation with its 2014 Frank H. Krusen, MD, Lifetime Achievement Award, its highest honor. The Academy saluted Dr. Ragnarsson's longtime commitment to patient care, research, education, and advocacy. The award was established in 1972 for Dr. Krusen, a founding father of the Academy and early developer of the Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation specialty.

"We are very proud of Dr. Ragnarsson and congratulate him for this outstanding honor," says Dennis S. Charney, MD, Anne and Joel Ehrenkranz Dean, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai and President for Academic Affairs, the Mount Sinai Health System. "He is recognized internationally for his commitment to the care of all patients with physical disabilities. Under his leadership, Mount Sinai has participated in groundbreaking clinical trials in physical and rehabilitation medicine, including technological advances for paralyzed individuals."

Dr. Ragnarsson has also testified before Congress, presented to federal commissions, and met with leaders of federal agencies to advocate for patients on behalf of the Academy and other physical medicine and rehabilitation organizations.

"I see this award as recognition for all of my colleagues in the Department of Rehabilitation Medicine at Mount Sinai—our physicians, nurses, therapists, and researchers," says Dr. Ragnarsson.



Gregory M. Worsowicz, MD, MBA, right, 2015 President-Elect of the American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, presents Kristjan T. Ragnarsson, MD, with the Academy's highest honor.

Enhancing Quality of Care and Reducing Costs Through a New Collaboration

The Mount Sinai Health System has entered into an agreement with Empire BlueCross BlueShield that is designed to enhance quality of care and help individuals maintain healthy habits, all while reducing the cost of care. Empire is the largest health insurer in New York State.

Under the innovative agreement, which became effective January 1, 2015, Mount Sinai will manage all aspects of care for Empire's 48,000 commercial and Medicare members who are attributed to the Health System. This includes coordinating all medical treatment, closely monitoring the patient between physician visits, and ensuring that appropriate follow-up care is received. Patients with chronic or complex conditions will receive individualized care plans tailored to their specific needs.

“It is a good partnership when provider and payer are both focused on improving health outcomes, streamlining care models, and driving down costs.”

– Kenneth L. Davis, MD

The agreement adopts an “accountable care” strategy that seeks to link provider reimbursements to overall quality of care and reductions in the total cost of care for a defined patient population. It is believed that such coordinated care will prevent costly duplicative services, and unnecessary emergency room visits and hospital admissions, and result in enhanced care overall.

“It is a good partnership when provider and payer are both focused on improving health outcomes, streamlining care models, and driving down costs,” says Kenneth L. Davis, MD, Chief Executive Officer and President, Mount Sinai Health System. “We are pleased to work with Empire BlueCross BlueShield to bring our expertise in primary care and population health management to bear in attaining these goals.”

EVENT

Sing for Hope

All are welcome to attend a performance by Sing for Hope, a nonprofit organization that presents world-class artists to hospital and community audiences through its Healing Arts Concert Series.

Tuesday, February 10

Noon

The Mount Sinai Hospital Campus
Guggenheim Pavilion
Seventh Floor Atrium

Brain Imaging Center Seminar

Jacob M. Hooker, PhD, Associate Professor, Radiology, Harvard Medical School, presents "A Tale of Two Radiotracers: Development and Use of Probes for Epigenetic Processes and Neural Density."

Tuesday, February 10

3 – 4 pm

The Mount Sinai Hospital Campus
Hess Center, Room 8-101

Grand Rounds / Radiology

Edward E. Conway Jr., MD, MS, Chair of Pediatrics, Mount Sinai Beth Israel, Mount Sinai Roosevelt, and Mount Sinai St. Luke's, presents "Nonaccidental Head Injury in Infants and Children."

Wednesday, February 11

4 – 5 pm

The Mount Sinai Hospital
Annenberg MC 330

Grand Rounds / Medicine

Christina Wyatt, MD, Associate Professor, Medicine (Nephrology), presents "HIV Kidney Disease: Update for the Internist."

Tuesday, February 17

8:30 – 9:30 am

The Mount Sinai Hospital Campus
Hatch Auditorium

Grand Rounds / Medicine

Nathan Goldstein, MD, Associate Professor of Medicine, presents "Palliative Care in Hospitals: Making the Case."

Tuesday, February 17

8:30 – 9:30 am

Mount Sinai Beth Israel
Podell Auditorium

"Food Fit for Life" Teaches Healthy Eating Habits

The Mount Sinai Hospital's Wellness Initiative and the Department of Clinical Nutrition present the second round of Food Fit for Life, a free course on weight loss and healthy eating. The program, which began on Tuesday, January 20, will continue every Tuesday through April 7.



Two inpatient dietitians, Daniela Neman, RD, CSO, CDN, and Melissa Nagelberg, MS, RD, will educate attendees on how to lose weight and enjoy healthy food. For more information, email Daniela.Neman@mountsinai.org or Melissa.Nagelberg@mountsinai.org.

Tuesdays, through April 7

Noon

The Mount Sinai Hospital Campus
Annenberg Room 12-60

ANNOUNCEMENT

"Mount Sinai Mile" Indoor Walking Route

Mount Sinai Heart and the Wellness Initiative have mapped a one-mile indoor walking route through The Mount Sinai Hospital campus to help staff meet their physical activity goals. "Mount Sinai Mile" signs are posted along the route. Walk individually, or with colleagues, and even consider hosting a walking meeting. The route starts and finishes at the Annenberg building, Madison Avenue entrance, MC level. To learn more, email Abby Schwartz, MBA, BSN, RN, at Abby.Schwartz@mountsinai.org.



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