Our research — and what it means for you

At OHSU, improving your health drives everything we do. We explore the boundaries of research — and push those boundaries to make discoveries that transform health care. New developments in the lab are one thing, but at OHSU our research goes “from bench to bedside.” Research is only as useful as you make it, and every day we apply that knowledge.

Among our recent discoveries is the successful reprogramming of human skin cells to become embryonic stem cells, capable of transforming into any other cell type in the body. This holds a wealth of possibilities for treating degenerative medical conditions including Parkinson’s disease, multiple sclerosis (MS), cardiac disease and spinal cord injuries. Other research at OHSU has identified the genetic change causing two types of leukemia previously thought to be untreatable. This development may help people with leukemia benefit from existing drugs developed for different types of cancer.

OHSU Health magazine is one way to learn about some of OHSU’s research, but if you’d like to find out more, please visit www.ohsu.edu/research.
FDA clears medical device developed by OHSU

A stroke or spinal cord injury can greatly reduce the ability to move your limbs. Now, a new machine developed by OHSU researchers and AMES technology can help: The AMES rehabilitation medical device uses robotic technology to assist a patient in moving an affected limb while vibrating the muscle receptors at the same time. This vibration can help the brain “locate” the muscles controlling the joint, reduce joint tightness and enhance sensation at the treated joint or joints. This enhanced sensation is thought to help the brain re-establish communication with the affected muscles.

Physical activity labels = smarter food choices

You may be familiar with calorie counts and nutrition labels, but are you wondering how long you’d have to walk to burn off that Big Mac? New research from OHSU and the University of North Carolina reveals that labels converting calories to minutes of walking were more effective than traditional nutrition labels at showing people how much caloric energy they consume. Researchers chose walking over running because they felt walking was more relatable to the average person. (That Big Mac? With 540 calories, it’d take almost three hours of walking to make it worth it.) The study was published in Nutrition Journal.

Craving a midnight snack? There’s a reason

A study published by OHSU and Harvard researchers in the journal Obesity found that the body’s internal clock, the circadian system, increases hunger and cravings for sweet, starchy and salty foods in the evenings. While this may have helped our ancestors store energy to survive in times of food scarcity, nowadays those cravings may lead to significant weight gain and even obesity. Consuming more calories in the evening predisposes people to more energy storage; we simply don’t expend as much energy after an evening meal as we would after a morning one. If weight loss is a goal, say researchers, it’s best to eat larger, higher-calorie meals earlier in the day.

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I was just diagnosed with prostate cancer. Do I need treatment right away?

**PROSTATE CANCER IS NOT “ONE SIZE FITS ALL.”** For example, if an abnormality can be felt on a physical exam, if the cancer appears aggressive under the microscope, or if a large number of biopsy samples are cancerous, we often recommend treatment sooner rather than later because these cancers can cause significant problems if left alone. In other cases, an approach of delayed treatment, or “active surveillance,” can make sense. This is because while treatments for prostate cancer — including radiation or surgery — may be curative, side effects can occur. It is a complex and personal decision.

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**What should I do if I leak urine when I sneeze or laugh?**

**MORE THAN A THIRD OF WOMEN IN THE U.S.** may experience urinary incontinence (UI) at some point in their lives. There are two forms of UI: stress incontinence (leaking urine when you cough, sneeze, laugh or exercise) and overactive bladder (needing to urinate more often than normal). You shouldn’t be ashamed if you experience UI; less than half of women with it don’t talk to their doctors because they fear nothing can be done. The good news is that both forms of UI can be controlled or even cured through lifestyle and behavioral techniques, exercises, physical therapy, medication or surgery if necessary. An outpatient procedure called a mid-urethral sling can be used to treat stress incontinence; the cure rate for this and other surgical procedures is around 75–80 percent.

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**Joshi Alumkal, M.D.**

OHSU Knight Cancer Institute

Dr. Alumkal is a medical oncologist who cares for men with all stages of prostate cancer. He sees patients at OHSU Knight Cancer Institute’s Multi-Disciplinary Prostate Cancer Clinic. The clinic provides an integrated, comprehensive approach to prostate cancer care that places patients first.

**ACCEPTING NEW PATIENTS:** Yes  
**INSURANCE:** Most major health plans  
**APPOINTMENTS:** 503 494-7999  
**WEB:** www.ohsuknightcancer.com  
**LOCATION:** Center for Health & Healing, 7th Floor  
3303 S.W. Bond Ave. Portland, OR 97239

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**Mary Anna Denman, M.D.**

OHSU Center for Women’s Health

Dr. Denman specializes in urogynecology with a focus on pelvic organ prolapse and incontinence, as well as pelvic floor dysfunction. She sees patients at the OHSU Center for Women’s Health, the only National Center of Excellence designated center in the Northwest.

**ACCEPTING NEW PATIENTS:** Yes  
**INSURANCE:** Most major health plans  
**APPOINTMENTS:** 503 418-4500  
**WEB:** www.ohsuwomenshealth.com  
**LOCATION:** OHSU Kohler Pavilion, 7th Floor  
3181 S.W. Sam Jackson Park Rd. Portland, OR 97239
My son had a seizure. Does that mean he has epilepsy?

**THERE IS A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HAVING**

a seizure and having epilepsy. Many conditions can cause a single seizure, such as a high fever in children or alcohol withdrawal, but two or more unprovoked seizures indicate epilepsy. Your doctor will conduct a thorough patient history to understand what happened before, during and after the seizure, and your son may have tests including bloodwork, magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and an electroencephalogram (EEG) to help confirm the diagnosis and understand the cause. While seizures can be scary, epilepsy is not something to fear. It’s common: More than two million people in the U.S. have it. Also, the majority of people with epilepsy have their seizures controlled with medication. Many treatment options are available; talk to your doctor about what’s right for you.

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Does my child need cholesterol screenings?

**RESEARCH SHOWS THE MOST SUCCESSFUL**

way to prevent a heart attack is to eliminate risk factors throughout your life — starting in childhood. Too much cholesterol in the bloodstream leads to collections of cholesterol called atherosclerosis; this is linked to heart attacks and strokes. Atherosclerosis can be found in children as young as two years old; identifying the problem early is important to prevent future heart attacks. Recently, experts have recommended all children between 9–11 and 17–21 years old get screened for high cholesterol. If cholesterol levels are elevated, your doctor will discuss changes in your child’s diet and exercise. If these changes are not enough, you may be referred to an expert in childhood cholesterol problems for further testing and treatment.

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**About the Expert**

Dr. Spencer specializes in treatment of seizure disorders and video EEG monitoring. He sees patients at the epilepsy clinic at OHSU Brain Institute. The institute has over 400 healthcare providers and researchers treating people with diseases of the brain, teaching the next generation of health care professionals and scientists doing research.

**David Spencer, M.D.**

**OHSU Brain Institute**

**Accepting New Patients:** Yes

**Insurance:** Most major health plans

**Appointments:** 503 494-7772

**Web:** www.ohsubrain.com

**Location:** Center for Health & Healing, 8th Floor

3303 S.W. Bond Ave. Portland, OR 97239

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Dr. Armsby specializes in caring for children with heart problems and is the director of the childhood cholesterol program at Doernbecher Children’s Hospital. Doernbecher Children’s Hospital has the most pediatric specialists in Oregon and ranks among the nation’s best hospitals.

**Laurie Armsby, M.D.**

**OHSU Doernbecher Children’s Hospital**

**Accepting New Patients:** Yes

**Insurance:** Most major health plans

**Appointments:** 503 346-0640

**Web:** www.ohsudoernbecher.com

**Location:** OHSU Doernbecher Children’s Hospital, 7th Floor

700 S.W. Campus Dr. Portland, OR 97239

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ohsuhealth.com/magazine
I’m thinking about getting laser eye surgery. Is it safe?

**Laser Eye Surgery is actually safer** than a lifetime of contact lens wear: The risk of infection from wearing contacts is about ten times higher than laser eye surgery. During laser eye surgery, the lasers don’t actually enter the eye, just the surface of the cornea. The surgery itself is quick and painless: It takes less than a minute. If you are thinking about laser eye surgery, research the doctor’s experience and training, as well as the facility’s equipment. At the Casey Eye Institute, we use the latest lasers and all our doctors are fellowship-trained cornea specialists. In addition, we have experts throughout OHSU who represent every part of the eye, should you need to be referred to additional specialists.

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**What are the benefits of 3-D mammography?**

**Tomosynthesis, also known as 3-D mammography,** helps the radiologist look at your breast tissue in more detail. Instead of viewing complex breast tissue as a flat image in a conventional mammogram, 3-D mammography allows your doctor to examine it layer by layer. This improved view can be especially helpful in women with dense breast tissue. Early studies show that 3-D mammography can help find breast cancer earlier, prevent the need for additional imaging and provide fewer “false positive” results. The amount of radiation involved is about the same as a conventional mammography, which is minimal: You’d get as much radiation as during a cross-country flight. Ask your provider if it’s the right choice for you, or call the Breast Center. Please note that not all insurances cover 3-D mammography.

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**About the Expert**

**Rick Fraunfelder, M.D.**

OHSU Casey Eye Institute

Dr. Fraunfelder specializes in corneal and external diseases, refractive surgery, ocular oncology and pharmacology and toxicology. Casey Eye Institute attracts top specialists from around the globe and is dedicated to promoting the best possible eye health through education, research, clinical leadership and service to the community.

**Accepting New Patients:** Yes  
**Insurance:** Most major health plans  
**Appointments:** 503 494-3937  
**Web:** www.caseylaser.com  
**Location:** Casey Eye Institute, 3375 S.W. Terwilliger Blvd.  
Portland, Oregon 97239

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**Karen Oh, M.D.**

OHSU Breast Center

Dr. Oh specializes in women’s imaging and is part of a multidisciplinary breast team at OHSU, which includes subspecialized breast surgeons, radiation oncologists, hematologic oncologists, genetic counselors and breast health nurses. Dr. Oh is also the Director of Breast Imaging at OHSU.

**Accepting New Patients:** Yes  
**Insurance:** Most major health plans  
**Appointments:** 503 494-4673  
**Web:** www.ohsuhealth.com/breastcenter  
**Location:** OHSU Kohler Pavilion, 7th Floor  
3181 S.W. Sam Jackson Park Rd. Portland, OR 97239
Ask the Health Experts
Seminars

OHSU Center for Health & Healing, 3rd Floor
3303 S.W. Bond Avenue, ohsu.edu/health/maps

To register, visit ohsuhealth.com/seminar

Sept 11  7 p.m.

How to stay mentally sharp as we age
Joseph Quinn, M.D.
Eventually all humans will develop some degree of cognitive impairment or memory loss as they age. Learn about current prevention strategies, from simple lifestyle changes to experimental therapies to stay sharp.

Sept 18  7 p.m.

Pelvic mesh: information, options and alternatives
Renee Edwards, M.D.
Pelvic problems are common following childbirth and become more common with aging. Some treatments may use mesh. Whether you might be considering surgery or have already had surgery, learn the facts about the use of mesh in slings for incontinence and pelvic prolapse.

Sept 25  7 p.m.

Hands, elbow and shoulder — diagnosis and treatment
Adam Mirarchi, M.D.
Learn about the common conditions of the upper extremities along with latest advancements in diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation.

Oct 2 and 9  7 p.m.

Men’s health: you’re not alone
Jason Hedges, M.D., Ph.D.
Learn about treatment options for common health issues that affect millions of men, including enlarged prostate, male incontinence and erectile dysfunction.

Oct 8  7 p.m.

Hip pain and the active young patient
Andrea Herzka, M.D.
Learn about causes and treatments of non-arthritis hip pain, femoral acetabular impingement, labral tears and cartilage injuries.

Lecture with Moore Institute
Director Kent Thornburg, Ph.D.

Thursday, Oct 17, 7 p.m., OHSU Auditorium
For more information visit www.ohsu.edu/mhlectures.

Join Team OHSU
OHSU welcomes all participants

Susan G. Komen Portland Race for the Cure
Sept 15, 7:30 a.m.  Tom McCall Waterfront Park
Register as part of Team OHSU and receive a free team T-shirt. Anybody can join. For more information, please contact Alena Lam at 503 494-5293 or lamal@ohsu.edu.

Leukemia & Lymphoma Society’s
Light the Night Walk
Oct 19, 5 p.m.  Oregon Convention Center
Join a variety of OHSU teams in our efforts to end blood cancers. For more information, please contact Alena Lam at lamal@ohsu.edu or 503 494-5293.

30th Annual Parkinson’s Disease Symposium
Back to the Future: A Better Day Now and Tomorrow
Saturday, Oct 12   Red Lion Jantzen Beach
This symposium is for people with Parkinson’s disease, their families and their healthcare providers. The latest and best information on Parkinson’s disease will be covered. Learn more and register at www.ohsubrain.com/pco.

Baby talk, with OHSU fertility consultants

Sept 12   6 – 7:30 p.m.
OHSU Center for Health & Healing
3303 S.W. Bond Avenue, ohsu.edu/health/maps
10th Floor, fertility clinic lobby
Register at: ohsuhealth.com/babytalk or by calling 503 418-4500. Refreshments provided.
Considering fertility treatment? Want to learn about which options are best for you? At OHSU, we offer a full range of fertility services. Join us at an open house to learn about your options, talk to our fertility specialists and get your questions answered.
The knowledge of all for the care of one.

OHSU Health is a quarterly publication of OHSU serving the greater Portland area. Information is intended to educate and is not a substitute for consulting with a healthcare provider.

The OHSU Brain Institute: The Pacific Northwest’s only certified Comprehensive Stroke Center

This spring, the Stroke Center at the OHSU Brain Institute became the first hospital in the Pacific Northwest certified as a Comprehensive Stroke Center by the Joint Commission hospital accreditation organization. A Comprehensive Stroke Center provides the highest level of stroke care and treatments not found in other hospitals, including experts in cerebrovascular and neurointerventional surgery, advanced therapies and a specialized neurosciences intensive care unit. OHSU features all of these capabilities 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

For more information, please visit ohsuhealth.com/stroke