



## THIRD NORTH AMERICAN CONGRESS OF EPIDEMIOLOGY

Montreal, Canada  
June 21st-24th, 2011

<http://www.epicongress2011.org>



As co-chair of the meeting, **Dr. Jonine Bernstein** invites you to attend the Third North American Congress of Epidemiology. More than 20 epidemiologic societies and over 100 Congress Faculty are involved in sponsoring and planning this event. Participants will include epidemiologic researchers, methodologists, educators, and policy makers from academia, public health, government, and industry. This is the most significant meeting in the field and it is held only once every 5 years.

Please consider submitting an abstract proposal due January 10, 2011. View the Congress website for submission guidelines, preliminary agenda, and other meeting details. Registration information will follow in the next few months.

We look forward to seeing you in Montreal on June 21st-24th, 2011!

## PRIVACY POLICY AT MSKCC

### Did you know...?

The privacy policy at MSKCC is governed in part by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) Privacy Rule, which covers three broad areas:

- ❖ patient privacy,
- ❖ electronic security, and
- ❖ standards for electronic transactions.

The goal of the Privacy Rule is to assure that individuals' health information is properly protected while allowing the flow of health information needed to provide and promote high quality health care and to protect the public's health and well being. At all times, staff are expected to comply with the privacy policy. For further information, please see the institution's policy: <http://mskweb5.mskcc.org/intranet/html/95114.cfm>



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## BASCH TEAM AWARDS

- ❖ In October, **Dr. Ethan Basch** and **Dr. Antonia Bennett** were awarded a Department of Defense Idea Development Award for the development of pain endpoint models for use in cancer drug approval and labeling. Despite the significant impact pain has on patients with advanced prostate cancer, there are no established methods of measuring pain in clinical trials. Creating a reliable metric for pain associated with prostate cancer will facilitate the development of drugs to reduce pain in men with prostate cancer and better enable clinical trials to evaluate the full scope of patients' quality of life.
- ❖ **Dr. Thomas Atkinson** and other members of Ethan Basch's research team were awarded the 2010 Best Clinical Poster of the Year at the 17<sup>th</sup> Annual ISOQOL Conference. Their poster, "Associations of Patient vs. Clinician Adverse Event Reports with Functional Status," reported a prospective study of adverse symptom event reporting by patients and clinicians, which demonstrated that patient-reported information is a better indicator of daily overall health status than clinician reports. These results underline the clinical and scientific value of patient-reported adverse symptom events and are further evidence that scientists, regulators, and clinicians should have access to this information when evaluating drugs for their inclusion in clinical trials. Dr. Atkinson's coinvestigators were **Xiaoyu Jia**, **Laura Sit**, **Mike Fruscione**, **Dawn Lavene**, **Mary Shaw**, **Lauren Rogak**, **Glenn Heller**, and **Ethan Basch**.
- ❖ In September, **Dr. Ethan Basch** was awarded a 5-year NCI contract, "Development of the Patient-Reported Outcomes version of the Common Terminology Criteria for Adverse Events (PRO-CTCAE)." This award is to expand the capabilities of the current PRO-CTCAE system and support validation and feasibility research in the NCI cooperative group network. The three primary aims of the contract are to increase accessibility of the PRO-CTCAE system for cancer patients and researchers, including translation of the items in Spanish; conducting a feasibility study in NCI clinical trial networks; and to evaluate shared (patient-clinician) and stand-alone (patient only) models for symptoms adverse event reporting. Dr. Jennifer Hay is a coinvestigator on this contract.



Ethan Basch, MD

## RECENT PRESENTATION

- ❖ **Dr. Antonia Bennett** was a panelist for a patient-reported outcomes research discussion, "Is Any Data Better Than No Data? The Use of Mixed Modalities for PRO Data Collection in Clinical Trials" at the International Society for Pharmacoeconomics and Outcomes Research 13th Annual European Congress. The meeting was held in Prague, Czech Republic on November 7th, 2010. She presented the potential benefits of mixed mode data collection (e.g. web and interactive voice response [IVR]) which include less non-ignorable missing data and a method for adjusting power calculations.



Antonia Bennett, PhD

## VICTORIA BLINDER GRANT

In October, **Dr. Victoria Blinder** was awarded a 5-year grant by the American Cancer Society to support her project: "Ethnic Differences in the Impact of Breast Cancer on Employment Status, Financial Situation, and Quality of Life." The objective of Dr. Blinder's study is to compare the impact of breast cancer on employment, income, and quality of life in African American, Caucasian, and Latina women. A cohort of breast cancer survivors will be prospectively followed along with a cohort of healthy ethnicity-matched women in order to distinguish cancer-specific effects from those due to fluctuations in the economy. Through this study, we will gain a more complete understanding of the economic impact of breast cancer and of whether women of different ethnicities may be disparately impacted by the disease. These results will ultimately inform the development of ethnically sensitive and relevant interventions to improve the lives of breast cancer survivors and their families.

December 6, 11:30 AM – 12:30 PM  
Rockefeller Research Lab Room 117

❖ "Electronic Health Record Use, Delegation, and Productivity in Primary Care"

Julia Adler-Milstein

Doctoral Candidate, PhD Program in Health Policy, Harvard University

January 21, 10:30 AM – 11:30 AM

❖ John Browne, PhD

Associate Professor of Epidemiology and Public Health, Department of Epidemiology and Public Health, University College Cork

## PREVENTION, CONTROL & POPULATION RESEARCH SEMINARS

December 14, 4:00 PM – 5:00 PM  
1275 York Avenue, Room M-107

❖ "Public Health Genomics: Closing the Gap between Genome Discoveries and Population Health Benefits"

Dr. Muin Khoury

Director, Office of Public Health

Genomics at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

January 11, 4:00 PM – 5:00 PM  
1275 York Avenue, Room M-107

❖ Timothy R. Rebbeck, PhD

Professor of Epidemiology  
Department of Biostatistics & Epidemiology  
University of Pennsylvania

## STAFF PROMOTION

❖ **Erica Schubert** was promoted to Research Study Assistant III.

Please join us in congratulating our secretaries who have been promoted. Their new position, "Research Secretaries" more adequately describes the tasks and responsibilities of their jobs.

❖ **Joseph Christoff** – Research Secretary III

❖ **Joey Kanik** – Research Secretary II

❖ **Simone Hutchinson** – Research Secretary II

## STAFF ACHIEVEMENTS

❖ **Ravi Jagannathan** ran the New York City Marathon this November and dedicated the run to his mother. Despite cramping, he finished the race. This is his fourth full marathon so far and the second this year. He plans to run the National Breast Cancer marathon in February 2011.

## CRG CORNER

The Clinical Research Database (CRDB) runs on three platforms including CRDB Client, CRDB Web and CRDBi. The Computer Resource Group (CRG) introduced new forms, reports, and additional data collection tools including:

- ❖ CCL Specimen Relocation Form
- ❖ GU Specimen Request Form



CRDBi is the web client platform of the Clinical Research Database. The release version is currently CRDBi 1.21.2.

## FAREWELL TO LARRY ENGEL

**Dr. Larry Engel** is relocating to Chapel Hill, NC and has accepted a position as Associate Professor of Epidemiology at the University of North Carolina, School of Public Health. He will begin his new position February 1, 2011. In addition to teaching a course in environmental epidemiology, Larry will continue a research project started with several collaborators at MSKCC investigating the relationship between polymorphisms in genes related to detoxification pathways, immunity, and DNA repair to mutations in gastrointestinal stromal tumors. He will begin a large population-based study that will expand upon previous research linking environmental exposure to organochlorines to higher incidence of liver cancer. Larry will also begin a prospective study tracking several health endpoints among workers cleaning the BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. Biological samples will be collected from approximately 55,000 individuals working in the clean-up effort and measurements of neurological, immunological, and pulmonary health as well as incidence of cancers will be tracked for a period of at least ten years. The study will investigate the different jobs performed by the workers and the different biological exposures.

Dr. Engel's work at MSKCC focused on environmental and occupational risk factors for cancer and the role of genetic susceptibility. Larry is the Principal Investigator of a study examining the relationship of blood levels of organochlorines and aflatoxins with the risk of primary liver cancer. He is also Principal Investigator for a study of breast cancer risk within a large agricultural cohort; he is currently examining the roles of pesticide and sun exposures in genetic variation in the vitamin D pathway. Larry has been with the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics at MSKCC for seven years. We wish him well and best of luck in his future endeavors.

## RECENT PUBLICATION



❖ In a paper recently published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, **Cami Sima**, **Katherine Panageas** and Deborah Schrag demonstrated that a sizeable proportion of patients living with advanced cancers continue to receive routine cancer screening tests that are unlikely to provide a meaningful benefit.

**Sima CS, Panageas KS, Schrag D.** *Cancer screening among patients with advanced cancer.* JAMA. 2010 Oct 13;304(14):1584-91.

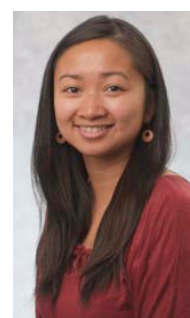
## STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Please join us in welcoming our new staff!

❖ **Paige Nobles, MA** Research Study Assistant, Health Outcomes Group  
Paige holds a MA in Counseling for Mental Health and Wellness from New York University. Prior to coming to MSKCC, she worked at the Center for Health, Identity, Behavior, and Prevention Studies at NYU. She is working with **Elena Elkin** and investigators at Weill Medical College on a study of decision support tools for women considering screening mammography.

❖ **Sean Ryan, MS** Research Study Assistant, Health Outcomes Group  
Sean recently graduated with an MS in Rehabilitation Psychology from the University of Wisconsin. He will be joining **Ethan Basch**'s research team to facilitate patient self-reports of symptoms for the STAR study (IRB 04-020), interviewing patients and clinicians about their experience with the PRO-CTCAE platform (IRB 10-072), and validation of the PRO-CTCAE items (study pending).

❖ **Amethyst Saldia, BS** Research Study Assistant, Epidemiology Service  
Amethyst holds a BS in Brain, Behavior and Cognitive Science from the University of Michigan. After graduating from college, Amethyst worked as a Community HealthCorps\*VISTA member at the Ryan/Chelsea-Clinton Community Health Center in New York. She will be working with Dr. Robert Kurtz and **Dr. Sara Olson** on the *Pancreatic Cancer Family Registry* (IRB 02-102)



## EPIDEMIOLOGY & BIostatISTICS HOLIDAY FOOD DRIVE

This holiday season we are organizing a food drive for the Food Bank For NYC, the city's largest food bank working to end hunger in the five boroughs. **Through Monday, December 20th**, we will be collecting and donating canned food to help those New Yorkers most in need.

Please join the rest of the staff in bringing nonperishable food donations and placing them in the boxes on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floor reception areas as well as desk 356c. The top ten most needed items include *canned* beans, milk, fruit, vegetables, juice, meat, fish, soup, stew and peanut butter. The lists of items most in need are posted on the cork board on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floors. Items must also be:

- ❖ In the original package, unopened
- ❖ With an expiration date
- ❖ In a plastic jar, aluminum or other container, but no glass

For more information on the Food Bank For NYC, please visit: [www.foodbanknyc.org](http://www.foodbanknyc.org).