I am delighted to update you on the following exciting developments at the division of gastroenterology at Penn Medicine:

RAJENDER REDDY, MD, director of hepatology, medical director of liver transplantation and director of the Penn Center for Viral Hepatitis, is a co-investigator and co-author of landmark papers in the New England Journal of Medicine that appeared this year on new therapies—Telaprevir and Boceprevir—that are now available to patients with hepatitis C at Penn. Dr. Reddy is a recipient of the Louis Durling award for excellence as a clinical specialist, Penn’s top honor for subspecialty medicine.

GARY WU, MD, and JAMES LEWIS, MD, of the division of gastroenterology, in collaboration with FREDERICK D. BUSHMAN, PhD, of the department of microbiology at Penn collectively found that long-term dietary patterns influence gut bacterial composition and could affect patients with Crohn’s disease. Their findings were published in the September 1, 2011, edition of Science.3

Their work related to the potential discovery of the etiology for biliary disease, a childhood disorder affecting the ducts within the liver.

References

Rebecca G. Wells, MD, and Michael A. Pack, MD, will be funded by the NIH for work related to the potential discovery of the etiology for biliary disease, a childhood disorder affecting the ducts within the liver.

Profiles in gastroenterology

A New Generation Joins the Faculty at Penn Gastroenterology

Welcome to the Fall edition of the Penn Gastroenterology newsletter. This issue contains two reports that together reflect the breadth of the GI program at Penn. The first offers brief profiles of recent additions to the division faculty—and evidence of the increasing presence of women in gastroenterology. At Penn Gastroenterology, almost 30 percent of the faculty are women; of recent additions, more than half are women. The second report features advances in enteral feeding, an often unappreciated, but vital factor of patient outcomes in which gastroenterologists play a central and critical role.

Anil K. Rustgi, MD, Chief, Division of Gastroenterology

Vinay Chandrasekhar, MD, completed a fellowship at the University of Pennsylvania in advanced therapeutic endoscopy after finishing a clinical fellowship in gastroenterology and hepatology at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. Dr. Chandrasekhar’s clinical interests include gastrointestinal oncology, gastrointestinal stromal tumors, pancreatic cancer and neuroendocrine tumors. He is board certified in internal medicine and gastroenterology and is a member of the American Gastroenterological Association (AGA), the American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy (ASGE) and the American College of Gastroenterology (ACG).

Rotonya McCants Carr, MD, graduated from Cornell University Medical College, completed her internal medicine residency at Massachusetts General Hospital and completed a fellowship in gastroenterology and hepatology at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, where she was a recipient of the division of gastroenterology’s Frank Brooks Research Award. Dr. Carr serves on the Basic Research Committee of the American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases. At Penn, she is currently involved in translational and basic science research focusing on the role of lipid droplet proteins in non-alcoholic and alcoholic fatty liver disease and the causes of insulin resistance in fatty liver disease.
Octavia Pickett-Blakely, MD, MHS, and Gregory Ginsberg, MD, of the division of Gastroenterology are incorporating a variety of new techniques and devices to improve enteral feeding procedures at Penn.

Dr. Ginsberg specializes in gastroenterology at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania. He completed an internal medicine/pediatrics internship at the University of California, San Francisco, where he was concurrently a graduate of the University of Sheffi eld Medical School. She completed a clinical fellowship in gastroenterology at the University of Pennsylvania. A recipient of the Frank Brooks Research Award, Ginsberg supports is typically accomplished via nasoenteric feeding. Enteral nutrition can assume many forms. Short-term nutritional support is typically accomplished via nasoenteric feeding tubes (NETs). Longer-term feeding arrangements generally involve percutaneous endoscopic gastrostomy (PEG) tubes or direct-percutaneous endoscopic jejunal (DPEJ) tubes, a specialty of gastroenterologists at Penn Medicine. Used when the proximal-most portion of the digestive tract must be bypassed and feeding must be delivered beyond the ligament of Treitz, the DPEJ technique is technically challenging, Ginsberg says.

“We’ve worked to develop tools and techniques to best ensure success in selected patients. In preclinical work, for example, we incorporate magnetic attraction forces to help localize and transiently fi x the small intestine to the anterior abdominal wall to facilitate the placement of DPEJ tubes.”

Appropriate indications for the DPEJ procedure include post-operative anatomy, pancreatitis and entero-respiratory refl ux.

Low-profi le PEG Button Tubes Improve Enteral Feedings for Young Patients

Penn gastroenterologists have recently introduced low-profi le percutaneous endoscopic gastrostomy (PEG) button tubes designed for single-step application in young patients and those with pre-existing tubes.

“The concern with conventional PEG tubes is that they can come loose as a result of forces placed on the exterior tubing,” says Octavia Pickett-Blakely, MD, MHS. “The button design places the bolster at the abdominal wall, which decreases the risk of pull-out and irritation at the wound site in young, active patients.”

Dr. Ginsberg demonstrates a low-profi le percutaneous endoscopic gastrostomy (PEG) button tube designed for G-tube replacement.