Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center/Neurosurgery

Glimmer of Hope

Fluorescent technology helps improve accuracy of intricate neurosurgery

Nearly 70,000 people will be diagnosed with primary brain tumors this year. A new intraoperative visualization technology that makes a brain tumor glow could help extend their lives.

Ricardo Komotar, M.D. (right), assistant professor of neurological surgery at the Miller School of Medicine and co-director of surgical neuro-oncology at Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center, recently used the technique at University of Miami Hospital.

County Sheriff’s Deputy Shawn Monti, the father of five, sought out Komotar after he was diagnosed with an aggressive glioblastoma in fall 2013 and given just six months to live. After Komotar performed a successful first surgery, Monti’s cancer recurred in a different location—adjacent to the motor strip that controls the body’s movements.

During the second surgery, Komotar injected Monti with sodium fluorescein, a fluorescent tracer that is leaked by tumor cells, making them glow and appear distinct from healthy tissue when viewed through a special filter. Monti was kept awake during the procedure to make sure his mobility was not being affected.

Now more than a year out from his initial diagnosis, Monti is back at work and treasuring every additional day of life his state-of-the-art care has made possible.

Surgery alone is not a cure for glioblastoma; patients typically also require chemotherapy and radiation. But, says Komotar, biofluorescence is “a potential game changer. It will, hopefully, become the standard of care for difficult cases.”

Prevention Strategies Show Long-Term Benefits

AN ESTIMATED 79 MILLION

American adults are currently at high risk for developing type 2 diabetes. An NIH-funded study indicates that long-term risk can be reduced through lifestyle or medical strategies.

NIH 15-Year Follow-Up: Reductions in Diabetes Risk

Lifestyle intervention 27%

Metformin 17%

Fewer microvascular complications (in patients who avoided diabetes through other intervention) 28%

Hispanic Adults with Apnea: Elevated Disease Risks

90% Higher chance of diabetes

44% Higher chance of hypertension

50% Higher chance of impaired glucose tolerance

To refer a patient for a metabolic syndrome, diabetes, or cardiovascular consult, please call 305-243-3636.

Wake-Up Call On Apnea Risks

SLEEP-DISORDERED BREATHING (SDB) such as obstructive sleep apnea raises Hispanic-Americans’ risk for diabetes and hypertension, according to a landmark study coauthored by Alberto R. Ramos, M.D., M.S.P.H., assistant professor of clinical neurology and co-director of the University of Miami Sleep Medicine Program.

The study examined the prevalence of sleep apnea and its relation to high blood pressure and diabetes among 14,440 middle-aged Hispanics from across the U.S. Though 33 percent of men and 19 percent of women in the study had sleep apnea, only 1.3 percent had been previously diagnosed with the condition.

Even after adjusting for body mass index and waist circumference, the study found significant associations between sleep apnea, diabetes, and hypertension, suggesting a large burden of disease may be due to untreated SDB.

To refer a patient or to consult with a UHealth sleep medicine specialist, please call 305-482-5113 or email uhealthsleephotline@med.miami.edu.
We are desperately in search of a therapeutic drug, T-817MA, which may have the potential to slow the disease or stop it in its tracks. The NOBLE study, conducted by the Miller School of Medicine, is a collaborative multidisciplinary program spearheaded by the departments of neurology and psychiatry and behavioral sciences. This resource offers access to the very latest therapeutic options, and the U M team sees patients at sites around South Florida. The research provides a comprehensive evaluation to determine the exact nature of the disease, and its effectiveness may save lives over time. Mehran Movassaghi, MD, PhD, chief of Gastroenterology and Hepatology, comments, “Esophageal adenocarcinoma is a growing concern due to the rising incidence of GERD, the most common cause. It affects about 20 percent of the general population. Left untreated, it can lead to serious complications such as ulcers, stricture, Barrett’s esophagus, and elevated risk of esophageal adenocarcinoma.” Side effects of proton pump inhibitors (PPIs), the most commonly prescribed class of drugs for GERD, range from headache, nausea, abdominal pain, and dyspepsia to hair loss, osteoporosis, and increased risk for pneumonia. Nissen fundoplication, a surgical intervention for patients who do not tolerate PPIs well or do not want to take them on a long-term basis, brings risks associated with surgery, and its effectiveness may save lives over time. Mehran Movassaghi, MD, PhD, chief of Gastroenterology and Hepatology, comments, “Esophageal adenocarcinoma is a growing concern due to the rising incidence of GERD, the most common cause. It affects about 20 percent of the general population. Left untreated, it can lead to serious complications such as ulcers, stricture, Barrett’s esophagus, and elevated risk of esophageal adenocarcinoma.”

As part of the NOBLE study, participants are also being offered by the gastroenterology team at UHealth. These interventions, UGEM and StrattaR, offer a middle path between medication and surgery for GERD patients. The “manufacturers of these modalities must that clinicians have specialized training,” says Behzad Mohseni, M.D., an associate professor of medicine and director of motility at UHealth Gastroenterology laboratories, in UHealth monthly. “Only a university setting or UHealth can offer GERD treatment options, allowing us to precisely meet the patient’s needs for GERD.”

**For more information please visit** http://uhealthsystem.com/clinicaltrials.

**UHealth Divisions**

- **Gastroenterology**: offers a comprehensive array of treatments for GERD, including the latest minimally invasive procedures.

## DIRECT LAB ACCESS

- **LINKX Reflux Management System**
  - This sterile, single-use device is surgically inserted for the treatment of gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD). It is positioned at the lower esophageal sphincter (LES) and delivers radiofrequency energy to the LES. Study results indicate that the BRAVE study is centered around reducing the risk of Barrett’s esophagus and providing a novel therapeutic option for patients with GERD. **StrettaR Procedure**
  - The UHealth Divisions are offering a novel and minimally invasive endoscopic procedure to treat GERD, called StrettaR. This procedure is performed endoscopically under conscious sedation. It involves the delivery of radiofrequency energy to the LES, which is thought to contract to close the LES. Study results indicate that the benefit of UHealth in the treatment of GERD patients with persistent GERD.

- **Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia (BPH)**
  - The Miller School of Medicine is participating in a multicenter international trial of Prostate Artery Embolization (PAE), a minimally invasive treatment for BPH. In PAE, tiny particles are injected into the patient’s blood vessels, blocking blood flow to the prostate, causing pain, and symptoms of BPH. UHealth is the only South Florida site offering this innovative treatment. The study aims to evaluate the safety and efficacy of this treatment, as well as its effectiveness in reducing BPH symptoms. In the study, patients receive PAE vs. TURP (transurethral resection of prostate). For details, call 305-243-4104 or 305-263-4507 or visit UHealth at UHealth.net/clinicaltrials.

- **Neurology/Geriatrics**
  - The University of Miami conducts more than 2,000 clinical trials each year, including Phase III or IV investigations at Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center, Berenson-Allen Eye Institute, and other programs throughout the Miller School of Medicine and University of Miami Health System. The NOBLE study is currently enrolling patients with Parkinson’s disease, with a focus on improving quality of life and disease-modifying treatments. For details or information on other clinical trials, visit UHealth system or call 305-243-3333.

- **Radiation Oncology**
  - A Randomized Phase III Trial to Assess the Efficacy of Tavalan (321200) in Patients With Advanced or Progressive Esophageal Squamous Cell Carcinoma (ESCC) and Proven Cachexia Investigator: Dr. Dennis Iwamoto, M.D.
  - The study aims to evaluate the efficacy and safety of Tavalan in patients with advanced or progressive ESCC and proven cachexia, comparing Tavalan to a standard of care. For details, visit UHealth at UHealth.net/clinicaltrials.

- **Renal**
  - A phase II study of Cabozantinib (XL184) in combination with Cabozantinib in Subjects with Advanced or Metastatic Renal Cell Carcinoma Investigator: Dr. Ronan Swords, MD
  - The study aims to evaluate the safety and efficacy of Cabozantinib in combination with Cabozantinib in Subjects with Advanced or Metastatic Renal Cell Carcinoma, comparing the combination to a standard of care. For details, visit UHealth at UHealth.net/clinicaltrials.

- **Streptococcal Endocarditis**
  - A Phase III efficacy study of Acibendazole (ACB) in Patients with Esophageal Fungus Sinusitis Investigator: Dr. Kelly Hedges-Peerman
  - The study aims to evaluate the efficacy of Acibendazole in Patients with Esophageal Fungus Sinusitis, comparing Acibendazole to a standard of care. For details, visit UHealth at UHealth.net/clinicaltrials.

- **Surgical**
  - A Phase III randomized, controlled trial of Nivolumab (anti-PD1) in patients with metastatic melanoma who have failed at least one prior systemic therapy Investigator: Dr. Martin Reardon
  - The study aims to evaluate the safety and efficacy of Nivolumab in patients with metastatic melanoma who have failed at least one prior systemic therapy, comparing Nivolumab to a standard of care. For details, visit UHealth at UHealth.net/clinicaltrials.

- **Clinical Trials**
  - A phase II study to evaluate the safety and efficacy of a novel, non-invasive, endoluminal device for the treatment of obesity in patients with obesity. Investigator: Dr. John Hoppin
  - The study aims to evaluate the safety and efficacy of a novel, non-invasive, endoluminal device for the treatment of obesity in patients with obesity, comparing the device to a standard of care. For details, visit UHealth at UHealth.net/clinicaltrials.

- **HIV/AIDS**
  - A phase II study of a novel anti-HIV drug Investigator: Dr. Michael Litt
  - The study aims to evaluate the safety and efficacy of a novel anti-HIV drug in patients with HIV/AIDS, comparing the drug to a standard of care. For details, visit UHealth at UHealth.net/clinicaltrials.

- **Oncology**
  - A phase I study of a novel anti-cancer agent Investigator: Dr. Dollie Green
  - The study aims to evaluate the safety and efficacy of a novel anti-cancer agent in patients with cancer, comparing the agent to a standard of care. For details, visit UHealth at UHealth.net/clinicaltrials.

- **Obgyn**
  - A phase II study of a novel anti-cancer agent Investigator: Dr. Jennifer Marks
  - The study aims to evaluate the safety and efficacy of a novel anti-cancer agent in patients with cancer, comparing the agent to a standard of care. For details, visit UHealth at UHealth.net/clinicaltrials.

- **Radiology**
  - A phase II study of a novel anti-cancer agent Investigator: Dr. Lynn Feun
  - The study aims to evaluate the safety and efficacy of a novel anti-cancer agent in patients with cancer, comparing the agent to a standard of care. For details, visit UHealth at UHealth.net/clinicaltrials.

- **Transplant**
  - A phase II study of a novel anti-cancer agent Investigator: Dr. Andrew Kassianides
  - The study aims to evaluate the safety and efficacy of a novel anti-cancer agent in patients with cancer, comparing the agent to a standard of care. For details, visit UHealth at UHealth.net/clinicaltrials.

- **Urgent Care**
  - A phase II study of a novel anti-cancer agent Investigator: Dr. Carissa Smith
  - The study aims to evaluate the safety and efficacy of a novel anti-cancer agent in patients with cancer, comparing the agent to a standard of care. For details, visit UHealth at UHealth.net/clinicaltrials.

- **Vascular**
  - A phase II study of a novel anti-cancer agent Investigator: Dr. Margaret A. Fischl
  - The study aims to evaluate the safety and efficacy of a novel anti-cancer agent in patients with cancer, comparing the agent to a standard of care. For details, visit UHealth at UHealth.net/clinicaltrials.

- **Women’s Health**
  - A phase II study of a novel anti-cancer agent Investigator: Dr. Mary Collins
  - The study aims to evaluate the safety and efficacy of a novel anti-cancer agent in patients with cancer, comparing the agent to a standard of care. For details, visit UHealth at UHealth.net/clinicaltrials.

- **UHealth**
  - A phase II study of a novel anti-cancer agent Investigator: Dr. John Hoppin
  - The study aims to evaluate the safety and efficacy of a novel anti-cancer agent in patients with cancer, comparing the agent to a standard of care. For details, visit UHealth at UHealth.net/clinicaltrials.
Orthopaedics

Frontline Joint Care

The demand for total joint replacement is rising dramatically, driven by factors including the growing prevalence of obesity and heavy demands placed by active baby boomers on their joints.

The fellowship-trained faculty of the Miller School’s multidisciplinary Department of Orthopaedics provide critical mass in joint replacement capabilities. Joint surgeons Raymond P. Robinson, M.D., FACS, Michaela M. Schneiderbauer, M.D., Ph.D., M.B.A., and Fernando E. Vilella-Hernandez, M.D., have recently been joined by Victor H. Hernandez, M.D., M.S.

Schneiderbauer and Hernandez have subspecialty training and extensive experience in anterior hip replacement, which is performed through a small incision on the front (anterior), rather than the side or back, of the joint.

UHealth is one of the few facilities in South Florida to offer the muscle-sparing anterior technique for hip replacement. The team also provides bilateral knee and hip replacement and partial knee (including patello-femoral and uni-condylar) replacements.

The UHealth Orthopaedics joint replacement team performs surgeries at University of Miami Hospital (UMH) and offers consultations at UMH and in Boca Raton, Hialeah, and Kendall. For more information or to refer a patient, call 305-243-3000.

UHealth offers unsurpassed expertise in all minimally invasive joint replacement techniques, including the anterior approach to hip replacement.

Cardiology

Lowering Lipids

Among the millions of people at risk for serious disease due to elevated cholesterol and triglycerides, those with abnormally high lipid scores present a significant clinical challenge.

“Theyir levels may be high due to genetic factors, because they can’t tolerate medication, or because they are unable to follow lifestyle regimens,” says Carl E. Orringer, M.D., an associate professor of medicine who is an expert in lipid management and president-elect of the National Lipid Association. “We are here to partner with community-based practitioners in the prevention of cardiovascular disease in patients with difficult lipid disorders.”

After an in-depth evaluation of a patient’s clinical presentation and cardiovascular risk factors, recommended interventions may include new combinations of medications. An LDL apheresis program, which can lower cholesterol up to 75 percent in biweekly treatments, is slated to launch later this year.

To refer a patient to UHealth’s preventive cardiovascular program, call 305-243-5554.