

General Internists and Research: Requiem for a Lightweight?

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Every reader of this journal knows that the specialty of general internal medicine has suffered from an image problem for many years. However, that is changing. In recognition of the traditional strengths of general internal medicine in patient care and trainee education, general internists are increasingly key players in the postgraduate/under-graduate education programs and deans' offices across Canada. As a result, the popularity of general internal medicine as a career option among our postgraduate trainees has increased substantially in the past few years.

But, what of the third facet of academic medicine – research? As I have travelled around the country, I have often heard comments that one subspecialty or another is the most research-intensive division in that institution. Although I have rarely heard general internal medicine mentioned as the research flag-bearers for any Canadian university, I believe this is a gross misperception. Perusal of the list of general internists who have won the New Investigator Award (presented by CSIM since 1997) and the Senior Investigator Award (presented by CSIM since 2000) reveals an outstanding cadre of

researchers who are too often misidentified as subspecialty researchers because their research focuses on a particular disease area. A general internist doing pharmaco-epidemiology or health services research on diabetes, ischemic heart disease, or stroke is no more an endocrinologist, cardiologist, or neurologist than the general internist looking after patients with diabetic ketoacidosis, unstable angina, or transient ischemic attack on the ward. What drew all of us to general internal medicine (and presumably keeps us there) is the variety of patients we meet in our day-to-day activities – and this is true whether we see ourselves primarily as clinicians, researchers, or educators.

The list of research to be presented at this year's CSIM research session proves yet again that the scope of general internal medicine research is wide, both in topic and in methodology. However, the theme running through all of the projects is the betterment of patient care and outcomes as a result of careful observation and subsequent scientific investigation. For too long, general internal medicine has been viewed as a lightweight in the research forum – it's time to acknowledge that we punch above our weight class!

Abstracts Chosen for Presentation at the Annual Scientific Meeting

TGP Oral Competition

A Painful CBC: Polycythemia Vera Presenting as a Non-ST Elevation MI

By Luke Devine, Anne McLeod, Melitta Mezody
University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario

Severe Hemolytic Anemia Post Renal Transplantation Caused by Anti-D Passenger Lymphocytes: Case Report and Literature Review

By C. D. Ainsworth, M. A. Crowther, D. Treleaven, D. Evanovich, M. A. Blajchman, K. E. Webert
McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario

An Unusual Case of Elder Abuse

By Anca Prica, Jerome Teitel
University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario

Azathioprine and Cholestasis of Pregnancy

By Ruth Sapir-Pichhadze, Shital Gandhi
University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario

Fat Embolism Syndrome: The Postoperative Masquerader

By Michael Tsang, Ganesh Subramanian, Sarah Nelson, Dan Perri
McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario

Acute Ataxia and Abducens Palsy in a Woman with Recent Varicella Zoster Infection

By Alexandra Bojceviski, Karen C. Y. To
McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario

A Rare Answer to a Common Problem: From Delirium NYD to Paraneoplastic Encephalitis

By L. Hajra, W. Mason, M. Otremba
University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario

Painless Chronic Pancreatitis Presenting with Exocrine Insufficiency

By Christopher Labos, Laurence Green
McGill University, Montreal, Quebec

Fulminant Hepatic Failure from Herpes Simplex I Infection

By Angel K. M. Chu, Steven Vaughn, Kerri Johansson, Sid Viner, Jason Lord
University of Calgary, Calgary, Alberta

An Uncommon Cause of Rhabdomyolysis

By Lisa Beauchamp
McGill University, Montreal, Quebec

TGP Poster Competition

Anti-Glomerular Basement Disease Associated with Thrombotic Thrombocytopenic Purpura: An Unusual Case

By Natalie Dayan, Karen Okrainec, Mark Blostein, Sarit Assouline, Mark Palayew, Marie-Laure Brisson, Mark Lipman
McGill University, Montreal, Quebec

Eosinophilic Cholecystitis: An Unusual Presentation of Churg-Strauss Syndrome

By Kylie Lepic, Anne Ellis
McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario

A Missed Diagnosis – A Lesson Learned – An Opportunity for Change

By Jennifer Nguyen
McGill University, Montreal, Quebec

Lactic Acidosis of Thiamine Deficiency –

A Case of Acute Pernicious Beriberi

By Nikila C. Ravindran, Stephen E. Lapinsky
University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario

A Salty Quandary

By Tina Hsu, Ally P. H. Prebtani
McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario

Au carrefour de l'étoile

By Caroline Walker
Université de Sherbrooke, Sherbrooke,
Québec

Acute Chest Pain in a Young Postpartum Woman: Dissecting the Problem of Pregnancy-Associated Myocardial Infarction

By Ewan C. Goligher, Alan W. Barolet
University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario

A Rare Case of Mollaret's Meningitis: A Dischargeable Diagnosis?

By Ganesh Subramanian, Nete Papneja
McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario

The Perfect Storm

By Adrian Lau, Steve Shadowitz
University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario

Insight for Sore Eyes: Metastatic Breast Cancer Presenting as Abnormal Extraocular Movements

By Cynthia T. Luk
McGill University, Montreal, Quebec

Oral Research Competition***Cardiac Medication Prescribing and Adherence after Acute Myocardial Infarction in Chinese and South Asian Patients***

By E. J. Lai, M. Grubisic, H. Quan, A. Palepu, K. King, N. A. Khan
University of British Columbia, Vancouver,
British Columbia

Chronic Antiplatelet Therapy and Mortality among Patients with Infective Endocarditis

By David Bechard, Jacques Pepin, Vanessa Tremblay, François Rodier, Caroline Walker, David Dufresne, Audrey Lafontaine, Nan Li, Caroline Lacroix, Luc Lanthier
University of Sherbrooke, Sherbrooke,
Quebec

Medical Errors and the Clinical Teaching Unit

By Saira Zafar, Mark Goldszmidt
University of Western Ontario, London,
Ontario

Sex Differences in Premature Acute Coronary Syndrome

By Shadi Akhtari, Stella Daskalopoulou, Louise Pilote
McGill University Health Centre, Montreal,
Quebec

Identification and Response to Signs of Critical Illness in Patients Prior to Unplanned ICU Admissions or Cardiorespiratory Arrest

By N. Spitale, C. D. Ainsworth, M. Kotowycz, M. Soth
McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario

Written Consultation Letters: Report of Data from a Postgraduate Training Program in Internal Medicine

By Diem-Quyen Nguyen, Michèle Mahone, Jean-Victor Patenaude, Benoit Deligne, Isabelle Coiteux, Roch Parent
Université de Montréal, Montréal, Québec

Once-Daily, Oral Rivaroxaban Compared to Twice-Daily, Subcutaneous Enoxaparin for Prevention of Venous Thromboembolism after Total Knee Replacement: The RECORD4 Study

By Alexander G. G. Turpie, Kenneth A. Bauer, Bruce L. Davidson, Michael Gent, Louis M. Kwong, Michael R. Lassen, Fred D. Cushner, Paul A. Lotke, Tiemo J. Bandel, Frank Misselwitz, William D. Fisher
McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario

Poster Research Competition***A Continuous Quality Improvement Study Evaluating the Implementation of Perioperative Pulmonary Assessment Guidelines***

By Christian Kraeker
McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario

The Effect of Ingested Sublimed Sulfur on Plasma Homocysteine Levels in Humans

By Airudin S. Khan

Outpatient Colonoscopy Findings at a Tertiary Care Centre following a Positive Fecal Occult Blood Test

By Brandon M. Meyers, John K. Marshall
McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario

Generalization of the POISE and Mangano Studies on Beta-blocker Use in the Perioperative Period

By O. Paquette, C. St-Georges, M. Touchette, L. Lanthier
Centre Hospitalier Universitaire de Sherbrooke, Université de Sherbrooke,
Sherbrooke Québec

Assessing the Learning Curve for the Acquisition of Colonoscopy Skills on a Computer-Based Endoscopy Simulator

By Puja Kumar, Frances Tse
McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario

Seriously Ill Hospitalized Patients: Assessing Their Satisfaction with End-of-Life Care

By J. Suurdt, N. Paul, J. Heyland, C. Frank, P. Wattam, D. Heyland
For the Canadian Researchers at the End of Life Network (CARENET)

2008 Award Winners

The Canadian Society of Internal Medicine would like to congratulate all those who were recipients of awards in the following categories:

Osler Awards

Dr. Christine Bradley, Hamilton, **Dr. James Nishikawa**, Ottawa, **Dr. Marc Giasson**, Montreal, **Dr. Peter Kopplin**, Toronto, and **Dr. Robert Herman**, Calgary

Ted Giles Clinical Vignettes

Dr. Craig Ainsworth, McMaster University (first place), **Dr. Lisa Beauchamp**, McGill University (second place), and **Dr. Leena Hajra**, University of Toronto (third place)

Awards for Excellence in Research

Dr. David Béchard, CHUS Sherbrooke (first place), **Dr. Craig**

Ainsworth, McMaster University (second place), and **Dr. Saira Zafar**, University of Western Ontario (third place)

We also congratulate **Dr. Puja Kumar**, McMaster University, who won first place in the Research Poster Competition.

Dr. David Sackett Senior Investigator Award

Dr. Allan Detsky was recipient of the 2008 Dr. David Sackett Senior Investigator Award.

New Investigator Award

Dr. Joel Ray was recipient of the 2008 New Investigator Award.

Upcoming CSIM Annual Scientific Meetings

OCTOBER 21–24, 2009
The Westin Ottawa
OTTAWA, ONTARIO

OCTOBER 27–30, 2010
Hyatt Regency
VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA

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Quality Assessment Study Evaluating the Implementation of Perioperative Pulmonary Assessment Guidelines

Christian Kraeker, MD, Kara Nerenberg, MD



About the Authors

Christian Kraeker is a third-year internal medicine resident, and Kara Nerenberg is an internist and clinical scholar, both at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario.

Background

In the field of perioperative medicine, there has been a paucity of information regarding the benefit of routine preoperative respiratory investigations. Recently, the American College of Physicians (ACP) published an evidence-based review of the literature on preoperative respiratory assessment along with clinical practice guidelines.¹ This review emphasizes that the widespread use of routine chest radiography and spirometry in the preoperative evaluation of patients has not been

shown to influence or improve patient-related clinical outcomes. As such, ACP recommends that the use of preoperative chest radiography and spirometry be limited to only those individuals with either a history of chronic lung diseases or suspected pulmonary pathology based upon clinical examination.

Clinical Importance

Given the large numbers of elective orthopedic surgeries and the high