As the major program in North Texas caring for children with gastrointestinal (GI) disorders, the Division of Gastroenterology at UT Southwestern provides patient-centered care to an ever expanding population. Our mission is to improve the lives of children with gastrointestinal and liver diseases through quality care, innovative clinical programs, education and training of healthcare providers, and state-of-the-art basic, translational, and clinical research.

This nationally recognized division includes distinguished individuals focusing on diverse areas of Gastroenterology, including molecular biology of cholestatic liver disease, neurogastroenterology, chronic viral hepatitis, inflammatory bowel disease, therapeutic endoscopy, intestinal rehabilitation, and liver transplantation.

We continue to provide a full-service outreach consultative practice at Children’s at Legacy and have opened an outreach GI consultation clinic at Southlake. Both of these outreach practices are thriving and have substantially increased our new patient visits.

Specialized multidisciplinary clinics include:
- Chronic abdominal pain (GI, anesthesiology/pain management, psychology)
- Aero-digestive disorders (GI, ENT, pulmonary, psychology)
- Cystic fibrosis (GI, pulmonary, nutrition, psychology)
- Inflammatory bowel disease (GI, nutrition, psychology)
- Intestinal failure (GI, surgery, nutrition and psychology)

Faculty

The Division underwent a change in leadership at the end of 2011 as Dr. John Andersen, who led the division for 21 years, accepted a new position as Vice Chair of Clinical Operations for the Department of Pediatrics. Dr. Drew Feranchak was appointed the new Director for the Division of Gastroenterology and was named the Willis C. Maddrey, M.D. Professor of Liver Disease. Additionally, Dr. Brad Barth was appointed the new Clinical Director for the Division.

Other changes include the addition of two new faculty members to our division last year. We are pleased to recognize recruitment of Dr. Amal Aqul, a clinical hepatologist specializing in the care of children with liver disorders, and Dr. Edaire Cheng a physician-scientist studying the pathogenesis of eosinophilic esophagitis, who both completed their pediatric gastroenterology fellowships at UT Southwestern in 2011. This brings the total number of full-time faculty to 17. The other division faculty are:

- Nandini Channabasappa, M.D.  
  Assistant Professor
- Amal Dutta, M.D., Ph.D.  
  Assistant Professor
- Aakash Goyal, M.D.  
  Assistant Professor
- Koorosh Kooros, M.D.  
  Assistant Professor
- Qin Li, M.D., Ph.D.  
  Instructor
- Ashish Patel, M.D.  
  Assistant Professor
- Charina Ramirez, M.D.  
  Assistant Professor
- Norberto Rodriguez-Baez, M.D.  
  Assistant Professor
- Michael Russo, M.D.  
  Associate Professor
- Rinarani Sanghavi, M.D.  
  Assistant Professor
- Meghana Sathe, M.D.  
  Assistant Professor
- M. Gaith S. Semrin, M.D.  
  Assistant Professor

Additionally, 11 Advanced Practice Providers, including eight Nurse Practitioners and three Physician Assistants, work within the GI Division to provide additional resources to the care of our patients both in the inpatient and outpatient settings.
**Research Activities**

Funded gastroenterology research spans a wide range of important areas in both basic science and clinical investigation. Hepatology, both basic and clinical, comprises the most active area of investigation.

The Liver Research Laboratory, headed by Dr. Andrew Feranchak, is investigating basic mechanisms of bile formation and hepatobiliary transport, the regulatory role of purinergic signaling in biliary secretion, and mechanisms of fatty liver disease. Dr. Feranchak, a NIH-funded investigator, is recognized internationally for his innovative approaches to elucidating the basic mechanisms regulating bile formation and signaling within the liver. Dr. Feranchak’s research is pivotal, since it is very likely that therapeutic interventions for cholestatic liver disease await a basic understanding of the basic mechanisms of bile flow.

The Liver Research Laboratory also includes Dr. Amal Datta, supported by grants from the American Liver Foundation and Children’s Medical Center Foundation, who is investigating novel targets for the treatment of cholestatic liver disease. Dr. Qin Li is the newest member of the Liver Research Laboratory and is working to identify the pathways involved in bile formation. The Laboratory is supported by Charles Kresse, lab manager, and provides training opportunities for post-doctoral fellows, residents, and students.

Dr. Norberto Rodriguez-Baiz is the principle investigator at our site for a national, multicenter, NIH-supported study examining the causes for fulminant hepatic failure in children. Dr. Rodriguez-Baiz’s second group of studies involves treatment of chronic hepatitis B and C.

The second general area of active clinical research involves inflammation in the GI tract.

- Dr. Ashish Patel is leader of the nutritional management algorithm development for the Trailblazer Collaborative for Pediatric Inflammatory Bowel Disease.
- Dr. Edaire Cheng is exploring basic mechanisms responsible for the pathogenesis of eosinophilic esophagitis, while Dr. John Andersen is investigating new treatments for the disorder.
- Dr. Rina Sanghavi is exploring new therapies for constipation and motility disorders.

**Clinical Activities**

The nationally recognized clinical programs of the Division of Gastroenterology are housed at Children’s Medical Center Dallas with satellite activity at Children’s at Legacy and Southlake. In the patient-centered environment, 15 gastroenterology physicians, 8 gastroenterology nurse practitioners, 3 physician assistants, and a child psychologist embedded in the gastroenterology program, provide multidisciplinary, comprehensive state-of-the-art care for children with virtually any gastrointestinal or liver problem.

In addition to gastroenterologists, outpatients are seen in parallel by four nurse practitioners with the support of six nurse-coordinators and five medical assistants. The entire program is supported by a psychologist, two full-time dieticians, child-life, social work, a pharmacist and an enterostomal therapist/educator.

Gastroenterology Clinical Laboratory. The gastroenterology laboratory staff of five nurses and two medical assistants is capable of supporting not only routine endoscopic procedures, but also therapeutic endoscopy (ERCP, balloon enteroscopy and capsule endoscopy) and a full range of motility procedures (anorectal, esophageal, antroduodenal, small bowel and colonic).

The division also provides several specialized clinical programs, including:

- **Neurogastroenterology Program**, under the direction of Dr. Rina Sanghavi, provides evaluation and management of children with a wide range of disorders including abdominal pain, vomiting, constipation and complex motility disorders.

**Education and Training**

The division continues to provide new and innovative training strategies for students, residents, fellows, and junior faculty, as well as educational programs to the local community and nationally.

**The Fellowship program** directed by Drs. Norberto Rodriguez and Meghana Sathe, provides comprehensive training for six gastroenterology fellows (two annually) in specialized clinical care, diagnostic and therapeutic endoscopy, and basic and clinical research. Focused areas of research by our current fellows include:

- hepatobiliary transport physiology
- pathogenesis of eosinophilic esophagitis
- mechanisms of pruritus associated with chronic liver disease
- metabolic liver disease
- immunobiology of IBD

**Presentations/Teaching Activities**

John M. Andersen, M.D.

- “Celiac Disease,” Pediatric Grand Rounds, UT Health Science Center at Tyler, November 2011
- Amal Aqul, M.D.
- “Infusion Reaction to Infliximab,” Pediatric Morbidity and Mortality Conference,” UT Southwestern, February 2011
- “Prevention of Neurodegeneration in Niemann-Pick Type C1 Mice,” Second Pediatric Senior Fellow Conference, UT Southwestern, May 2011

**Hepatology & Liver Transplantation Program** which is producing internationally recognized research and clinical studies in acute liver failure, viral hepatitis, and chronic liver diseases. The liver transplant program ranks among the busiest in the United States with results second to none.

**Intestinal Rehabilitation Program**, under the direction of Dr. Nandini Channa, is one of the largest in the country and the only program of this type in the Southwest.

**Southwestern Center for Pediatric Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD)**, directed by Dr. Ashish Patel, provides specialized care for children with inflammatory bowel disease, conducts research into new treatments, and participates in national consortiums, such as the Trail Blazer Collaborative and the ImproveCareNow program, establishing quality improvement indicators and benchmarks in order to rapidly advance patient care and optimize outcomes.

**Therapeutic Endoscopy Program**, directed by Dr. Brad Barth, is one of fewer than 10 programs in the United States performing specialized, cutting-edge endoscopic procedures, including endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography (ERCP) in children of all ages.

Referrals are accepted for all of these programs and a Gastroenterology physician is on call daily to take calls from physicians.
Bradley Barth, M.D.

- “Getting the Most Out of Your Fellowship,” Teaching and Tomorrow Luncheon, NASPGHAN Annual Meeting, Orlando FL, October 2011

Nandini Channabassapa, M.D.

- “Overview of Gastroenterology,” UT Arlington School of Nursing, January 2011

Edaire Cheng, M.D.

- “Eotaxin-3 Expression After Stimulation with IL-13 and IL-4 in Esophageal Squamous Cell Lines from Patients with Eosinophilic Esophagitis and GERD,” Digestive Disease Week, Chicago, IL, May 2011
- “Differences in Th2 cytokine-induced Eotaxin-3 Expression in Esophageal Squamous Cell Lines from Patients with Eosinophilic Esophagitis and GERD,” NASPGHAN Annual Meeting, Orlando, FL, October 2011

Amal Dutta, M.B.B.S., Ph.D.

- “Regulation of Bile Formation by Extracellular Nucleotides,” Invited Lecturer, Digestive Health Center Seminar Series, Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center, Cincinnati, OH, March 2011
- “Regulation of Liver Bile Formation by the Vascular Nucleotide Transporter SLC17A9,” PAS and Asian Society for Pediatric Research Joint Meeting, Denver, CO, May 2011
- “Progress in Determining Causes of Neonatal Cholestatic Disorders,” PAS and Asian Society for Pediatric Research Joint Meeting, Denver, CO, May 2011
- “Regulation of Bile Formation by Mechanosensitive Pathways,” Invited Lecturer, Mount Sinai Medical Center, New York, NY, July 2011
- “Gastrointestinal Manifestations of Cystic Fibrosis,” Topic Symposium, NASPGHAN Annual Meeting, Orlando, FL, October 2011

Drew Feranchak, M.D.

- “Regulation of Bile Formation by Extracellular Nucleotides,” Invited Lecturer, Digestive Health Center Seminar Series, Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center, Cincinnati, OH, March 2011
- “Regulation of Liver Bile Formation by the Vascular Nucleotide Transporter SLC17A9,” PAS and Asian Society for Pediatric Research Joint Meeting, Denver, CO, May 2011
- “Progress in Determining Causes of Neonatal Cholestatic Disorders,” PAS and Asian Society for Pediatric Research Joint Meeting, Denver, CO, May 2011
- “Regulation of Bile Formation by Mechanosensitive Pathways,” Invited Lecturer, Mount Sinai Medical Center, New York, NY, July 2011
- “Gastrointestinal Manifestations of Cystic Fibrosis,” Topic Symposium, NASPGHAN Annual Meeting, Orlando, FL, October 2011

Koorosh Kooros, M.D.


Ashish Patel, M.D.

- “Pediatric Inflammatory Bowel Disease: A Biological Journey,” UT Southwestern, April 2011
- “Pediatric Inflammatory Bowel Disease,” UT Health Science Center at San Antonio, June 2011
- “Pediatric Inflammatory Bowel Disease, A Biological Journey,” UT Southwestern, April 2011
- “One of Best Five Abstracts, 2nd Pediatric Senior Fellow Conference, UT Southwestern
- “Honorable Mention, APS Award, GI and Liver Section
- “Best Pediatric Specialists in Dallas, D Magazine
- “Best Doctors in America
- “Top US Doctors, D Magazine
- “One of Best Five Abstracts, 2nd Pediatric Senior Fellow Conference, UT Southwestern
- “Honorable Mention, APS Award, GI and Liver Section
- “Best Pediatric Specialists in Dallas, D Magazine
- “Best Doctors in America
- “Top US Doctors, D Magazine

Michael Russo, M.D.


Rina Sanghavi, M.D.

- “Recent Advances in SMA and other Neuromuscular Disease,” Texas Scottish Rite Hospital for Children, Dallas, February 2011
- “Recent Advances in SMA and other Neuromuscular Disease,” Texas Scottish Rite Hospital for Children, Dallas, February 2011

Meghana Saile, M.D.

- “Pancreatic Enzymes and Nutrition,” Children’s Dallas CFFIT Day, April 2011
- “Baby Care,” BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha Healthfair, Dallas, April 2011
- “AGS and Nutrition; AGS and Endocrine Issues,” Aalgie’s Alliance Conference, Chicago, IL, June 2011

Awards and Honors

John M. Andersen, M.D.

- “Best Pediatric Specialists in Dallas, D Magazine
- “Texas Super Doctors, Texas Monthly
- “Top US Doctors, U.S. News
- “Best Doctors in America
- “IBCs Top 100 Health Professionals

Amal Aqul, M.D.

- “One of Best Five Abstracts, 2nd Pediatric Senior Fellow Conference, UT Southwestern
- “Honorable Mention, APS Award, GI and Liver Section
- “Best Pediatric Specialists in Dallas, D Magazine
- “Best Doctors in America
- “Top US Doctors, D Magazine

Ashish Patel, M.D.

- “Best Pediatric Specialists in Dallas, D Magazine
- “Best Doctors in America
- “Top US Doctors, D Magazine

Bradley Barth, M.D.

- “Best Pediatric Specialists in Dallas, D Magazine
- “Texas Super Doctors, Texas Monthly
- “Top US Doctors, U.S. News
- “Best Doctors in America
- “IBCs Top 100 Health Professionals

John M. Andersen, M.D.

- “Best Pediatric Specialists in Dallas, D Magazine
- “Texas Super Doctors, Texas Monthly
- “Top US Doctors, U.S. News
- “Best Doctors in America
- “IBCs Top 100 Health Professionals

Daniel J. Desilets, Jr., B.A.

- “AGS and Nutrition; AGS and Endocrine Issues,” Alagille’s Alliance Conference, Chicago, IL, June 2011

Publications


Ashish Patel, M.D.
Risk Stratification & Identification of Immunogenetic and Microbial Markers of Complicated Disease Course in Pediatric Crohn's Disease
Crohn's and Colitis Foundation/Emory University, s499572
07/01/10 – 06/30/11

Building Modular Pediatric Chronic Disease Registries (Improve Care Now)
Improve Care Now
07/01/11 – 06/30/12

Sponsored Clinical Trials

John M. Andersen, M.D.
Open-Lbl Sfty Study of Reslizumab (CTx55700) for Trtmt of Pediatric Sbjs with Eosinophilic Esophagitis Who Completed Study Res-5-0002
Cephalon Inc., Res-5-0004
10/14/09 – Present

Pharmacodynamics of Intravenous Mepolizumab in Pediatrics Subjects
GlaxoSmithKline, MEE103219
11/27/06 – Present

Reslizumab (CTX55700) in the Treatment of Eosinophilic Esophagitis
Ception Therapeutics, Award ID: RES50002
08/01/02 – Present

Study of Reslizumab in Pediatric Subjects with Eosinophilic Esophagitis
Premier Research
10/06/09 – Present

Ashish Patel, M.D.
Ph 2 Study of Certolizumab Pegol in Children & Adolescents w/Active Crohn's Disease (NURTURE Study)
UCB Biosciences, Inc., C87035
03/31/10 – Present

Multi-Center Observational Registry of Pediatric Pts w/Inflammatory Bowel Disease
Centocor Research and Development, Inc., C0168Z02
08/14/08 – Present

Norberto Rodriguez-Baez, M.D.
Evaluation of the Pharmacokinetics, Safety, Tolerability, and Efficacy of Entecavir (ETV) in Pediatric Subjects with Chronic Hepatitis B Virus (HBV) Infection who are HBeAg-Positive
Bristol-Myers Squibb Company, AI463028
04/01/07 – Present

Assessment of the Safety, Efficacy, Tolerability and Pharmacokinetics of PEG-Intron Plus REBETOL in Pediatric Patients with Chronic Hepatitis C
Schering-Plough Research Institute, P02538
11/01/05 – Present

Rinarani M. Sanghavi, M.D.
Pharmacokinetics of Lubiprostone in Pediatric Patients with Constipation
Sucampo Pharmaceuticals, SPI0211SC0641
02/01/08 – Present

Development of an Instrument to Measure Quality of Life in Children with Chronic Constipation and Soiling
Medical College of Wisconsin, 08-014LUB.01
11/01/09 – Present