



## Ellen Tedaldi, MD, Outstanding HIV/AIDS Clinician and Researcher

In 1984 Ellen M. Tedaldi, MD, an internist at New York City's Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center, cared for a 19-year-old native of the Dominican Republic who was admitted 22 times that year suffering from typhoid fever and other complications. She lost her vision one day in Tedaldi's office due to a brain infection.

An HIV test was not developed until the following year, but that is what Tedaldi's patient had. Thus inspired, Tedaldi has devoted her career to both treating people with HIV/AIDS, including the most vulnerable groups—minorities and women—and furthering HIV/AIDS research.

"HIV/AIDS combines all the reasons I'm in medicine: public health, social activism, politics, human and economic rights," says Tedaldi, who has taught at Temple since 1986 and been the director of the Temple Comprehensive



Ellen M. Tedaldi, MD, founder and director of the of the Temple Comprehensive HIV program, surrounded by (from left) Anastasia Gray, CRNP, HIV nurse practitioner; Mary (Cissy) van den Berg-Wolf, MD, deputy program director; Robert Bettiker, MD, infectious disease specialist; Princess Graham, program administrator; Rafik Samuel, MD, infectious disease specialist; and Christiane Geisler, RN, the program's research coordinator.

HIV Program since she founded it in 1996. Her multi-disciplinary approach now involves five physicians, three nurse practitioners and a case manager, nutritionist and pharmacist. The federally and state-funded clinic annually cares for nearly 800 patients: about half male, half female, 70 percent African-American and 20 percent Latino.

"At a time when it was almost impossible for people with HIV/AIDS in our community to access good healthcare, Dr. Tedaldi was a leader in providing such care and in partnering with pediatricians and obstetricians to preserve and sustain the health of these underserved people," says Thomas Fekete, MD, chief of Infectious Diseases.

As Tedaldi was launching the program a dozen years ago, HIV/AIDS was evolving from a fatal disease to a chronic one. "That's when we introduced combination drug therapy," says Tedaldi. "There are now 28 approved

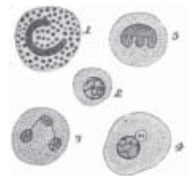
HIV medications. If a diagnosed patient's T-cell white blood count is still high enough, their life expectancy should be close to normal. There's also less than a one-percent chance of a medicated mother transmitting the disease to her newborn at birth.

"Once it's controlled for our patients, HIV becomes the least of their worries, since many of them also are dealing with diabetes, hypertension and heart disease," and the stigma and fear that Tedaldi says still haunts the disease.

With an estimated 56,000 new infections nationwide each year and a quarter of the affected unaware they are infected, Tedaldi says the key is screening potential carriers so that, if they are infected, they can obtain treatment and take measures to avoid spreading the disease as soon as possible.

Funded by NIH and CDC research grants, the Temple program is part of

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HEMATOLOGY  
and  
INFECTIOUS  
DISEASES

summer/fall  
2008

*This issue of  
PULSE focuses  
on the work of  
the Temple  
Comprehensive  
HIV Program and  
the Department  
of Medicine's  
Hematology  
Section.*

### More about Ellen Tedaldi, MD

Fellow: Hedwig van Amerigen Executive Leadership in Academic Medicine, 2005-06; American College of Physicians; College of Physicians of Philadelphia

Board of Directors: Hepatitis Treatment, Research and Education Center; MEDNICA (Medicines for Nicaragua)

Member: American Academy of HIV Medicine; Perinatal Advisory Committee, AIDS ETC

Best Doctors in America, 2005, 2007; Philadelphia magazine Top Docs, six years

Awards: Exemplar of Humanism in Medicine Award (Temple) College of Physicians (2004); Clinical Practice Award, Philadelphia College of Internal Medicine (2005); HepTREC Award and John Allen Blue Award, Blacks Educating Blacks About Sexual Health Issues (2006)

## Making a Difference at the Bench and Bedside

*A message from Joel Richter, MD, FACP, MACG  
Richard L. Evans Chair, Department of Medicine*



This issue of *Pulse* highlights the considerable contributions of Ellen M. Tedaldi, MD, the founder and director of the Temple Comprehensive HIV Program. A leader among women doctors in the Department of Medicine for more than two decades, Dr. Tedaldi's work with patients afflicted with HIV/AIDS has been a shining

example of what we aspire to at Temple: outstanding, compassionate clinical care—in this case, primarily of minorities and women who are among the most vulnerable to the disease—combined with high-level federally-funded research that can directly affect their clinical care.

In addition, this issue features the research of A. Koneti Rao, MD, chief of our Hematology Section, who has devoted his NIH-funded research career to teasing out the mechanisms involved in the formation of blood clots.

Such excellence is also amply demonstrated on page 3, where we offer two lists: Physicians cited this year as Top Doctors by *Philadelphia* magazine, and faculty members who have earned coveted teaching awards—recognition from their students and peers of their outstanding ability to pass on their knowledge to the next generation of physicians.

Quality clinical care, patient-related research and first-rate medical education—that's the Temple formula we strive for every day.

Contact me at 215-707-5069 or [jrichter@temple.edu](mailto:jrichter@temple.edu)

## Two Cardiologists, Two Geriatricians Join Faculty

*(continued from back page)*



### **B. Brent Simmons, MD**

Geriatrician

[b.brent.simmons@tuhs.temple.edu](mailto:b.brent.simmons@tuhs.temple.edu)

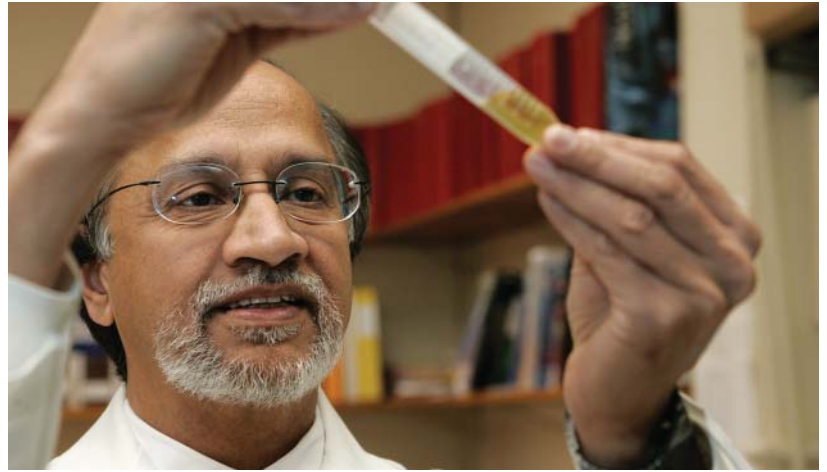
MD, Jefferson Medical College

#### POSTGRADUATE EDUCATION:

Thomas Jefferson University Hospital, Philadelphia, Pa.

SPECIAL INTEREST: Palliative care, outpatient geriatrics, anticoagulation

## Rao at Forefront of Platelet Research



A. Koneti Rao, MD, chief of Hematology and director of the Sol Sherry Thrombosis Research Center.

Since joining Temple in 1979, A. Koneti Rao MD, has focused his research on blood platelets and their dysfunction leading to bleeding disorders, and on platelet role in arterial diseases.

“Our goal is to understand the platelet mechanisms at the molecular level in order to translate that information into

Rao's laboratory is also studying blood coagulation mechanisms in diabetes mellitus, in collaboration with Guenther Boden, MD, chief of the Endocrinology, Diabetes and Metabolism Section. The two are conducting NIH-funded research on the impact of high glucose and high

**BECAUSE THESE ARE BOTH BASIC AND CLINICAL STUDIES INVOLVING PATIENTS, IT IS TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH BRIDGING INFORMATION FROM THE BENCH TO THE BEDSIDE AND VICE VERSA.**

—A. Koneti Rao, MD

new therapeutic agents,” says Rao, the chief of Hematology and director of the Sol Sherry Thrombosis Research Center.

Rao is currently engaged in two NIH-funded studies. Over the past 25 years Rao has identified novel inherited abnormalities in platelet proteins and mechanisms. One of his current NIH RO1 grants involves using a method called gene expression profiling to sort through thousands of genes in the platelets of patients with bleeding disorders to identify—at a molecular level—the mechanisms involved.

“Even today the mechanisms are completely unknown in most such patients,” says Rao. “If we can define what pathways are involved in these dysfunctional platelets, we would understand what happens in normal platelets and could identify novel targets to develop newer anti-platelet drugs.”

insulin levels on blood clotting. “Our studies show,” says Rao, “that if you increase glucose and insulin levels in normal individuals, certain circulating coagulation factors go up and platelets are activated.

“These studies advance our understanding of the biological processes that contribute to heart attacks and stroke in diabetes.”

Listed in Best Doctors in America (1998–08), Rao is the recipient of the Investigator Recognition Award of the International Society of Thrombosis and Haemostasis and the Temple University Faculty Research Award.

For more information, contact A. Koneti Rao, MD, at 215-707-4684 or [koneti.rao@temple.edu](mailto:koneti.rao@temple.edu).

# Department of Medicine Salutes Top Doctors and Teachers

## Top Teachers at Temple

The Temple University School of Medicine's Department of Medicine is dedicated to clinical care, research and education. We're proud to honor the following 2008 teaching award winners:

### MEDICAL STUDENT TEACHING AWARDS:

#### Lindback Award for Distinguished Teaching:

- Lawrence Kaplan, MD, Professor and Section Chief, General Internal Medicine

#### 8TH Golden Apple Award:

- Ronald N. Rubin, Professor, Hematology

### RESIDENT TEACHING AWARDS:

#### Outstanding Consultant:

- Colleen Veloski, MD, Assistant Professor, Endocrinology
- Peter Axelrod, MD, Professor, Infectious Diseases

#### Outstanding Critical Care Faculty:

- A. James Mamary, MD, Assistant Professor, Pulmonary and Critical Care

#### Outstanding Ambulatory Educator:

- Shiva Chandrasekaran, Assistant Professor, General Internal Medicine

### Junior Faculty Educator:

- Brian Wolff, MD, Adjunct Assistant Professor, Cogent Hospitalist

### Senior Faculty Educator Award:

- Thomas Fekete, MD, Professor and Section Chief, Infectious Diseases

### Special Faculty Residency

#### Recognition Award:

- Bizath Taqui, MD, Assistant Professor, General Internal Medicine

## Tops in *Philadelphia* magazine

Three of seven Temple University School of Medicine doctors and four of the 12 specialty patient-care programs at Temple recognized for clinical excellence in *Philadelphia* magazine's May issue are from the Department of Medicine.

The doctors named in the magazine's annual "Top Docs" list of regional specialists include:

- Ellie Kelepouris, MD, Professor of Medicine and Deputy Chief of Nephrology and Kidney Transplantation
- Joel Richter, MD, Professor and Chair of the Department of Medicine
- Ellen Tedaldi, MD, Professor of Medicine and Director of the Comprehensive HIV Program

Specialty patient-care programs at Temple designated as "Centers of Excellence" offered by Department of Medicine physicians include:

- Temple Digestive Disease Center
- Temple Heart Center
- Temple Lung Center
- Temple Sleep Disorders Center

"While it's important to note the limitations of such consumer-oriented lists, we congratulate and applaud the dedicated Temple specialists and world-class programs highlighted in this annual magazine guide," said John M. Daly, MD, dean of Temple University School of Medicine.

## Tedaldi

(continued from page 1)

a unique network of primary care practices that enable clinical trial access to both minorities and women—two groups that often do not enroll in studies but comprise the majority of Tedaldi's patients. Although HIV/AIDS still affects gay white men, in the U.S. it is now taking a disproportionate hold on African-Americans and Latinos.

As a national site investigator for INSIGHT (International Network for Strategic Global HIV Trials), this fall Tedaldi will begin recruiting patients to determine if it makes sense to begin medication therapy when HIV-positive patients' CD4 T-cell levels are at 500 cell/mm<sup>3</sup> or higher, rather than waiting till they decline to 350, the current standard treatment level. "There is some evidence that, even at the higher blood count level, patients develop some HIV complications, as well as cardiovascular and kidney complications, when the virus is not treated," Tedaldi says.

She was also the lead author of a five-year study that appeared in the April issue of the *Journal of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (JAIDS)* that concluded certain HIV drug side effects are more pronounced in African-Americans and women. These include two to three times greater risks for adverse psychiatric effects in African-American males, cardiovascular and kidney side effects in African-Americans, and anemia in women.

Of her research contributions, Fekete says, "Dr. Tedaldi has been in the center of important clinical investigations of HIV care that have led to improved quality of life and prolonged life expectancy for people with HIV/AIDS everywhere."

For more information, contact Ellen M. Tedaldi, MD, at 215-707-1800 or [ellen.tedaldi@temple.edu](mailto:ellen.tedaldi@temple.edu).



Award-winning teachers Lawrence Kaplan, MD, professor and chief of General Internal Medicine; Brian Wolff, MD, adjunct assistant professor and Cogent hospitalist; and Thomas Fekete, MD, professor and chief of Infectious Diseases.

# PULSE

Newsletter of the  
Department of Medicine,  
Temple University  
School of Medicine

## Two Cardiologists, Two Geriatricians Join Faculty

The Department of Medicine is pleased to announce the appointment of the following four distinguished physicians to the Temple University School of Medicine faculty.



MICHAEL A. BROWN,  
MD, MS

**Michael A. Brown, MD, MS**  
Cardiologist  
michael.brown2@tuhs.temple.edu

MD, Georgetown University School of Medicine

POSTGRADUATE EDUCATION:  
University of Chicago Hospitals,  
Chicago, Ill.  
Washington University, Barnes-Jewish  
Hospital, St. Louis, Mo.

SPECIAL INTEREST: Percutaneous management of valvular heart disease and coronary artery disease, including acute coronary syndromes



DAVID M. FISS, MD

**David M Fiss, MD**  
Cardiologist  
david.fiss@tuhs.temple.edu

MD, Medical College of Pennsylvania/  
Hahnemann University School of  
Medicine

POSTGRADUATE EDUCATION:  
Temple University/Temple University  
Hospital, Philadelphia, Pa.

SPECIAL INTEREST: Heart failure



DUANE ERRON KIRKSEY,  
MD

**Duane Erron Kirksey, MD**  
Geriatrician  
duane.kirksey@tuhs.temple.edu

MD, Washington University

POSTGRADUATE EDUCATION:  
University of Alabama at Birmingham  
Hospital, Birmingham, Ala.

University of Pennsylvania, Hospital  
of the University of Pennsylvania,  
Philadelphia, Pa.

SPECIAL INTEREST: Transitions in care,  
case management, medical decision-  
making

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