



**Mount  
Sinai**

# inside

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## Mount Sinai Specialties Rank Among the Best Nationally

Eight specialties within the Mount Sinai Health System were ranked among the top 25 in the nation, according to the 2015-2016 *U.S. News & World Report* Best Hospitals rankings, released in July. The specialties included seven at The Mount Sinai Hospital: Cardiology/Heart Surgery; Diabetes/Endocrinology; Ear, Nose & Throat (ENT); Gastroenterology/GI Surgery; Geriatrics; Nephrology; Neurology/Neurosurgery; and the Department of Ophthalmology at New York Eye and Ear Infirmary of Mount Sinai.

Among the top 25, four specialties moved higher in the rankings between 2014 and 2015, led by Cardiology/Heart Surgery, which now stands at No. 7, up from No. 10; Gastroenterology/GI Surgery at No. 8, up from No. 9; Neurology/Neurosurgery at No. 14, up from No. 15; and Nephrology, which moved up to No. 23 from No. 47.

Both the Department of Urology at The Mount Sinai Hospital and the Department of Otolaryngology at New York Eye and Ear Infirmary of Mount Sinai also ranked higher in 2015, at No. 26 and No. 42, respectively. Mount Sinai's Geriatrics department stands at No. 3.

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Ranking by Specialty	2015
<b>The Mount Sinai Hospital</b>	
Geriatrics	3
Cardiology/Heart Surgery	7
Gastroenterology/GI Surgery	8
Neurology/Neurosurgery	14
Diabetes/Endocrinology	21
Nephrology	23
Ear, Nose & Throat (ENT)	23
<b>New York Eye and Ear Infirmary of Mount Sinai</b>	
Ophthalmology	11

## Researchers Identify Key Protein in Melanoma Growth



Emily Bernstein, PhD

A protein that promotes abnormal growth in melanoma cells has been identified for the first time by a team of researchers led by Emily Bernstein, PhD, Associate Professor of Oncological Sciences, and Dermatology, at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai.

The novel discovery that the H2A.Z.2 protein is highly expressed in melanoma, appears to turn on the cell cycle, and makes melanoma cells grow faster, could also lead to therapeutic strategies that serve to inhibit cell proliferation. The results of Dr. Bernstein's study were published in the July 2, 2015, issue of *Molecular Cell*.

The incidence of malignant melanoma, the most lethal form of skin cancer, has been rising steadily over the past 30 years, with roughly 73,870 new cases diagnosed annually in the United States, according

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## › Mount Sinai Specialties Rank Among the Best Nationally *(continued from page 1)*

“The *U.S. News* rankings exemplify Mount Sinai’s ongoing commitment to practicing innovative medicine and providing excellent, patient-centered care,” says Kenneth L. Davis, MD, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Mount Sinai Health System. “Our physicians, researchers, and medical staff provide world-class care to our patients throughout their lives.”

Five specialties at The Mount Sinai Hospital and one at Mount Sinai Beth Israel were also ranked by *U.S. News* as “high performing,” including Gynecology, Orthopaedics, Psychiatry, Pulmonology, and Rehabilitation at The Mount Sinai Hospital, and Neurology/Neurosurgery at Mount Sinai Beth Israel.

“Ranking seventh nationally for cardiology and heart surgery demonstrates that Mount Sinai is on the leading edge in both the diagnosis and treatment of cardiovascular diseases,” says Valentin Fuster, MD, PhD, Director of Mount Sinai Heart and Physician-in-Chief of The Mount Sinai Hospital.

David H. Adams, MD, Chair of Cardiovascular Surgery at Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai and Cardiac Surgeon-in-Chief at the Mount Sinai Health System, says, “We now rank above a majority of the best-known heart centers in the nation, and this achievement

is only possible due to the extraordinary dedication of our cardiovascular team to provide the highest quality of care to each and every patient.”

Mount Sinai Heart opened its 20,700-square-foot Lauder Family Cardiovascular Ambulatory Center in May. With a team of more than 50 cardiologists and vascular specialists, fellows, nurses, and clinical support staff, the expansive Center, located on The Mount Sinai Hospital campus, will treat approximately 300 heart and vascular outpatients per day.

In addition, Mount Sinai’s digestive disease specialists—including gastroenterologists, surgeons, pathologists, nurses, researchers, and nutritionists—now provide personalized treatments and comprehensive care at the newly opened Susan and Leonard Feinstein Inflammatory Bowel Disease Clinical Center on The Mount Sinai Hospital campus. (See related story on page 3).

Mount Sinai continues to make advances and provide comprehensive care in Neurology and Neurosurgery. These specialties include endoscopic skull base surgery, treatment of pituitary disorders, minimally invasive treatment of spinal tumors, and treatments for cognitive neurology, multiple sclerosis, vestibular

disorders, headache and pain medicine, stroke, epilepsy, neuro-oncology, movement disorders, neuromuscular disorders, and general neurology.

Mount Sinai’s neurosurgeons have been pioneers in such procedures as WEB Embolization and stem-cell transplant for spinal cord injury. Mount Sinai’s Stroke Center—the first Joint Commission-certified comprehensive stroke center in New York State—has received high marks for its rapid response to complex stroke patients, its community outreach and education, and for providing the most advanced neuro-endovascular service in the region.

The Division of Nephrology provides a broad range of care in general nephrology, hypertension, dialysis, and kidney transplantation. The Division’s peritoneal dialysis program grew by more than 30 percent this year. In addition, the Division opened a new hemodialysis unit in Manhattan and initiated a home hemodialysis program. Clinical outcomes—in terms of infection rates, patient mortality, and the incidence of peritonitis—are among the best in the nation. And the Division’s National Institutes of Health funding, in excess of \$10 million, is among the nation’s highest.

## › Researchers Identify Key Protein in Melanoma Growth *(continued from page 1)*

to the American Cancer Society. While significant advances have been made in immune and targeted therapies in recent years, distinct subsets of patients either do not respond to these treatments or develop resistance over time.

“Ours was the first study to show that H2A.Z.2 drives melanoma progression by affecting chromatin structure and to identify a specific role for H2A.Z.2 in any tumor type,” says Dr. Bernstein. “The next step would be gaining a better understanding of how to prevent H2A.Z.2 from functioning in chromatin.” Chromatin is a mass of genetic material that packages DNA and proteins to fit inside the cell nucleus.

An emerging theory in cancer research is that abnormal cell growth may result not only from mutations in patients’ genes, but also from epigenetic mechanisms, a complex level of gene regulation. Dr. Bernstein’s focus on epigenetics examines histone proteins that package DNA and the factors that influence them as they switch genes on and off.

“There’s a whole world out there that is unknown with regard to the complexity of how normal cells transform and how DNA is packaged and regulated,” says Dr. Bernstein. Her research team found that patients who had higher levels of H2A.Z.2 had worse prognoses than those who did not.

The most promising discovery was that removing H2A.Z.2 from melanoma cells made them more sensitive to chemotherapy and the targeted therapies that focus on genetic mutations. In theory, the new finding could lead to clinical trials that would combine the use of chemotherapy or targeted therapies with a method of depleting a patient’s levels of H2A.Z.2.

Researchers from New York University Langone Medical Center, Ludwig-Maximilians University in Germany, and the Max-Planck Institute of Biochemistry in Germany also collaborated on the study.

# Around the Health System

## Celebrating Cancer Survivors

Singer and musician Johannes Schwaiger—who lost his voice after radiation treatment for throat and neck cancer but regained it following treatment at Mount Sinai Beth Israel—entertained more than 200 guests at Mount Sinai’s annual National Cancer Survivors Day® luncheon, held recently at Mount Sinai Beth Israel Phillips Ambulatory Care Center. Among the attendees were cancer survivors, their families and friends, and Mount Sinai faculty and staff. Charles L. Shapiro, MD, Professor of Medicine, Co-Director of the Dubin Breast Center at The Mount Sinai Hospital, Director of Translational Breast Cancer Research, and Director of Cancer Survivorship, Tisch Cancer Institute, delivered the keynote address. “More cancer survivors will experience cures, mainly due to screening, early detection, and improved treatments and supportive care,” Dr. Shapiro says. “Sometimes treatment causes long-term side effects that can affect survivors’ quality of life, so we need to prevent or treat them effectively.”



▲ From left: Johannes Schwaiger, cancer survivor; Elizabethanne Spiotta, Chaplain Intern, Mount Sinai Beth Israel; Gabriel Sara, MD, Medical Director, Infusion Suite, Mount Sinai Roosevelt; Charles Shapiro, MD; Linda Bailey-Walker, cancer survivor; Frances Cartwright, PhD, RN-BC, AOCN, Vice President of Nursing and Clinical Quality for Oncology Services, Mount Sinai Health System; Alison Snow, PhD, LCSW-R, OSW-C, Social Work Coordinator, Cancer Supportive Services, Mount Sinai Beth Israel; and Jeremy Winell, MD, Director of Cancer Supportive Services, Mount Sinai Beth Israel

## Wall Street Run and Heart Walk

More than 300 Mount Sinai Health System physicians, nurses, and staff laced up their sneakers to participate in the recent American Heart Association’s (AHA) three-mile Wall Street Run and Heart Walk. Team members raised \$52,000 to help the AHA advance its cardiovascular research. They wore pink and black T-shirts designed by Jonathan P. Kyriacou, a Director of Hospital Operations, who won the “Best T-shirt” contest initiated by Lisa Allen, Administrative Director, Cardiology, Mount Sinai Beth Israel.



# The Susan and Leonard Feinstein Inflammatory Bowel Disease Clinical Center Opens

The Mount Sinai Hospital recently opened the Susan and Leonard Feinstein Inflammatory Bowel Disease Clinical Center at 17 East 102nd Street, a facility created to provide comprehensive care in one location for pediatric and adult patients. Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) is a general classification of conditions that cause inflammation of the intestines. An estimated 1.4 million people in the United States have Crohn’s disease and ulcerative colitis.

The new Center will offer patients personalized treatments, new disease management strategies, and more opportunities to participate in clinical trials. A team of gastroenterologists, surgeons, pathologists, nurses, social workers, researchers, nutritionists, and other allied health professionals will coordinate care.

“Our digestive disease specialists have been at the forefront of research and treatment of these chronic conditions, and we are proud to have them continue their innovative work in this unique Center,” says Kenneth L. Davis, MD, President and Chief Executive Officer, Mount Sinai Health System. “We are grateful to our donors who have made this possible.”

Mount Sinai’s leadership in this specialty was established in the 1930s, when Burrill B. Crohn, MD, a Mount Sinai physician, and his colleagues Leon Ginzburg, MD, and Gordon Oppenheimer, MD, were the first to describe Crohn’s disease.

“Mount Sinai’s IBD team has always worked together to improve our understanding of these diseases,” says Bruce Sands, MD, Dr. Burrill B. Crohn Professor of Medicine and Chief of the Dr. Henry D. Janowitz Division of Gastroenterology. “This new Center will facilitate collaboration and help us to identify better treatment plans for patients and further our research in this area.”

Jean-Frédéric Colombel, MD, and Marla C. Dubinsky, MD, have been named co-directors of the Susan and Leonard Feinstein Inflammatory Bowel Disease Clinical Center. Dr. Colombel, a preeminent IBD researcher, is Professor of Medicine and Director of The Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust Inflammatory Bowel Disease Center at Mount Sinai. Dr. Dubinsky is Professor of Pediatrics, and Chief of Pediatric Gastroenterology and Hepatology, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai.

## Marching in the 2015 Pride Parade

More than 50 Mount Sinai Health System employees and their families and friends, led by Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai students Kyle Riley and Dudley Charles as parade co-captains, marched together during the 46th Annual New York City Pride Parade on Sunday, June 28. The Mount Sinai Health System walkers entered Fifth Avenue early in the parade and marched approximately three miles downtown to Washington Square and Christopher Street. A Mount Sinai St. Luke’s ambulance decorated with rainbow flags followed the group. Staff and volunteers from Mount Sinai’s Institute for Advanced Medicine also hosted booths at PrideFest, a Pride Day street festival in the West Village, distributing information about the many health services the Health System provides to the LGBT community.



## Annual Resident Research Fair

The Office of Graduate Medical Education at Mount Sinai St. Luke’s and Mount Sinai Roosevelt recently held its ninth Annual Resident Research Fair. Five judges reviewed 61 abstracts and three residents received a certificate and prize. The winning abstracts were: “Radial vs. Femoral Access in Acute Coronary Syndrome: Decrease in Mortality, Major Adverse Cardiac Events and Bleeding—An Update Meta-analysis of Randomized Controlled Trials,” presented by Abel Casso-Dominguez, MD; “Review of Ascites and Spontaneous Bacterial Peritonitis (SBP) Diagnosis and Treatment for Cirrhotic Patients at MSSLR—A Follow Up,” by Vijay Dalapathi, MD; and “Randomized Controlled Trial of Insulin Detemir vs. Insulin NPH for the Treatment of Pregnant Women with Gestational Diabetes and Type 2 Diabetes,” by Kimberly Herrera, MD.



▲ Research Fair winners Vijay Dalapathi, MD, center, and Abel Casso-Dominguez, MD, right, with Jean Abed, MD, Attending Physician, Internal Medicine, Mount Sinai St. Luke’s, who served as a poster judge.



◀ From left: Marla C. Dubinsky, MD; Bruce Sands, MD; Kenneth L. Davis, MD; Jean-Frédéric Colombel, MD; Susan Feinstein; Leonard Feinstein; James Marion, MD, Professor of Medicine (Gastroenterology), and the Center’s Director of Education and Outreach; and Daniel Present, MD, former Professor of Clinical Medicine, and a longtime mentor to several physicians in the IBD Center.

# Examining the Impact of Hospice Care on Family Members

Surviving spouses of patients who received hospice care for three or more days more frequently reported reduced depressive symptoms after the patient's death compared to spouses of patients who did not receive hospice, according to a study by Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai researchers. The findings were published recently in *JAMA Internal Medicine*.

Hospice services, which are offered to terminally ill patients, are focused on providing quality-of-life care that may include medical services, symptom management, and spiritual counseling to the patient, as well as bereavement and other counseling services for family members.

This was the first time a national study examined the impact of hospice on patients and their spouses in the setting of a variety of terminal illnesses—not only cancer, as in prior studies—and used data linked to Medicare claims for hospice services to counter recall bias. Hospice care is a standard benefit covered by Medicare and all major health insurers in the United States.

Specifically, researchers analyzed data from 1,016 deceased patients, and their surviving spouses who participated in surveys over a period of years, to assess common depressive symptoms. The surveys were conducted in the



From left: Investigators Amy Kelley, MD; Melissa Garrido, PhD, Assistant Professor, Geriatrics and Palliative Medicine; Diane E. Meier, MD; and Katherine Ornstein, PhD

years before the death of the patient, through bereavement, and up to two years after.

While researchers found that depressive symptoms increased for the majority of surviving spouses immediately following the death of their loved ones, 28 percent of the surviving spouses of hospice users had fewer symptoms of depression, compared to 22 percent of the spouses of non-hospice users.

The researchers say that while the study was not able to determine which specific aspects of hospice care are associated with the observed improvements, they are encouraged by their conclusions, noting that hospice care has increased by 21 percent in the United States in the last decade.

“The expansion of hospice use in recent years to many patients beyond those with cancer makes the study more timely than ever,” says Katherine Ornstein, PhD, Assistant Professor, Geriatrics and Palliative Medicine, and the study's lead author. “While previous studies in the cancer population have demonstrated the benefits of hospice for patients and their families, our work shows benefits of hospice for families of patients with all types of serious illness, including dementia and congestive heart failure.”

Based on their findings, the investigators believe families could benefit from earlier supportive interventions. “Additional support is needed for families and caregivers throughout the often long course of serious illness,” says Amy Kelley, MD, Associate Professor, Geriatrics and Palliative Medicine, and senior author of the study.

Adds Diane E. Meier, MD, Director of Mount Sinai's Center to Advance Palliative Care, and Co-Director of The Patty and Jay Baker National Palliative Care Center: “We need to formalize the process of assessing the needs of family members and caregivers across a wide range of palliative care and clinical settings. We need to recognize that we cannot take care of the patient without taking good care of the family.”

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## Mount Sinai Physicians Named as 2015 “Best Doctors”

A total of 241 physicians from the Mount Sinai Health System's seven hospital campuses and an additional 34 physicians from Mount Sinai's affiliated hospitals were represented in *New York* magazine's recently released list of “Best Doctors in New York.” The 275 physicians represented 21 percent of the overall 1,282 area doctors on the 2015 list, available online and in the June 8-14, 2015, print edition. The list covers physicians from throughout the New York metropolitan region, including Connecticut and New Jersey.

Mount Sinai Health System physicians are listed in all specialties reviewed in the magazine, including medical oncology, orthopaedic surgery, endocrinology and diabetes, neurological surgery and neurology, and cardiovascular disease and interventional cardiology.

“Mount Sinai's innovative research and world-class clinical care

have attracted the best of the best,” says Kenneth L. Davis, MD, President and Chief Executive Officer, Mount Sinai Health System.

In total, 168 physicians were on the list at The Mount Sinai Hospital and Mount Sinai Queens. Additionally, there were 35 physicians from Mount Sinai Beth Israel; 22 from Mount Sinai Roosevelt; 11 from New York Eye and Ear Infirmary of Mount Sinai; 4 from Mount Sinai St. Luke's; and 1 from Mount Sinai Brooklyn. Within the hospitals' departments of medicine, 37 full-time faculty and voluntary physicians in 13 specialties made the list.

Castle Connolly Medical Ltd., a New York City research firm, bases its rankings on a regional peer-review survey that asks physicians to nominate their colleagues. The top 10 percent of the region's physicians are listed in Castle Connolly's annual guidebook, *Top Doctors: New York Metro Area*. For the past 18 years, *New York* magazine has published a shorter version of Castle Connolly's list.

## EVENT

### Intensive Review in Gastroenterology/Hepatology

This activity will serve as an update on the latest diagnostic and therapeutic issues in gastroenterology and hepatology for physicians, trainees, and allied health professionals. To learn more, visit: [www.icahn.mssm.edu/cme/courses](http://www.icahn.mssm.edu/cme/courses).

Thursday, August 13 – Saturday, August 15  
7:30 am – 5 pm  
The Mount Sinai Hospital Campus  
Goldwurm Auditorium

### The 2nd Annual Colon and Rectal CME: Treatment and Preventative Care of the Human Papillomavirus

The cervical Papanicolaou test (pap test) has long been accepted as a method of detecting human papillomavirus (HPV) and preventing cervical cancers. This course plans to inform and raise awareness among physicians on HPV and the cancers it can cause, and discuss HPV screening and how it relates to cervical, oropharyngeal, and anal cancer. Go to [www.mssm.edu/cme/courses](http://www.mssm.edu/cme/courses) to register.

*Sponsored by the Division of Colon and Rectal Surgery. Course Director, Alex Jenny Ky, MD, FACS; Course Co-Director, Randolph M. Steinhagen, MD, FACS*

Friday, September 18  
8:30 am - 4 pm  
The Mount Sinai Hospital Campus  
Hatch Auditorium

## ANNOUNCEMENT

### A New Name: Mount Sinai Brooklyn

Mount Sinai Beth Israel Brooklyn is now known as Mount Sinai Brooklyn, part of an overall Mount Sinai Health System effort to establish a concise, community-oriented identity for all hospital campuses. The new name will be phased in over time. The Mount Sinai Brand Center, [www.mountsinaibrandcenter.org](http://www.mountsinaibrandcenter.org), now includes updated logo files and file templates. New signage will occur in phases over the coming months. The hospital, located in the Midwood section, is noted for exemplary care in specialties such as cardiology, general surgery, gynecology, orthopaedics, and geriatrics, and its Emergency Department serves as an important resource for the community.



## Courtside at the US Open

The Mount Sinai Hospital continues to serve as the official hospital of the United States Tennis Association (USTA), US Open, US Davis Cup team, and the US Fed Cup team. Stop by the Mount Sinai Health System booth during the 2015 US Open, Saturday, August 29 – Sunday, September 13, where volunteers will distribute sunscreen, as well as information on skin cancer prevention to event patrons. Mount Sinai physicians will also be interviewed onsite by USTA host Mara Montalbano for their expertise on a variety of sports-related health topics. Videos of those interviews will be available on Mount Sinai's YouTube channel and the USTA website. To learn more about the ongoing USTA Mount Sinai Partnership, visit: [www.mountsinaihealth.org/usopen](http://www.mountsinaihealth.org/usopen).



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