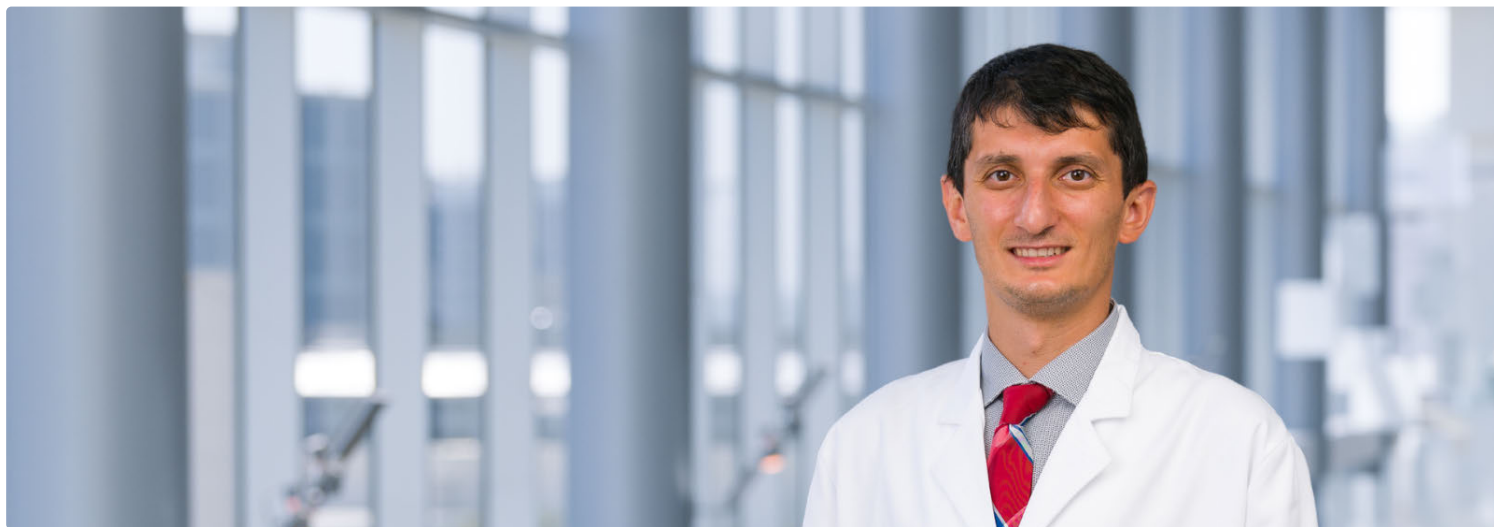


medicine minute

December 2, 2025

kudos



Bat Selected to Serve on UPA Scientific Advisory Board

The United Porphyrias Association (UPA) has appointed **Taha Bat, M.D.**, an Assistant Professor in the Division of Hematology and Oncology, to its Scientific Advisory Board.

UPA supports patients and physicians in the diagnosis and treatment of porphyria, a group of rare metabolic disorders that affect the production of heme, an essential component of hemoglobin. These conditions can cause severe neurological and skin symptoms, making specialized care and research critical.

Dr. Bat specializes in bone marrow failure syndromes, porphyria, clonal hematopoiesis, and platelet disorders.

"I am honored to join UPA's Scientific Advisory Board and contribute to advancing research and improving care for individuals living with porphyria," said Dr. Bat. "This role provides an opportunity to collaborate with leading experts from throughout the nation and help shape strategies that could make a real difference for patients." ■

research report



PI Town Hall Scheduled for Dec. 3

A Town Hall for the Department's principal investigators (PIs) will be held on **Wednesday, Dec. 3, at noon in D1.502**. Updates will be presented on Department research funding, pre- and post-award grant support, and what has been happening with new grant activations and non-competing renewals. Lunch will be provided.

[RSVP for Lunch at the Town Hall](#)



New Ultrasound Protocol May Transform Heart Failure Assessment

A UT Southwestern team has introduced a novel 4-stage point-of-care ultrasound (POCUS) protocol to estimate right atrial pressure (RAP) by comparing the internal jugular vein (IJV) and carotid artery (CA) areas. This method could offer a practical alternative to traditional inferior vena cava imaging, which is currently the most common approach.

"POCUS is emerging as part of the physical examination," said Dr. Mark Drazner, a Professor in the Division of Cardiology, Vice Chair of Clinical Affairs, and senior author of the study. "We developed and validated a protocol to estimate RAP—a key assessment in managing heart failure. While IJV imaging may have advantages over the inferior vena cava, there has been no universally accepted, easy-to-perform method. We believe our protocol may fill that void, though further validation is needed."

In a cohort of 117 patients with heart failure or pulmonary hypertension undergoing pulmonary artery catheterization, RAP increased stepwise across the four stages ($P < 0.001$). The protocol demonstrated strong discrimination for elevated RAP (≥ 10 mm Hg), with a C-statistic of 0.785. Stages 3 and 4 had an 85% positive predictive value for elevated RAP, while Stage 1 predicted normal RAP with 80% accuracy.

The findings, [reported in the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology: Heart Failure*](#), suggest that this approach could enhance bedside assessment and reduce reliance on invasive procedures, marking an important step toward integrating POCUS into routine clinical care.

Other Department members who co-authored the report include former Resident **Diana de Oliveira-Gomes, M.D.**; Resident **Rachel Drazner, M.D., M.P.H.**; former Fellow **Michelle Dimza, D.O.**; Faculty Associate **Colby Ayers, M.S.**; former Chief Resident **Angela Duvalyan, M.D.**; Associate Professor **Robert Morlend, M.D.**; Associate Professor **Faris Araj, M.D.**; Associate Professor **Ashley Hardin, M.D.**; Assistant Professor **Nicholas Hendren, M.D.**; Associate Professor **Justin Grodin, M.D., M.P.H.**; and Professor **Jennifer Thibodeau, M.D., M.S.C.S.** ■

Dr. Drazner holds the James M. Wooten Chair in Cardiology.

Dr. Thibodeau holds the Catherine Marie Bassett Distinguished Professorship in Heart Failure.

education and training

Hospice and Palliative Medicine Fellows Participate in Statewide Meeting

The Hospice and Palliative Medicine Fellows recently participated in the Texas Consortium of Hospice and Palliative Medicine Annual Meeting, held in San Antonio, an event that brought together fellows from six programs across Texas for connection, collaboration, and fellowship.

UTSW Fellowship leaders **Carla Khalaf McStay, M.D.**, and **Winnie Wang, M.D.**, facilitated engaging workshops on conflict management and career development.

Dr. Khalaf McStay, an Assistant Professor in the Palliative Care Section of the Division of General Internal Medicine and Program Director for the Hospice and Palliative Medicine Fellowship, currently serves as Vice President of the Consortium, and **Dr. Wang**, an Associate Professor in the Division of General Internal Medicine and Section Chief of Palliative Care, serves as its Academic Chair. ■

[Internal Medicine News Portal](#)

in case you missed it

News and Digital Media Featuring Internal Medicine Colleagues

- [The Obesity Society Honors Almandoz, Williams for Clinical Care, Research](#) (via *Center Times+*, with **Jaime Almandoz, M.D., M.B.A.**, and **Kevin Williams, Ph.D.**)
- [An Update from One of the 2018 Early-Stage Research Grant Recipients](#) (via Southwestern Medical Foundation, with **David Greenberg, M.D.**)
- [Three Facts About Whooping Cough and Tips to Stop its Spread](#) (via *MedBlog*, with **Sonja Bartolome, M.D.**)
- [Presurgical Vaccine May Prevent Orthopedic Device Infections](#) (via UTSW Newsroom, with **Alexander Tatara, M.D., Ph.D.**)

need to know

Start the New Year by Ensuring Your Email Signature is Brand-Compatible

Every email you send represents UT Southwestern's brand. To maintain consistency and professionalism, the Office of Communications, Marketing, and Public Affairs has created an email signature generator.

Key elements of an approved email signature:

- **Keep it simple and readable.** Avoid clutter for easy scanning.
- **Include advanced degrees and certifications** after your full name and include the designated abbreviations (e.g., **Full Name, M.B.A.**). Please note, these should be listed in the following order: Highest academic degree, followed by the next highest (Ph.D., M.B.A., M.P.H., etc.); licensures (RN, LVN, etc.); certifications (FACHE, CHCP, etc.)
- **Font:** Aptos
- **Font size:** 11pt.

- **Font colors:** Names are in blue (Hex: #004c97) but all other typography is black
- **Prohibited:** Taglines, photos, images, graphic badges, social icons, or unapproved text (including the UT Southwestern logo, which is automatically appended to every email sent from Outlook).

Don't delay. Review and update your email signature today to ensure compliance. ■

UTSW Email Signature Generator

Enrollment Now Open for ABIM Longitudinal Knowledge Assessment

If you are due for an American Board of Internal Medicine (ABIM) assessment in 2026, you can enroll now in the [Longitudinal Knowledge Assessment](#) (LKA). The LKA is a five-year assessment cycle that offers 30 questions each quarter covering the breadth of the discipline. You have five minutes to answer each question, and the assessment is open book, so you can use any resource you use in practice except another physician. You can skip up to 100 questions over five years, and the questions expire at the end of each quarter. Enroll early to ensure you have the maximum amount of time to answer questions.

Registration for the [traditional, 10-year Maintenance of Certification](#) (MOC) exam is also now open for those who prefer this assessment option. ■

Enroll Through the ABIM Physician Portal

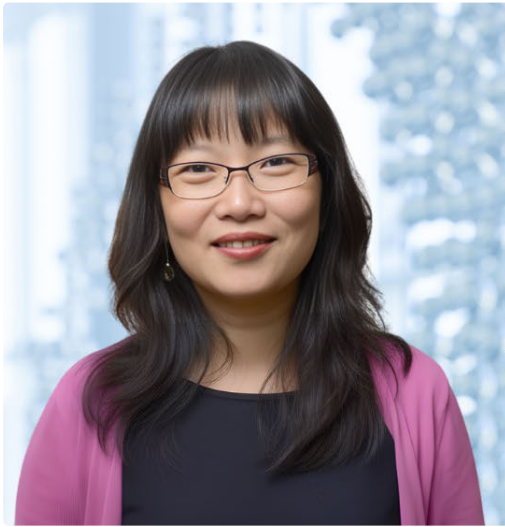
this week



INTERNAL MEDICINE Department Forum

Burstein to Present Department Forum on Dec. 5

Ezra Burstein, M.D., Ph.D., Professor and Interim Chair, will present the Internal Medicine Department Forum on Friday, Sept. 5, at 8 a.m. in D1.502. All members of the Department are welcome to attend the in-person event or watch at one of the satellite locations. ■



Chook to Share Insights on Molecular Transport at Research Conference

Yuh Min Chook, Ph.D., a Professor of Pharmacology, will present the Internal Medicine Research Conference on **Friday, Dec. 5, at noon** in **D1.502**. Her topic: "Signals and Blockers in Nuclear-Cytoplasmic Transport."

Dr. Chook holds a bachelor's degree in chemistry and biology from Bryn Mawr College and a doctoral degree from Harvard University, where she studied the structure and function of chorismate mutase under Nobel laureate William Lipscomb, Ph.D. She later completed postdoctoral research in Toronto with Emil Pai, Ph.D., and Tony Pawson, Ph.D., focusing on cell signaling in the Ras pathway, and at Rockefeller University with Nobel laureate Günter Blobel, M.D., Ph.D., studying how proteins enter the cell nucleus.

She joined the UT Southwestern faculty in 2001.

Dr. Chook's lab investigates how molecules move between the nucleus and cytoplasm and how nuclear transport receptors, called Karyopherin- β (Kap β s), control these processes. Her team uses structural biology, biochemistry, biophysics, bioinformatics, and cell biology to understand Kap β s' roles in organizing and regulating cellular functions. ■

Other Upcoming Lectures & Conferences of Note

- **Tuesday, Dec. 2, Noon:** [Hematology & Oncology Faculty Recruitment Seminar](#) with **Dr. Jasmin Hundal** (Cleveland Clinic) – "Impact of Cardiometabolic Health and Immune Cell Dynamics on Immunotherapy Outcomes in Breast Cancer"
- **Tuesday, Dec. 2, Noon:** [Pathology Seminar](#) with **Dr. Diyua Yu** (MD Anderson Cancer Center) – "Coevolution of Cancer Cells and TME in Metastasis and Therapeutic Resistance"
- **Thursday, Dec. 4, 8 a.m.:** [Infectious Diseases Grand Rounds](#) with **Dr. Helen King** (Infectious Diseases & Geographic Medicine) – "What's Hot in STI and HIV Prevention?"
- **Thursday, Dec. 4, Noon:** [Renal Grand Rounds](#) with **Dr. Asra Kermani** (Endocrinology) – "GLP1 Therapy in Diabetic Kidney Disease: A Clinical Approach"
- **Friday, Dec. 5, 12:15 p.m.:** [Endocrine Grand Rounds](#) with **Dr. Niki Parikh** (Urology) – "Shared Hormones, Shared Patients: The Endocrine-Urologic Interface in Men's Health"
- **Friday, Dec. 5, 2:30 p.m.:** [CORT Lecture](#) with **Dr. Al Hassanein** (Indiana University) – "Lymphedema: A Translational Preventive Approach"

on the horizon



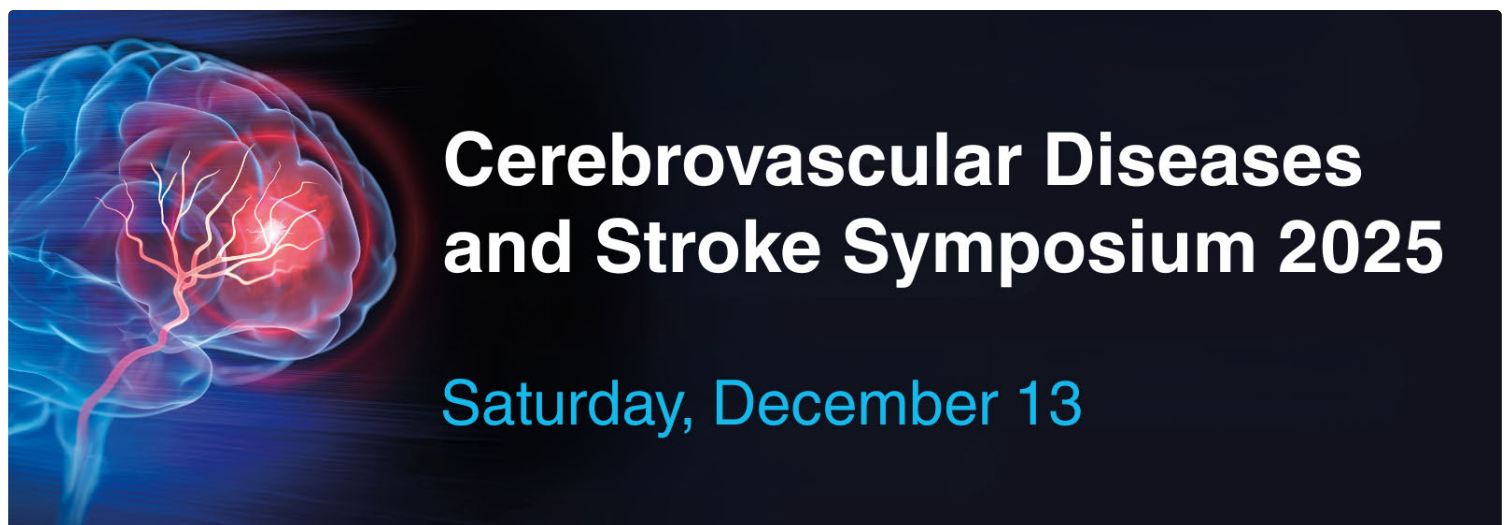
UTHSC Houston's Jun Wang to Present Moss Heart Center Seminar on Dec. 11

Jun Wang, Ph.D., an Associate Professor of Pediatrics in the Pediatric Research Center at UT Health Science Center at Houston, will present the Moss Heart Center Seminar on **Thursday, Dec. 11, at noon in NA6.212**. Her topic: "Beat or Not to Beat: A Hippo in the Sinoatrial Node."

Dr. Wang earned her doctorate from Texas A&M Health Science Center and completed postdoctoral training at Baylor College of Medicine. Her research spans cardiovascular science, craniofacial biology, stem cells, and regenerative medicine.

She has received numerous honors, including the American Heart Association (AHA) Established Investigator Award, Lawrence Bone Research Award, and the Breakthrough in Science Award. Her work has been published in leading journals such as *Circulation*, *Development*, *Developmental Cell*, *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS)*, *Nature*, *Science*, and *Science Signaling*. She has secured multiple National Institutes of Health and AHA grants as a principal investigator.

Beyond research, Dr. Wang actively contributes to academic service through national and international grant review panels and leadership roles in professional societies. She is a frequently invited speaker and session chair at global conferences and plays a key role in graduate education and seminar organization across institutions. ■



Cerebrovascular Diseases and Stroke Symposium Set for Dec. 13

Markey McNutt, M.D., Ph.D., an Associate Professor in the Division of Clinical Genetics; **Dharam Kumbhani, M.D.**, a Professor in the Division of Cardiology and Director of Interventional Cardiology; and **Ibrahim Ibrahim, M.D.**, an Associate Professor in the Division of Hematology and Oncology and Director of the Blood Disorders Clinic, will be among the presenters at the **Cerebrovascular Diseases and Stroke Symposium on Saturday, Dec. 13., in NG3.112**.

Sponsored by the O'Donnell Brain Institute, the symposium will provide timely updates on cerebrovascular disease and stroke care, including emerging interventions, use of devices, and practical reviews of complex cases. Speakers will examine the impact of the recent landmark stroke trial with direct relevance to patient management. ■



Jon Garinn
Medicine Minute Editor

Look for the next *Medicine Minute* on **Tuesday, Dec. 9, 2025**.

Want to access an item in a previous edition of the newsletter? [Check our *Medicine Minute* archive.](#)

Share feedback and news items with us at IMNews@UTSouthwestern.edu

Copyright 2025 UT Southwestern Medical Center. All rights reserved.

Medicine Minute is a publication of the Department of Internal Medicine at UT Southwestern Medical Center.