

BRENDEN-COLSON CENTER FOR PANCREATIC CARE



The Brenden-Colson Center for Pancreatic Care is a patient-centric research hub for programs that focus on three main areas essential for alleviating suffering from pancreatic diseases: Earlier Detection, Advanced Therapy, and Patient Resilience.

Our Newsletter serves as a way for us to stay connected, share community events, and provide updates on the successes and progress the Center is making.

In the news this month:

- Meet Paige Arneson-Wissink, Ph.D.
- Biological Dynamics and the BCCPC Collaborate on Early-Stage Pancreatic Cancer Detection Study
- 2023 Faculty Excellence and Innovation Award
- 2023 Young Physician-Scientist Award
- Upcoming Events
 - *New Series!* Pancreatitis Research Collaborative (March 6)
 - Basic & Translational Sciences Seminar (March 6)
 - Pancreas Research Monthly (March 10)
 - *CME Conference* Benign Pancreas Disease: Updates in Treatments and Research (March 18)
 - "Team OHSU" PurpleStride Registration is Open
- "A Conversation About Pancreatic Cancer in the Black Community"
- Recent Publications

- Conferences for Your Calendar

Meet Paige Areneson-Wissink, Ph.D.



Originally from the Midwest, Dr. Arneson-Wissink completed her Ph.D. at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota in 2021. She worked with Dr. Jason Doles studying the impacts of dysfunctional muscle regeneration on cancer cachexi— a complex syndrome, particularly common in pancreatic cancer, characterized by muscle wasting that occurs even with proper nutrition. Dr. Arneson-Wissink's interest in how a disease in one part of the body (like the pancreas) has far-reaching impacts on other tissues (like the muscle) brought her to OHSU to continue studying pancreatic cancer cachexia in the Grossberg and Marks labs as a postdoctoral scholar. She is excited to be working in the BCCPC with so many talented scientists studying pancreatic disease.

Dr. Arneson-Wissink's current project focuses on how pancreatic cancer induces changes in liver metabolism, and the impacts this has on muscle. Her preliminary findings suggest that inflammatory signaling in the liver impairs ketogenesis, a metabolic process that allows the liver to send fuel to the brain and other tissues during periods of nutritional scarcity. When ketogenesis is impaired in mice with pancreatic cancer, they lose muscle mass. When they restore ketogenesis, by blocking inflammatory signaling or through dietary interventions, mice with pancreatic cancer retain muscle mass. The next step of her project is to investigate how disruption of ketogenesis might persist after cancer recovery. Studying muscle preservation in pancreatic cancer is important because loss of muscle mass leads to decreased quality of life and limits patient eligibility for life-saving anti-tumor interventions.

Dr. Arneson-Wissink has already proven to be a strong scientist, having won one of the poster awards at our recent BCCPC Scientific Retreat, in addition to being awarded the Gender Equity in Academic Health and Medicine 2023 Professional in Training Award. Dr. Arneson-Wissink is passionate about science and

teaching, so her ideal career would be leading a research team while mentoring and teaching students in an academic setting.

Fun fact: Dr. Arneson-Wissink loves the snow! So, this past snow storm was a treat!

Biological Dynamics and the BCCPC Collaborate on Early-Stage Pancreatic Cancer Detection Study

For patients diagnosed with advanced disease, pancreatic cancer is highly lethal.

Co-Directors of the BCCPC, Rosalie Sears, Ph.D. and Brett Sheppard M.D., FACS, emphasize the importance of earlier detection: "Finding tumors at an earlier stage will provide the opportunity for prompt neoadjuvant therapy followed by targeted interception with potentially curative minimally invasive surgical techniques to optimize survival and quality of life," said Dr. Sheppard. The current limitations were also explained by Dr. Sears, "Our core goal is to move the needle for high-risk patients through early PDAC diagnosis. Detection is limited using the standard imaging and endoscopy methods currently available,"

To address the need for earlier detection of pancreatic cancer, the BCCPC is collaborating with [Biological Dynamics, Inc.](#), and providing important sample cohorts to study its ExoVita™ Pancreas assay for early disease diagnostics.

Using their proprietary ExoVerita instrument to isolate extracellular vesicles from standard blood samples, the ExoVita Pancreas assay measures specific extracellular vesicle protein biomarkers. Capable of detecting Stage 1 and 2 pancreatic cancer with high sensitivity, ExoVita Pancreas is a promising diagnostic test. To test the assay's utility, Biological Dynamics initiated the [ExoLuminate](#) registry study ([NCT05625529](#))— a clinical trial enrolling patients at high-risk for PDAC to demonstrate effectiveness of early-stage detection of pancreatic cancer. BCCPC is a participating site for this exciting study.

Disclaimer: Biological Dynamics does not provide diagnostic information. ExoVita Pancreas is a 'Research Use Only' (RUO) test produced from Biological Dynamics' CAP/CLIA certified lab. Any and all clinical decision-making remains, in all cases, with patients and their physician providers.

2023 Faculty Excellence and Innovation Award



Aaron Grossberg, M.D., Ph.D., assistant professor of radiation medicine, OHSU School of Medicine, received an unrestricted three-year award. Made possible by the Silver Family Innovation fund, the competitive awards are given to exceptionally talented and promising faculty to extend leading-edge research.

Dr. Grossberg will use his award to study how pancreatic cancer affects the metabolism of fat and muscle, and identify drugs to prevent or reverse this process.

2023 Young Physician-Scientist Award



Robert Eil, M.D., assistant professor of surgery, received a 2023 Young Physician-Scientist Award from the American Society for Clinical Investigation. This award recognizes physician-scientists early in their faculty appointment who have made notable achievements in research.

Dr. Eil's research focuses on re-engineering immune cell function to develop novel treatments for colon and pancreatic cancer.

Upcoming Events

Pancreatitis Research Collaborative

The Brenden-Colson Center for Pancreatic Care is starting up a new working group we're calling our **Pancreatitis Research Collaborative**, a research and strategy hub for clinicians, surgeons, and scientists with a special interest in pancreatitis looking to develop a deeper understanding of the disease and to advance collaborative research efforts addressing it and related precursor changes in the tissue microenvironment.



During this month's Pancreatitis Research Collaborative, Dr. Cory Wyatt will be presenting on "Magnetic Resonance Fingerprinting of Pancreatitis".

Lunch will be provided!

Date: Monday, March 6, 2023

Time: 1:00-2:00PM

Location: AUD 211

For more information, contact [Swati Mishra](#).



Basic & Translational Sciences Seminar

Hosted by the Knight Cancer Institute and the Department of Cell, Developmental and Cancer Biology, Dr. Teresa Zimmers will be presenting at this month's BTS Seminar on "Cachexia: Pathological or Physiological?".

Graduate students- join us at 3:00PM at the Vollum Institute, M1446 for a Meet and Greet with Dr. Zimmers. Refreshments will be served.

Date: Monday, March 6 , 2023

Time: 4:00-5:00PM

Location: Vollum Institute, M1441

Pancreas Research Monthly

Join us this month for the BCCPC Pancreas Research Series. Dr. Kim A Reiss Binder, MD, from University of Pennsylvania will be presenting on "Novel Strategies for DNA Damage Repair Deficient Pancreatic Cancer".

Light breakfast and beverages will be provided!

Date: Friday, March 10, 2023

Time: 9:00AM-10:00AM

Location: KCRB Auditorium & [WEBEX](#)



Benign Pancreas Disease: Updates in Treatments and Research

Join the BCCPC and guest faculty, Dr. Steve Pandol (Cedars Sinai) for updates on evidence-based pancreatitis treatment strategies. This CME conference approved for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™*. Registration is free for OHSU employees, fellows and students.

Breakfast and lunch will be provided!

Date: Saturday, March 18, 2023

Time: 7:15AM-4:00PM

[Register Today](#)



"Team OHSU" PurpleStride Registration is Open!

Join the Brenden-Colson Center for Pancreatic Care and the Knight Cancer Institute for this year's PurpleStride!

[Join "Team OHSU" today!](#)

Questions? Email [Grace McCarthy](#)

“A Conversation About Pancreatic Cancer in the Black Community”

Miss PanCAN's “A Conversation About Pancreatic Cancer in the Black Community,” last month? No worries! [Watch the recording here](#).

Recent Publications

Cyclic immunohistochemistry (cycIHC) is a powerful staining technique used to map the location and number of cells of interest. Use of cycIHC has been desired in pancreatic research, especially with increased focus on the tumor microenvironment the field. Analyzing these complex and large datasets, however, requires expert data scientists to utilize several open-source tools, or the use of proprietary software. Shamilene Sivagnanam, M.S., Courtney Betts, Ph.D., and Lisa Coussens, M.D., Ph.D. recently published a user-friendly pipeline for analyzing cycIHC data in a paper entitled, "[Alignment, segmentation and neighborhood analysis in cyclic immunohistochemistry data using CASSATT](#)". Use of their open source workflow tool, CASSATT, will improve accessibility of cycIHC.

Conferences for Your Calendar

[AACR Annual Meeting](#): April 14-19, 2023

[The Stroma in Pancreatic Cancer Think Tank 2023](#): May 24, 2023

[Pancreatic Cancer AACR](#): September 27-30, 2023

[Cancer Cachexia Conference](#): September 28-30, 2023

[Pancreas Club Meeting](#): October 26-27, 2023

[American Pancreatic Association Annual Meeting](#): November 15-18, 2023



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