

# UT Southwestern Medical Center

## Dr. Jonathan Cohen elected to National Academy of Sciences

May 3, 2022

To the UT Southwestern Community:

I am very pleased to share the news that today, Jonathan Cohen, Ph.D. was elected to the National Academy of Sciences (NAS). Election to the NAS is one of the highest honors that can be bestowed upon an American scientist. It is a wonderful event for our entire institution to have another UT Southwestern colleague join this prestigious organization.

Dr. Cohen is a Professor of Internal Medicine in the Center for Human Nutrition and the Eugene McDermott Center for Human Growth and Development and holds the C. Vincent Prothro Distinguished Chair in Human Nutrition Research. His nomination to the NAS was made by his peers in recognition of his research to identify genes that play major roles in the metabolism of cholesterol and triglycerides and to elucidate the biological roles of their protein products. For more than 20 years, Dr. Cohen has worked with Helen Hobbs, M.D., to discover genetic factors that contribute to high levels of LDL cholesterol through investigations that have included the Dallas Heart Study, a longitudinal, multiethnic, population-based study of more than 3,500 Dallas County residents. Among their findings, they discovered that mutations in a gene called PCSK9 were associated with marked reductions in plasma levels of LDL cholesterol, which led to the rapid development of a new class of cholesterol-lowering drugs.

More recently, the Hobbs-Cohen Lab identified the first genetic risk factor for fatty liver disease – both nonalcoholic and alcoholic – an increasingly common disorder that will soon overtake hepatitis C as the No.1 indication for liver transplantation.

The National Academy of Sciences is a private, nonprofit institution that recognizes achievement in science by election to membership, and – with the National Academy of Engineering and the National Academy of Medicine – provides science, engineering, and health policy advice to the federal government and various organizations.

With Dr. Cohen's election, UT Southwestern now has 26 members of the NAS, more than any institution in Texas. This is also the most NAS members we have had at any other time in our institution's nearly 80-year history.

We are extremely proud of Dr. Cohen's work, which well represents the caliber of scientific discovery taking place at UT Southwestern. Please join me in congratulating Dr. Cohen on this outstanding recognition.

Daniel K. Podolsky, M.D.  
President, UT Southwestern Medical Center