“NEUROSURGE”
MONTHLY INFORMATION FROM THE CHAIRMAN’S OFFICE
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO, DIVISION OF NEUROSURGERY

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FROM THE CHAIRMAN'S OFFICE

The Gamma Knife and The Division of Neurosurgery, The University of Toronto:

The Ministry of Health has sent out a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a Gamma Knife Unit in the Province of Ontario. I am pleased to inform you that the Divisions of Neurosurgery at St. Michael’s Hospital and The University Health Network (Toronto Western Hospital) have acted on this initiative, and have each written a proposal which will be considered by the Ministry of Health this year.

I am hopeful that the Ministry will look favorably on the University of Toronto hospitals proposals, and provide funding for a Gamma Knife Unit in Toronto which will serve as a city-wide, provincial, and national resource. I wish St. Michael’s and The Toronto Western Hospital the best of luck in their bids for the Gamma Knife.

NEUROSURGERY SUBSPECIALTY FELLOWSHIPS

The following sub-specialty fellowships at the University or Toronto are listed in the most recent AANS/CNS directory of fellowships. You will see that the University of Toronto is well represented across the board.

Cerebrovascular Surgery - Toronto Western Hospital

General Clinical - St. Michael's Hospital & Toronto Western Hospital

Neuro-oncology - Toronto Western Hospital

Neurotrauma & Critical Care - St. Michael’s Hospital & Sunnybrook Health Science Centre

Pediatric Neurosurgery - The Hospital for Sick Children

Peripheral Nerve - Toronto Western Hospital
Spine Surgery - Toronto Western Hospital

Skull Base Surgery - St. Michael’s Hospital

Stereotactic & Functional Neurosurgery - Toronto Western Hospital

Surgical Education - St. Michael’s Hospital

If there are other fellowships you would like to have listed, please let Stephanie know at 813-8441.

HONOURS AND AWARDS

Steve Casha has won the Cervical Spine Research Society Resident/Fellow award for his paper on the "Role of Oligodendrogial Apoptosis in Delayed White Matter Degeneration after Traumatic Spinal Cord Injury." This is a prestigious, international research award. His paper will be presented at the Cervical Spine Research Society Meeting in December 1999. Congratulations Steve!

Howard Ginsberg was successful in obtaining an MRC Doctoral Research Award for his work on overcoming shunt obstruction using ultrasound energy. Howard is working in the laboratory of Dr. Jim Drake, at The Hospital for Sick Children.

Ab Guha recently received a Monsanto Biomedical Research Award for his grant entitled “Transgenic modeling of human astrocytomas”.

Dr. Michael Tymianski received an RO1 grant from the NIH for his work in Molecular mechanisms of calcium dependent excitotoxicity. The chances for a non-American to receive an NIH-sponsored award these days are less than 1%. Congratulations to Michael on this outstanding achievement!

Warren Ho successfully transferred to the PhD program within the Institute of Medical Sciences for his research project on the utility of differential display in identifying novel genes in a global ischemia model. His supervisors are Chris Wallace and Jim Eubanks.

Todd Mainprize received a National Cancer Institute of Canada research fellowship for work in the Arthur and Sonia Labatt Brain Tumour Research Centre. He is supervised by Jim Rutka.

PUBLICATIONS


Feldkamp M, Lau N, Rak J, Kerbel R, Guha A. Astrocytoma cell lines express high levels of vascular endothelial growth factor (VEGH), which is reduced by inhibition of the Ras signaling pathway. Int J Cancer 81:118-124, 1999


The major neuroscience journals will be scanned, and a Medline search will be performed every month for each Neurosurgical Staff. If you have other publications in journals not tracked by these methods, please give the details to Stephanie at 813-8441.

RESIDENTS’ CORNER

Tying the knot!

On August 21, 1999, Brad Jacobs (PGY2) and Judy Elder were married in Calgary, Alberta.

On September 25, 1999, Sheila Singh (PGY3) and Stephan Gacesa were married in Dundas, Ontario.

Congratulations to our neurosurgery resident newlyweds!

American Board of Neurological Surgeons Primary Written Examination:

The ABNS primary written examination will take place Saturday March 25th, 2000. The deadline for receipt of applications is January 7th, 2000. Application forms are available through Stephanie, in Dr. Rutka’s office. The Dan Chair fund will continue to support residents taking this examination, but you must book now!

Neurosurgery Opportunities

I am pleased to inform the residents that by going to http://www.neurosurgery-online.com/ and entering your password and user numbers, you can find a number of neurosurgical job opportunities that are listed for Canada and the United States. If you go to this site, you will see that there are opportunities, and this information is updated regularly.

WEB SITE OF THE MONTH

With this and subsequent issues of NEUROSURGE, an educational website will be posted which will contain useful information for neurosurgery residents and staff. This one was brought to my attention by Raj Midha:
This web page has links to their online emergency medicine book, which has good chapters pertinent to neurosurgery, eg. status epilepticus. They are also soliciting chapters for their neurology Ebook, due out Jan.2000. A comprehensive set of chapters have been selected but there may be others that residents or staff in our faculty could propose. The company will pay $500.00 USD for well-written contributions!

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES
The following information was provided by Michael Fehlings, Research Director.

1. Canadian Health Services Research Foundation (CHSRF) - New Key Dates for Upcoming CHSRF Competitions. Deadline for submission of LOIs: NOVEMBER 30TH, 1999

2. Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario Fellowship Award deadline: NOVEMBER 1ST, 1999

3. University of Toronto - Connaught New Staff Matching Grant. Deadline for submission of application: DECEMBER 1ST, 1999


5. The Pediatric Brain Tumor Foundation of the United States has issued two RFA; s. The deadline for receipt of applications is NOVEMBER 1ST, 1999.

6. Annual Neurotrauma Funding for injury prevention, rehabilitation and biomedical research of spinal cord and traumatic brain injuries. The deadline for the 2000 Grants Competition is FEBRUARY 1ST, 2000.

7. The Huntington Society of Canada and MRC/Fellowship Awards. Closing date for applications is NOVEMBER 1ST, 1999

8. Epilepsy Canada research fellowships and the Parke-Davis Fellowship. Deadline DECEMBER 1ST, 1999

9. Medical Research Council of Canada (MRC) - Childhood Cancer Foundation - Candlelighters Canada/MRC Fellowship Award. DEADLINE NOVEMBER 1ST, 1999.

QUESTION OF THE WEEK
(Prepared by Robin Humphreys)

All the following statements concerning myelin are true EXCEPT

(A) in the peripheral nervous system, myelin is formed from Schwann cells
(B) the plasmalemma of the Schwann cell surrounds an axon and spirals around the axon in concentric layers
(C) the spaces between Schwann cells will become nodes of Ranvier
(D) the same group of proteins are found in myelin of both the central and peripheral nervous systems
(E) in oligodendrocytes the genes that encode myelin are "turned on" by the presence of axons

ANSWER TO LAST MONTH’S QUESTION (September NEUROSURGE volume 1; issue 1)

The answers are 1B, 2A, 3G, 4A, 5F
Structures associated with motor functions such as alpha motor neurons, are derived from the basal plate (B). Structures associated with sensory functions such as the proper sensory nucleus and the spinal nucleus of cranial nerve V, are derived from the alar plate (A). A number of structures such as the dorsal root ganglia, sympathetic ganglia and chromaffin cells of the adrenal medulla are derived from neural crest cells (G). The choroid plexus is attached to the roof of most portions of the ventricles and is thus derived from the roof plate (F).

A reminder that some of these questions will appear on an in-house neuroanatomy "quiz" which will take place periodically throughout the year.

UPCOMING NEUROSURGICAL MEETINGS

NATIONAL/NORTH AMERICAN:

Congress of Neurological Surgeons, Boston, October 30-November 4, 1999

The following is a preliminary schedule of the U of T Division of Neurosurgery Resident and Staff involvement at the Congress meeting in Boston. You will see that U of T Neurosurgery is well-represented at the Congress. Congratulations to all participants!

Practical Courses
Dr. MC Wallace, Surgery of the Carotid Artery: Indications and Techniques
Dr. M Fehlings, Cervical Spine Stabilization

Luncheon Seminars
Dr. RP Humphreys, Craniosynostosis: Controversies in Treatment
Dr. R. Midha, Surgical Management of Brachial Plexus Pathology
Dr. MG Fehlings, Current Management of Odontoid Fractures
Dr. RG Perrin, Management Strategies for Spinal Neoplasms
Dr. JT Rutka, Treatment of Craniohypophysealomas
Dr. JM Drake, Managing Shunt Complications

Scientific Program
Dr. JT Rutka, Publishing Scientific Articles in ‘Neurosurgery’
Dr. MC Wallace, Controversies in the Management of Brain Stem Cavernous Malformations
Dr. AM Lozano, Transplantation and Functional Restoration
Dr. JT Rutka, Pediatric Brain Tumors: From the Laboratory Bench to the Operating Room
Dr. JM Drake, Shunt Technology: How to Choose a Valve
Dr. AM Lozano, Deep Brain Stimulation
Dr. WP Ng, Dr. A Lozano Regeneration of Transected Optic Nerve Axons in vivo.
Dr. EC Tsai, Dr. Tator Results of Management of Syringomyelia: Long Term Clinical and MRI Followup in 89 Cases
Dr. AV Kulkarni, Dr. J Drake Observer Reliability of the Frontal and Occipital Ho Ratio Measurement of Ventricular Size
Dr. P. Vannemreddy, M Fazl, Factors Influencing Neurological Deficit and Spinal Alignment in Cervical Spine Facet Injuries: Differences between Unilateral and Bilateral Facet Injury
Dr. S Tuli, Dr. J. Drake Risk factors for repeat cerebrospinal shunt failures in pediatric hydrocephalus

Canadian Brain Tumour Network (CBTnet) meeting at PMH, December 3-4, 1999:
Ab Guha has organized this year’s CBTNet meeting to take place in Toronto. Funding has been secured by Ab to support the travel of Clinicians and Scientists from across Canada to attend. All residents wishing to attend this meeting must notify either Ab Guha or Diane Chea (diane@MNI.Lan.McGill.ca) as soon as possible. This event will be hosted conjointly by the Arthur and Sonia Labatt Brain Tumor Centre and the Pencer Brain Tumor Centre. For further information, please call 603-5740.

Canadian Surgical Education: Past, Present and Future, Halifax, Nova Scotia, November 18-20, 1999

AANS/CNS Section on Pediatric Neurological Surgery, Atlanta, Georgia, December 1-4, 1999

Joint Meeting of the AANS/CNS Section on Cerebrovascular Surgery & American Society of Interventional and Therapeutic Neuroradiology, New Orleans, Louisiana, February 6-9, 2000

AANS/CNS Section on Disorders of the Spine and Peripheral Nerves, Indian Wells, California, February 23-26, 2000

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO:

City Wide Peripheral Nerve Rounds, Wednesday, November 3, 1999 5 pm, 2nd floor conference room, McLaughlin Pavilion Room 415, Toronto Western Hospital; Title: 1- Radiation Induced Peripheral Nerve Tumors, Presenter: Gelareh Zadeh, Ab Guha; Title2- VEGF-Receptor Inhibition in Neurogenic Sarcomas Presenter: Lily Angelov, Ab Guha

Botterell Lectureship, November 22nd, 1999, Visiting guest lecturer, Dr. Peter McL. Black, Neurosurgeon-in-Chief, Boston Children’s Hospital and Brigham and Women’s Hospital, Franc D. Ingraham Professor of Neurosurgery, Harvard Medical School. Residents are reminded to send their work in for the Horsey Prize.


RESIDENT SEMINAR SERIES

OCT. 1ST CANCELLED - UNIVERSITY ROUNDS

OCT. 8TH NEUROPHYSIOLOGICAL MONITORING DR. D. ROWED

OCT. 15TH CITY WIDE ROUNDS 0700-0900 HOURS

TORONTO WESTERN HOSPITAL

OCT. 22ND PEER REVIEW PROCESS IN NEUROSURGERY DR. J. RUTKA

ROOM 1248, ELM STREET, FIRST FLOOR, HSC

MANDITORY ATTENDANCE

OCT. 29TH NEURO-UROLOGY DR. D. BAGLI

The seminars will be held at The Hospital for Sick Children from 0800-1000 hours in Room 1527, 1st Floor, Gerrard Wing, unless otherwise indicated.

NEXT HEADS OF DIVISIONS MEETING
Thursday, October 14th, 1999 0700-0800 hours, Room 4109, Fourth Floor Elm Wing

RESIDENCY PROGRAM COMMITTEE MEETING –
Tuesday, October 12th, 1999 0700-0800 hours, Room 1445, First Floor Gerrard Wing