

Director: Zoher Ghogawala, MD

Special Thanks to Mrs. Katherine S. Prokop for her Generous support of the Carotid Outcomes Study!

Updated Patient Enrollment For Clinical Trials:

SLIP Study: 91

Carotid Study: 44

Cervical Spondylotic Myelopathy Study: 35

Duragen Study: 9

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Welcome, Dr. Abbed

On September 8, 2007, the Wallace Trials Center officially welcomed Dr. Khalid Abbed.

In addition to joining the WTC, Dr. Abbed joins the staff of Greenwich Hospital and the practice of Greenwich Neurosurgery.

Dr. Abbed is also the Director of Minimally Invasive Spine Surgery and Director of Oncologic Spine Surgery in the Department of Neurosurgery at Yale

University School of Medicine.

Dr. Abbed joins us from the Cleveland Clinic, where he did a spine fellowship under the direction of Dr. Edward Benzel. His neurosurgery residency was completed at The Massachusetts General Hospital.

He will have office hours at Greenwich Neurosurgery one day a week and will collaborate with the WTC on research matters.



Dr. Abbed lives in Westport with his wife, Sarah Adair, and their three young children.

Dr. Abbed was welcomed with a gathering at the home of Dr. Ghogawala. The party was attended by community physicians, donors from the Greenwich community, and colleagues from Yale and The Massachusetts General Hospital.

Approximately \$200,000 was donated for continuing research at the WTC.

New Research Project: Cervical Re-Operations

Dr. Khalid Abbed and Ms. Nazish Omar are collaborating on a new research project at the Wallace Trials Center.

The project aims to examine the re-operation rates for "front" versus "back" surgery for degenerative cervical spine disease.

Hospital charges for cervical spine surgery now exceed \$2 billion per year. Clearly, re-operations are a significant factor in these costs.

Currently, the optimal surgical strategy for these patients remains controversial.

Dr. Abbed and Ms. Omar plan a retrospective analysis using the State Inpatient Databases from 1997 to 2002 to identify patients who underwent a re-operation within the first two years after surgery.

Data will be collected for a total of five years from the date of initial surgery. The objective of the study is to

determine whether the "front" or the "back" approach results in a greater re-operation rate.

(Reference: Patil PG, Turner DA, Pietrobon R: National trends in surgical procedures for degenerative cervical spine disease: 1990-2000. *Neurosurgery* 57:753-758, 2005.)

New Award for Research Grant

In September, 2007, Dr. Ghogawala was awarded a Yale Center for Clinical Investigation Junior Faculty Pilot award for the WTC grant entitled "Prospective Multicenter Trial Comparing Ventral to Dorsal Surgery for Cervical Spondylotic Myelopathy."

The grant monies are made possible through the Clinical and Translational Science Award from the National Center for Research Resources, a component of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and the NIH Roadmap for Medical Research.

The aims of the grant are to support the development of new technologies and translational and clinical research by expanding the support of young investigators, and by promoting research in the community.

Our grant monies will be used for research-related expenses in our national Cervical Spondylotic Myelopathy clinical trial (for details, see www.clinicaltrials.gov/ct/show/NCT00506558).

We hope to ascertain whether randomized controlled trials are feasible in comparing front vs. back approaches to surgery in patients with degenerative cervical spine disease.

Ultimately, data generated from these trials will help neurosurgeons to understand which procedures are most effective, thereby reducing complications and promoting better outcomes. These are crucial issues, especially given our aging population and skyrocketing healthcare costs.



Dr. Dennis Spencer, Professor and Chairman, Department of Neurosurgery, Yale University School of Medicine (top, right), makes a toast honoring Sarah Adair and Dr. Khalid Abbed, at the home of Dr. and Mrs. Zoher Ghogawala. Dr. William T. Curry, Jr. (pictured between Dr. and Mrs. Abbed), renowned brain tumor surgeon from the Massachusetts General Hospital, also offered words of welcome.

Thank you to our donors!



Jean and David Wallace (seated), principal donors to the Wallace Trials Center, with Dr. Zoher Ghogawala and Greenwich Hospital CEO, Frank Corvino

Leadership Donors:

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WTC Presentation: Chicago

Dr. Ghogawala was the visiting professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago, for the Department of Neurosurgery Grand Rounds, in November, 2007.

His talk, entitled “Neurosurgical Randomized Trials: Designing Feasible and Fundable Clinical

Research” was well received.

As part of the invited lectureship, Dr. Ghogawala also had the opportunity to teach the neurosurgical residents on current techniques in spine surgery.



WTC Presentation: Newport

Dr. Ghogawala delivered two talks at the annual New England Neurosurgical Society meeting in Newport, Rhode Island, in September, 2007.

His first talk, “Effect of Extracranial Carotid Characteristics and Revascularization on Cerebral Blood Flow Assessed by qMRA,” was based on preliminary data

from the Carotid Study.

In his second talk, “Ventral Surgery vs. Dorsal Decompression with Fusion for Cervical Spondylotic Myelopathy: A Cost Analysis,” he concluded that if outcomes are similar with either approach, then surgeons may look to the complication and re-operation rates to aid their surgical decision making.

WTC Presentation: Dubai

In February, 2008, Drs. Ghogawala and Abbed served as course faculty for the First Annual U.S. Spine Masters Course held in Dubai, UAE (United Arab Emirates).

Through the use of didactic sessions and hands-on workshops, the course focused on the fundamentals of advanced spine surgery, state-of-the-art techniques, and cutting edge clinical trials data

from the USA.

In addition to the courses, Dr. Ghogawala delivered two talks:

Rationale and Design for a Randomized Clinical Trial Comparing Ventral to Dorsal

Surgery for Cervical Spondylotic Myelopathy and

Lumbar Degenerative Spondylolisthesis: To Fuse or Not to Fuse.

Charitable Donations

Our success here at the Wallace Trials Center is made possible only through the generous donations of individuals as well as private foundations. Please consider making a **fully tax-deductible** donation to:

Wallace Trials Center
Or
Greenwich Lumbar Stenosis SLIP Study Fund

Send donations to:

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The Wallace Trials Center
Newsletter will be
published twice a year.
Look for the next update in
July, 2008.



We're on the Web!

See us at:
www.greenwich-neurosurgery.com/research.shtml

