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Friends & SLU Liver Center News

friends of the SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY LIVER CENTER
Cure Liver Disease Now

EDITORS

Leisa Duff
Executive Director
The Friends of the Saint Louis University Liver Center
lduff@friendsoftheslulc.org

Lou Ann Biermann, RN, MSN
Administrative Manager,
The Saint Louis University Liver Center
liverctr@slu.edu

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Peter Horton, MD

SHOOT for a Cure at Strathalbyn Farms Club

High Temps and a little rain didn't stop shooting enthusiasts from participating in the 3rd annual "Shoot for a Cure" event at Strathalbyn Farms Club on June 25th. Both beginning and experienced shooters enjoyed their afternoon on the range and a shooting exhibition from eight time Collegiate National Championship Shooters from Lindenwood Shotgun Sports Team. A dinner, silent and live auctions and competitive flurry, helped raise over $45,000 for the research at the SLU Liver Center!

Special thanks to planning committee members Carter Finnell, Mark Johnson, Geoff Orf, and Vic Turvey and our large crew of volunteers from Gateway Claybusters and the Missouri National Guard who helped keep safety a number one priority!

Internationally Renowned Transplant Surgeon Joins the Transplant Team at SLU—Introducing Peter Horton, MD

In February 2011, Peter Horton, MD joined the team of transplant surgeons at SLU. Having trained and worked in many of the finest transplant programs in the world, he is a renowned surgeon, preeminent researcher and an excellent addition to the Saint Louis University School of Medicine and the SLU Liver Center.

Dr. Horton has published groundbreaking work in the area of immunological tolerance, for which he has been recognized with the highest level of doctoral research degree by Cambridge University. He played a major role in developing pancreas transplant services used as a cure for patients with Type 1 diabetes and refining the steps required to isolate insulin-producing islets.

Dr. Horton provides, liver, kidney and kidney-pancreas transplant services for adults and children, including laparoscopic living donor kidney nephrectomies. He also provides hepatobilliary surgery, including surgical treatments for liver and pancreas cancer as well as vascular access surgery and general surgery for transplant patients. Dr. Horton is a fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons of England in general surgery and transplantation.

Volunteers Needed for Trans Fat Clinical Study

Saint Louis University School of Medicine needs volunteers for a clinical trial studying the possible effects of dietary trans fats on the liver. The clinical trial is headed by principal investigator, Brent Tetri, M.D.

Trans fats found in hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated vegetable oils comprise a relatively new addition to the Western diet that has occurred over the past four to five decades, a time frame that correlates with the occurrence of nonalcoholic steatohepatitis (NASH) as the most common form of chronic liver disease. NASH effects 2-5 % of the US population and is a risk factor for the development of cirrhosis (scarring of the liver) in up to a third of affected people.

Despite a growing awareness of the health effects of trans fats in our foods, they continue to be found in baked goods, fried food and a wide variety of other commercially prepared foods. Even for people intending to avoid trans-fat containing foods, inadvertent consumption can be significant. Because current FDA labeling standards allow foods with less that 0.5 grams of trans-fats per serving to be labeled as "zero trans-fats," by consuming 4-5 small, industry defined "serving sizes" of zero trans fat food, a person could easily exceed the recommended maximum daily limit of 2 grams.

Based on the continued abundance of industrial trans fats (ITF) in many foods and the persistence of potentially significant amounts in foods labeled as zero trans fats, trans fats will not be disappearing from our foods anytime soon.

This study will investigate the potential role of ITF in liver disease. A total of 50 participants, 25 with NASH and 25 healthy controls, will be enrolled in this study at Saint Louis University.

Compensation for time and travel will be provided in the form of Whole Foods gift cards.

If you are interested in possible participation in this clinical trial, please call Joan Siegner at 314-977-9335 or email siegnerj@slu.edu or call Sue Stewart at 314-977-9337 or e-mail stewarse@slu.edu

Volunteers are the backbone of any non profit organization!

How Can You Help the Friends of the SLU Liver Center? Become a Sponsor! Become a Volunteer!

Whether you are interested in becoming a sponsor or want to answer phones, stuff envelopes or be a leader and serve on a planning committee, we have volunteer opportunities available. You may volunteer as an individual or bring a group of friends. Please complete and fax this form to 314-576-3654 or mail to the Friends office. A representative will contact you.

☐ *Yes, I am interested in learning more about sponsorship opportunities! Please contact me with more information.*

☐ *Yes, I am interested in volunteering! Please contact me with more information.*

Name _____ Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____

Address_____ Cell Phone _____ Email _____

City, State, Zip _____ Best way to reach you _____

Times you are available to volunteer: _____

Clinical Studies at Saint Louis University

The division of gastroenterology and hepatology at Saint Louis University has led the nation in enrollment in several large, multi-center clinical trials, and is a recognized leader in both clinical and laboratory based research in liver disease. Clinical research in liver disease is conducted in the **GI/Hepatology Studies Unit** and the **NIH Clinical Studies Unit** on the second floor of the Saint Louis University Salus Center in the Center for Biomedical and Health Care Research.

The SLU Center for Health Care Ethics and the SLU School of Public Health is also located in the Salus Center building, which is located on the corner of Grand Boulevard and Lafayette Avenue, only a few blocks from Saint Louis University Hospital. SLU operates its own on-campus hotel, the Water Tower Inn, and it is conveniently located in the same building as the Clinical Studies Units. The rooms are generally less expensive than most of the hotels in the area.

NIH Clinical Studies Unit (NIH CSU) - ***For information regarding clinical trials, call 314-977-9340***

The NIH CSU provides space and services to support adult and pediatric research that is funded by federal or foundation support. Approximately 160 patients are seen in this unit each month. Current clinical studies conducted in this unit includes the following areas of research:

- Hepatitis B
- Fatty Liver Disease
- Dyspepsia
- Pancreatitis
- Primary Sclerosing Cholangitis

GI/Hepatology Clinical Studies Unit – *For information regarding clinical trials call 314-977-9400*

Our GI/Hepatology clinical studies unit sees more than 500 patients each month who are involved with ongoing industry sponsored research protocols. Currently there are over 40 active clinical protocols with 15 new clinical trials pending site initiation. These pharmaceutical industry sponsored trials currently include the following areas of research:

- Hepatitis C
- Primary Biliary Cirrhosis
- Liver Cancer
- Hepatorenal Syndrome
- Inflammatory Bowel Disease

Please call the Clinical Studies Units if you are interested in clinical research at the numbers listed above. You can also visit the following web sites for information regarding liver disease research at Saint Louis University.

http://internalmed.slu.edu/gi/ or http://livercenter.slu.edu/

Don't miss the 9th annual

Denim & Diamonds Black & White Gala

Sponsorships are still available at the following levels:

Bronze Sponsor $5,000

- 1/8 page acknowledgement / advertisement in the Denim & Diamonds Program
- Invitations for 10 guests to Denim & Diamonds Gala
- Company recognition for being Bronze Sponsor in program and event signage
- Company recognition on the Friends of the SLULC website on the "Meet our Sponsors" page

Table Sponsor $2,000

- Invitations for 10 guests to Denim & Diamonds Gala
- Thank You acknowledgement / advertisement in the Denim & Diamonds Program

Individual Tickets $200 per person

Please call the Friends office for Gala information 314-576-3078 or visit us at http://friendsoftheslulc.org/events/denim-diamonds/

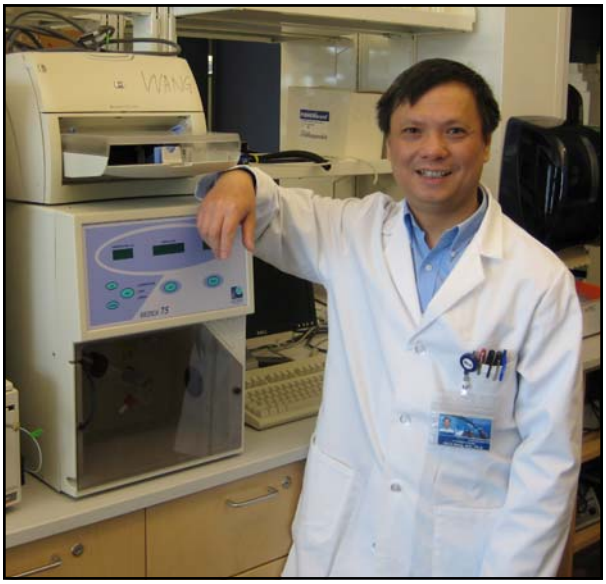
A few more pics of friends having fun at "Shoot for a Cure" at Strathalbyn Farms Club in June!

The Friends of the Saint Louis University Liver Center raise money to support the research efforts of the SLU Liver Center for the treatment and cure of liver diseases, and to promote understanding and awareness of liver disease.

New Saint Louis University Liver Center Investigator: David Q. -H. Wang, MD, PhD

Dr. Wang is an Associate Professor of Medicine and joined Saint Louis University School of Medicine on January 1, 2011. He has a demonstrated record of successful and productive research projects in an area of high relevance for biochemistry of lipid metabolism, physical-chemistry of lipids, and pathophysiology of cholesterol gallstones. Dr. Wang was an Assistant Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School and a gastroenterologist at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston, MA prior to moving his laboratory and research projects to Saint Louis University.

Dr. Wang is a well-respected researcher in the area of lipid metabolism and gallstones. His laboratory has been supported by grants from NIH, foundations and industry and his research has been productive with many papers being published in peer-reviewed journals.



David Q. –H. Wang, MD, PhD

Interested in participating in a clinical trial at the Saint Louis University Liver Center?

Contact Judy Thompson, Mgr., GI and Hepatology Clinical Research Unit at 314-977-9400

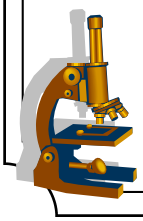
Research at the SLULC

Congratulations to Dr. Jeff Teckman and Dr. Rob Fleming on their recent selection to receive SLU Liver Center Seed Grant Awards of $25,000 each. These two Liver Center physicians are highly accomplished investigators and physicians. The Liver Center is proud to support their research projects because they were deemed extremely innovative and highly significant. The selection committee felt that their proposed research projects will generate impressive preliminary data for both publication and strong external grant applications.

Jeffrey H. Teckman, MD
Associate Professor of
Pediatrics and Biochemistry

Dr. Teckman, a pediatric gastroenterologist and hepatologist at Saint Louis University School of Medicine, will use his seed grant funding for his project titled: “Therapeutic mechanisms of nor-ursodeoxycholic acid”.

Dr. Fleming, a pediatric neonatologist at Saint Louis University School of Medicine, will use his seed grant funding for his project titled: “Role of HFE in modulating the effect of NTBI on hepcidin expression”.



We wish them both the best of luck in the success of their ongoing research.

Rob Fleming, MD

Pediatric Liver Disease

There are many pediatric liver diseases, including alagille syndrome , alpha-1-antitrypsin deficiency, bile acid synthesis and metabolism defects, biliary atresia, cystic fibrosis liver disease, idiopathic neonatal hepatitis, mitochondrial hepatopathies, progressive familial intrahepatic cholestasis, to name a few.

Facts:

*Approximately 15,000 hospitalizations occur each year for pediatric liver disease in the U.S.
*The incidence of neonatal liver disease may be as high as 1 in 2500 live births in the U.S.
*Biliary atresia occurs in about 1 of every 10,000 live births in the U.S. and there are approximately 300 new cases diagnosed each year
*As many as 135,000 children are infected with hepatitis B in the U.S.
*As many as 1 in 250 children are infected with hepatitis C in the U.S.
*Non-alcoholic fatty liver disease affects up to 10% of all children in the U.S.
*In 2010, 560 children had a liver transplant in the U.S.

The symptoms related to liver dysfunction include both physical signs and a variety of symptoms related to digestive problems, blood sugar problems, immune disorders, abnormal absorption of fats, and metabolic problems. Some common liver disease symptoms include the following:

- jaundice (a yellow discoloration of the skin due to elevated bilirubin concentrations in the bloodstream).
- cholestasis (condition where bile cannot flow from the liver to the duodenum)
- liver enlargement
- portal hypertension (is an increase in the pressure within the portal vein, which carries blood from the digestive organs to the liver)
- ascites (fluid accumulation within the abdominal cavity)
- liver encephalopathy (confusion and lethargy caused by poor liver function)
- liver failure

The Division of Pediatric Gastroenterology and Hepatology at Cardinal Glennon Children's Medical Center is involved in a wide range of cutting-edge research projects aimed at developing new and better treatments for their patients. These physicians' areas of research include:

- Alpha-1 Antitrypsin Deficiency
- Cystic Fibrosis Liver Disease
- Hepatitis B
- Fatty liver disease
- Inflammatory Bowel Disease
- Liver disease
- Obesity

Alex and Dr. Jeffrey Teckman

Please visit the SSM Cardinal Glennon web site at: http://www.cardinalglennon.com/MedicalSpecialties/Gastroenterology_Hepatology/Pages/GastroenterologyHepatology.aspx
OR
The Saint Louis University Department of Pediatrics web site at:
http://pediatrics.slu.edu/index.php?page=gastroenterology-hepatology-2

Game Changer: Hepatitis C Drug May Revolutionize Treatment

Saint Louis University Investigator Reports Findings in New England Journal of Medicine

Bruce R. Bacon, M.D.

The drug boceprevir helps cure hard-to-treat hepatitis C, says Saint Louis University investigator Bruce R. Bacon, M.D., author of the March 31 *New England Journal of Medicine* article detailing the study's findings. The results, which were first reported at the 61st annual meeting of the American Association for the Study of Liver Disease's last November, offer a brighter outlook for patients who have not responded to standard treatment.

Bacon, who is professor of internal medicine at Saint Louis University School of Medicine and co-principal investigator of the HCV RESPOND-2 study, studied the protease inhibitor boceprevir and found that it significantly increased the number of patients whose blood had undetectable levels of the virus.

"These findings are especially significant for patients who don't respond to initial treatment," said Bacon. "When the hepatitis C virus is not eliminated, debilitating fatigue and more serious problems can follow."

Hepatitis C is caused by a virus that is transmitted by contact with blood. The infection may initially be asymptomatic, but for patients who develop chronic hepatitis C infection, inflammation of the liver may develop, leading to fibrosis and cirrhosis (scarring of the liver), as well as other complications including liver cancer and death.

The prognosis varies for patients with chronic hepatitis C. With the current standard therapy, about half fully recover after an initial course of peginterferon and ribavirin anti-viral therapy that may last from six months to a year.

The remaining patients, known as non-responders, may improve with initial treatment but the virus is not eliminated, or may not respond to treatment at all.

For this group, the only current option is to re-treat patients with the same or similar drugs, which increases the likelihood of severe treatment side-effects. In addition, researchers have found that the success of treatment depends on the major strain, or genotype, of hepatitis C that a patient has.

The HCV RESPOND-2 study looked at 403 patients with chronic hepatitis C infections with genotype one, the most difficult strain of the virus to treat, who still had significant levels of the virus after being treated with peginterferon and ribavirin, the standard hepatitis C treatment.

"These results are very exciting," Bacon said. "In this study, boceprevir helped cure significantly more patients in 36 weeks of therapy than did treatment with peginterferon and ribavirin alone."

A second study, HCV SPRINT-2, examined patients with hepatitis C with genotype one who had not yet been treated with the standard treatment. They, too, responded well to the drug.

Bacon calls the progress made in treating hepatitis C remarkable.

"We've gone from the discovery of the virus in 1989 to where we are now, 22 years later, when we have the ability to cure a large majority of those with hepatitis C," Bacon said. "It's a true success story."

"Drugs like boceprevir are going to revolutionize care of those with hepatitis C."

The clinical trial was funded by Merck, which is seeking FDA approval for the drug.

Established in 1836, Saint Louis University School of Medicine has the distinction of awarding the first medical degree west of the Mississippi River. The school educates physicians and biomedical scientists, conducts medical research, and provides health care on a local, national and international level. Research at the school seeks new cures and treatments in five key areas: cancer, liver disease, heart/lung disease, aging and brain disease, and infectious disease.

Do you have a car you would like to donate?
The Friends now accept vehicle donations.
Please call the Friends office at 314-576-3078 for details.

Do you have a Schnuck's eScrip card?
You can raise money for liver research simply by using an eScrip card when you shop!

Call 314-576-3078 to get a card today!

Special Thanks
to our newsletter sponsors!

What's on the Calendar?

September 24-25, 2011 St. Louis Home Fires BBQ Bash at Wildwood Towne Center—Visit the Schnucks/Friends soda booths

November 4—8, 2011 AASLD (Assoc. for the Study of Liver Diseases), San Francisco, CA, Moscone West

November 12, 2011 Denim & Diamonds[9] at The Chase Park Plaza in the Khorassan Ballroom

Plans are currently underway for a cycling event in the fall. Please call the Friends office to participate or for more information.

Denim & Diamonds
November 12, 2011
The Chase Park Plaza

Friends of the Saint Louis University Liver Center
Leisa Duff, Executive Director
14323 South Outer 40, Suite 200M
Chesterfield, MO 63017
Phone 314-576-3078
Fax 314-576-3654
Website: http://friendsoftheslulc.org

Saint Louis University Liver Center
3635 Vista at Grand
St. Louis, MO 63110-0250
Phone: 314-577-8764
Fax: 314-577-8125
Website: http://livercenter.slu.edu