New Aortic Center at Jefferson Provides Most Advanced Technologies for Treatment of Aortic Aneurysms

Thomas Jefferson University Hospital has opened a new center that will provide patients access to the most advanced technologies available in the treatment of aortic aneurysms and dissections.

The Aortic Center at Jefferson is a multidisciplinary team of surgical and medical specialists focused on preoperative and postoperative care, making for a strong blend of surgical expertise, technology and quality bedside care.

“Our goal is to use a multi-skill approach to providing comprehensive care for aortic problems,” said Joseph Lombardi, MD, director of the new center and chief of Vascular Surgery at the Methodist Hospital Division of Jefferson University Hospital.

Thoracic aortic aneurysms (TAAs), which are diagnosed in more than 20,000 patients in the United States annually, occur when a section of the aorta, the body’s main circulatory vessel, weakens and bulges outward like a balloon in the section of the artery that runs through the chest.

“Should the aneurysm grow to the point where it ruptures, the patient would be at high risk for rapid death due to internal bleeding,” said Dr. Lombardi.

The Aortic Center at Jefferson offers treatment of:
- Aortic dissections
- Abdominal aortic aneurysms
- Thoracic aortic aneurysms
- Ascending aortic aneurysms
- Descending thoracic aneurysms
- Iliac aneurysms
- Pseudoaneurysms of the aorta
- Visceral aneurysms

Clinical studies are currently being conducted at Jefferson that focus on aortic aneurysms of the chest, aortic dissection and other complicated aneurysms. Given that patients with these problems are generally 65 and older, these trials focus on minimally invasive techniques that allow aortic reconstruction from within the arteries.

Patients diagnosed with TAA traditionally have had to undergo a highly invasive procedure where a surgeon opens the chest cavity, stops blood flow through the aorta and sews a new surgical graft to replace the aneurysm. Such open surgical procedures carry high health risks for many older patients, who may also suffer from other medical conditions such as diabetes or hypertension.

When a patient requires open surgery, Jefferson specialists in vascular surgery, cardiothoracic surgery and cardiology are uniquely involved to ensure a comprehensive and coordinated plan of care is delivered.

For information or to make an appointment with a physician at the Aortic Center at Jefferson, call 1-800 JEFF-NOW.

Todd J. Albert, MD, Appointed New Chair of Orthopaedic Surgery

Thomas J. Lewis, President and CEO, Thomas Jefferson University Hospitals, and Thomas J. Nasca, MD, MACP, Senior Vice President, Academic Affairs, Thomas Jefferson University, and Dean, Jefferson Medical College, have made the following announcement:

“We are pleased to announce that Todd J. Albert, MD, has been appointed as the James Edwards Professor and Chair of the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery at Jefferson Medical College of Thomas Jefferson University and Thomas Jefferson University Hospital.

He will assume his new position and title from renowned orthopaedic surgeon and field pioneer Richard H. Rothman, MD. Though Dr. Rothman will retire as Chair, he will continue fully his academic and clinical pursuits within the department.

Dr. Albert’s standing as a top clinician, researcher and teacher, coupled with his enthusiasm, vision, and demonstrated leadership capabilities, will add to Jefferson’s distinguished reputation as one of the finest institutions for orthopaedic care and musculoskeletal research in the United States.

One of America’s Top Doctors’ in 2006 Named one of “America’s Top Doctors” for Orthopaedics in 2006 by Castle Connelly and selected numerous times as a “Top Doc” by Philadelphia magazine, Dr. Albert is also a Professor of Neurological Surgery at Jefferson Medical College and serves as Co-director of both the Reconstructive Spine Service and the Spine Fellowship Program at Jefferson Hospital. He also serves as President of the Rothman Institute.

Dr. Albert has been a member of the Jefferson faculty since 1993.

Specializing in Spine Disorders

Specializing in disorders of the spine, Dr. Albert’s clinical research interests focus on cervical and reconstructive spine surgery. Currently, he is involved in NIH-funded basic research investigating stem cell regeneration of the disc, while also serving as a co-principal investigator in the five-year, $15 million, NIH-funded National Spine Patient Outcomes Research Trial (SPORT), which compares the clinical outcomes of lumbar spine patients.

Dr. Albert has presented his research nationally and internationally and is the author of over 200 original papers and abstracts, 80 book chapters and five books. He serves on the editorial boards for the medical journal Spine, the Journal of Spinal Disorders and Techniques, The Spine Journal, Orthopaedic Technology Review, and SpineUniverse.com.

Please join us in extending both your warmest thanks to Dr. Rothman for all of his passion and excellence over the years, and a warm welcome to Dr. Albert in his new position.

Come to Kimmel Cancer Center at Jefferson and Jefferson Cancer Network’s 8th Annual Symposium February 23

Come to the Kimmel Cancer Center at Jefferson and Jefferson Cancer Network’s 8th Annual Symposium:
“A Scientific and Clinical Update on Breast Cancer.”

The Symposium will be held on Friday, February 23, 8 a.m. to 5:15 p.m. in Bluemle Life Sciences Building, Connelly Conference Room 101. REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED!

To view the program agenda and to register online, please visit www.kimmelcancercenter.org/symposium.

Jefferson Medical College designates this educational activity for a maximum of 7 AMA PRA Category Credit™. Physicians should only claim credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

Keep Jeff ‘Number One’ – For 19th Straight Year – In Daffodil Days’ Fight Against Cancer

Last year, Jefferson exceeded all expectations and remained Number One in “Daffodil Days” sales in Philadelphia County for the 18th year.

“We have consistently increased our sales from year to year” says Dorothy Wyszynski of the Kimmel Cancer Center (KCC) at Jefferson.

“Thanks to the efforts and continued support of all coordinators who work hard and the employees who generously place orders, we will continue to succeed in reaching our goal – to remain #1 for 19 straight years. The response of volunteers continues to amaze me and we welcome all the help we can get.”

For 34 years the American Cancer Society has sponsored “Daffodil Days” to provide funds to fight cancer, and in 2006 raised more than $42 million nationally to support ACS programs and services. Richard G. Pestell, MD, PhD, the KCC Director, wholeheartedly supports our efforts and wishes us another successful campaign.

Jefferson Again A Top Seller

In 2006, more than $75,000 was raised in Philadelphia County alone. With more than 200 companies and organizations taking part, Jefferson’s increased sales of $16,174 accounted for more than 20 percent of funds raised. Among the top sellers: the Kimmel Cancer Center at Jefferson, Cardiac Catherization Unit, Radiation Oncology and Medical Oncology.

Order deadline is Friday, February 9, 2007 with anticipated delivery of flowers on Wednesday, March 21, 2007. A bunch of ten flowers is $8 and the pofted 3-bulb plants are $10. We welcome $20 contributions to the “Gift of Hope” to send daffodils to patients at KCC. Last year our patient area was overwhelmed with golden flowers.

Go to www.kimmelcancercenter.org/daffodil for a list of coordinators and order forms, call 215-503-6885 or email D.Wyzynski@mail.jci.tju.edu.
Olive Oil Emulsion Eases Insertion of Coronary Stents into Problem Arteries

An emulsion of olive oil, egg yolk and glycerin might keep heart patients away from the operating room and cardiac bypass surgery, according to a study led by Michael Savage, MD, Director, Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory at Jefferson Hospital.

The results were published in the journal Catheterization and Cardiovascular Interventions.

A small number of patients have arteries that cannot be stented because of anatomic obstacles. In such cases, the lubrication RotaGlide, which was originally designed to reduce catheter friction during other cardiovascular procedures, is a safe, simple and effective aid for stent delivery, the researchers found.

Scientists Find Guardian Gene’s Choices Crucial to Stopping Cancer Process

Scientists at the Kimmel Cancer Center (KCC) at Jefferson have uncovered a novel pathway by which the anti-cancer gene p53 springs into action, protecting a damaged cell from becoming cancerous.

The gene can either halt the cell’s growth or send it spiraling toward certain death.

How this choice is made, the researchers say, could have implications for future strategies in chemotherapy drug development. The scientists, led by Steven McMahon, PhD, Associate Professor of Cancer Biology at Jefferson Medical College, reported their findings in the journal Molecular Cell.

Jefferson Researchers Uncover New Way Nature Turns Genes On and Off

Peering deep within the cells of fruit flies, developmental biologists at the Kimmel Cancer Center (KCC) at Jefferson may have discovered a new way that genes are turned on and off during development.

If they’re right, and the same processes are at work in higher organisms, including mammals, the findings could eventually have implications for improving the understanding of a range of diseases, including childhood cancer.

The researchers, including Alexander Mazo, PhD, Professor of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, Jefferson Medical College, and Svetlana Petruk, PhD, a research associate in that department, reported their findings in the journal Cell.

Natural, Soy-Based Substance Might Help Fight MS

A natural substance made from soy appears to have amazing restorative powers when given to animals with a multiple sclerosis-like disease.

Neurologists at Jefferson Medical College (JMC) found that giving doses of a substance called Bowmann-Birk Inhibitor Concentrate dramatically improved animals’ ability to move and walk.

Reporting in the journal Multiple Sclerosis, the scientists, led by A. M. Rostami, MD, PhD, Professor and Chair of the Department of Neurology at JMC and the Jefferson Hospital for Neuroscience, say the treatment’s effects may be useful in conjunction with more mainstream therapies.

Protein Shows Promise for Spinal Cord Injury Patients

A study of a protein applied to the spinal cord for totally paralyzed patients during surgery shows some promise for spinal cord injury patients, with some regaining partial movement.

A one-year clinical study of Cethrin®, performed by neurosurgeons at Jefferson Hospital and other medical centers in the United States and Canada, indicated positive interim results for the treatment of acute spinal cord injury (SCI). The study was designed to determine if the protein was safe and well tolerated by SCI patients. James Harrop, MD, Assistant Professor of Neurology, Jefferson Medical College, is the study’s primary investigator at Jefferson.

Swati Rattan, DVM, Awarded $1.6 Million to Study Mechanisms of Gastrointestinal Disorders

Gastroenterology researcher Swati Rattan, DVM, Professor of Medicine, Jefferson Medical College, has been awarded $1.6 million from the National Institutes of Health to study the molecular mechanisms involved in maintaining smooth muscle tone of the internal anal sphincter (IAS), which is crucial for normal bowel functioning.

In research over the past 20 years, Dr. Rattan, who is in the Division of Gastroenterology and Hepatology in the Department of Medicine, has found that IAS basal tone owes much to the distinct characteristics of smooth muscle in this region. He and his co-workers also found that nitric oxide is the major neurotransmitter for IAS relaxation, which again is critical for a normal bowel. The work has had implications for therapies for a variety of gastrointestinal disorders.

Meet Nutrition and Dietetics Employees Working in Atrium!

Pancreatic Cancer Surgery Survivors 65-Plus Live Nearly as Long As Anyone

A study reported in the journal Surgery shows that pancreatic cancer patients 65 or older who live at least five years after surgery have nearly as good a chance as anyone else to live another five years.

“Not too long ago, few patients lived for five years after diagnosis of pancreatic ductal cancer,” says Charles J. Yeo, MD, Samuel Gross Professor at Jefferson Medical College and Chair of Surgery, who led researchers at the Kimmel Cancer Center (KCC) at Jefferson and at Jefferson Hospital.

“Today that’s not true. There’s been a paradigm shift in the way we treat and think about this disease.”

Dr. Yeo adds, “The public hears ‘pancreatic cancer’ and thinks there’s little hope and there isn’t much to do. The good news is, with new imaging techniques, better early detection, improved screening of high-risk groups, and new therapies on the horizon, we’re actually making great progress when it comes to pancreatic cancer. It’s no longer a death sentence.”

New Jefferson Initiative: Novel Therapies in Kidney Disease

Building on the success of its Center for Translational Medicine, the Department of Medicine at Thomas Jefferson University has created the Center for Novel Therapies in Kidney Disease, a program to combine basic research, clinical research and care for patients suffering from diabetic kidney disease.

“Diabetes is the number one cause of kidney (renal) failure in the United States,” explains Kumar Sharma, MD, Center Director.

“Diabetic kidney disease, which is the first indication of potential kidney failure, affects as many as 30 percent of people with diabetes.”

“In developing this new program, we recognize that slowing or halting renal (kidney) disease will take multidisciplinary diabetes management and treatment programs. Too often,” Dr. Sharma says, “people who live with diabetes find that their kidney disease becomes progressively worse despite the best available treatment.

“Ultimately, these patients find that they are so sick that they need to start dialysis or undergo kidney transplantation. Our goal is to go from bench to bedside. We will identify biomarkers that would be responsive to novel therapeutics and then develop and prove the therapies.”

Brian Wimes, Jeff Neroni Photography

Jeffrey E. Alderson Photography

Pancreatic Cancer Surgery Survivors 65-Plus Live Nearly as Long As Anyone

Dr. Sharma is a physician-scientist in the true sense of the word in that he translates his laboratory results directly to improvement in patient care,” notes Arthur M. Feldman, MD, PhD, Magee Professor and Chair, Department of Medicine at Thomas Jefferson University and Thomas Jefferson University Hospital.

GI Physicians Offer Easier Way to Find and Treat Small Intestine Disorders

At Jefferson Hospital, a new technology known as the Double Balloon Endoscopy (DBE) system enables physicians to evaluate and treat disorders of the small intestine that were previously inaccessible without invasive surgery.

Explains Anthony Infantolino, MD, Clinical Director of Endoscopic Ultrasound and Photodynamic Therapy and Co-director of the Gastrointestinal Bleeding Center at Jefferson Hospital, “The DBE system is an advance over the traditional endoscopy because it allows us to visualize the entire 12 to 15 feet of the small intestine.” The procedure is performed on an outpatient basis.
Barry S. Coller, MD, Delivers 43rd Annual Martin E. Rehfuss Lecture

The 43rd Annual Martin E. Rehfuss Lecturer, Barry S. Coller, MD, David Rockefeller Professor of Medicine, Head, Laboratory of Blood and Vascular Biology; Physician-in-Chief of the Rockefeller University and Vice President of Medical Affairs, displays the Rehfuss Medal (photo below) presented after delivering his address, “Beyond Translational Research: Medicine, Science, and the Physician-Scientist.”

Dr. Coller served as President of the American Society of Hematology from 1997 to 1998, and currently serves as a member of the Board of Extramural Advisors of the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, and the Advisory Board for Clinical Research at the National Institutes of Health.

Dr. Coller’s research interests have focused on hemostasis and thrombosis, in particular platelet physiology. He developed a monoclonal antibody that inhibits platelet function.

The Rehfuss Lectureship is endowed by the Percival E. and Ethel Brown Foerderer Fund.

Iron Work on Hamilton Building Reaches Zenith With Topping-Off Ceremony

Iron work of the Dorrance H. Hamilton Building has reached its zenith.

All six stories have been erected, and all iron work has been installed. A “topping-off” ceremony, shown in the accompanying photos, marked the latter achievement.

The structure is slated for completion by November 2007.

You can check the building’s ongoing progress by visiting Jefferson’s Web site at www.jefferson.edu.

Nurses Ball – Another Spectacular Success!

The Fifth Annual Nurses Holiday Ball was a huge success, drawing 640 nursing employees from all campuses – Center City, Jefferson Hospital for Neuroscience and the Methodist Division.

The gala was held at the Sheraton Center City, previously Wyndham-Franklin Plaza.

“We wanted to celebrate the holidays together as well as honor the staff of the Nursing Department and the very important work they do for the patients,” says Ball Coordinator Deborah Caplan, RN, MSN, BC.

Employees and their guests had a terrific time, enjoying a great DJ, dancing all night, delicious food and wonderful door prizes.

Helping to sponsor the event this year were Nursing Administration, several physician groups and area businesses who generously donated money and gifts. One of the most popular events of the evening was the silent auction that helped raise funds for future events.

The winners of the big raffle were employed Mike Roshko $1,000, Anne Delengowski $500, and Fran Schmal $300.

Ms. Caplan speaks into the microphone to introduce the members of the committee that helped make the event possible. Mary Ann McGinley, RN, PhD, Senior Vice President for Patient Services and hospital Chief Nursing Officer, waits to present a bouquet of flowers as a thank you.

Barry S. Coller, MD, Delivers 43rd Annual Martin E. Rehfuss Lecture

The 43rd Annual Martin E. Rehfuss Lecturer, Barry S. Coller, MD, David Rockefeller Professor of Medicine, Head, Laboratory of Blood and Vascular Biology; Physician-in-Chief of the Rockefeller University and Vice President of Medical Affairs, displays the Rehfuss Medal (photo below) presented after delivering his address, “Beyond Translational Research: Medicine, Science, and the Physician-Scientist.”

Dr. Coller served as President of the American Society of Hematology from 1997 to 1998, and currently serves as a member of the Board of Extramural Advisors of the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, and the Advisory Board for Clinical Research at the National Institutes of Health.

Dr. Coller’s research interests have focused on hemostasis and thrombosis, in particular platelet physiology. He developed a monoclonal antibody that inhibits platelet function.

Among Dr. Coller’s many honors, he received the 2005 Robert J. and Claire Pasarow Foundation Award for Cardiovascular Research and the 2005 Henry M. Stratton Medal, American Society of Hematology.

The Rehfuss Lectureship is endowed by the Perival E. and Ethel Brown Foerderer Fund.

After the Rehfuss Lecture, Dr. Coller, center, joins James Keen, PhD, left, Dean, Jefferson College of Graduate Studies, and Arthur M. Feldman, MD, PhD, Magee Professor and Chair of the Department of Medicine, who introduced Dr. Coller.