

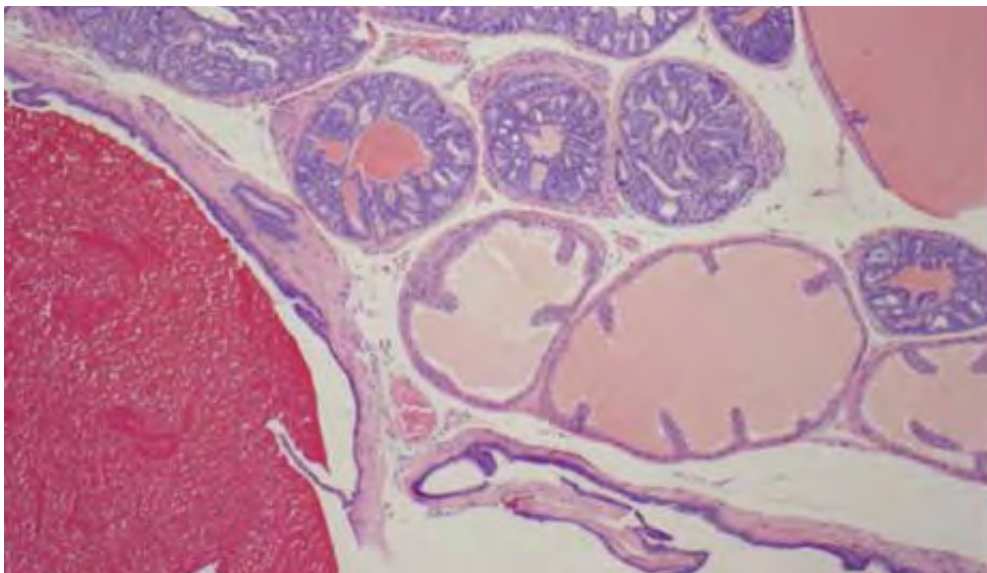


Mays Cancer Center

UT Health MD Anderson  
San Antonio Cancer Center

# FUTURE FOCUS

SHARING CANCER CENTER NEWS AS WE CHAMPION HEALTH TOGETHER.



## CORK TREE BARK EXTRACT, EXERCISE EACH SLOW AGGRESSIVE PROSTATE CANCER

Researchers from UT Health San Antonio are the first to show that Nexrutine, a natural supplement made from the bark of cork trees, is as effective as exercise in preventing the progression of aggressive prostate cancer.

[Darpan Patel, Ph.D.](#), associate professor of research in the School of Nursing, led the study, published Dec. 19 in the journal [PLOS ONE](#). "Nexrutine is an herbal extract from the bark of the cork tree *Phellodendron amurense*. It is widely used to treat inflammation, gastroenteritis, abdominal pain and diarrhea," Dr. Patel said.

In the study, supported by pilot funds from the Mays Cancer Center, home to UT Health San Antonio MD Anderson Cancer Center, 45 mice were divided into three groups. One group received food pellets supplemented with Nexrutine. The second group received free access to a running

wheel. The third was the control group, which received no treatment.

The overall results showed that the group receiving the cork tree extract had 62% less tumor growth, while the exercise group had 60% less tumor growth, compared to the control group.

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***"It appears that both Nexrutine and exercise work equally well but use different pathways." — Dr. Patel***

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The research team came to this conclusion by evaluating the tumors and levels of various inflammatory markers in the blood after the 20-week study. They learned that mice in both treatment groups had a lower level of Interleukin 1 alpha (IL-1a), a type of protein that regulates inflammation and

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NEWSLETTER 2.27.20



GIVE CANCER THE BOOT  
SURVIVORSHIP

5K AND  
1 MILE WALK

Join us for the 5th Annual Give Cancer the Boot Survivorship 5K and 1-mile walk on Saturday, April 4, in honor of cancer survivors everywhere. Last year's race had over 650 registrants and raised more than \$35,000 for the cancer center's patient and family assistance fund. This fun-filled event is meant to celebrate life and survivorship and gives friends and family members a chance to show support for their loved ones.

**SATURDAY, APRIL 4, 2020  
9 A.M. (RACE TIME)  
REGISTRATION BEGINS AT 7:30 A.M.**

Mays Cancer Center  
7979 Wurzbach Rd.  
San Antonio, TX 78229

5k Run/Walk (chip-timed):

- \$30 UNTIL MIDNIGHT 3/15/20
- \$35 UNTIL CLOSE OF REGISTRATION AT 7:00 PM 4/2/20

1-Mile Walk (not chip-timed):

- \$25 UNTIL MIDNIGHT 3/15/20
- \$30 UNTIL CLOSE OF REGISTRATION AT 7:00 PM 4/2/20
- FREE FOR CANCER SURVIVORS AND CHILDREN UNDER 12

Everyone is welcome to participate – adults, kids, serious runners, casual walkers, patients, survivors, caregivers, friends, family and well-behaved dogs on leashes.

**REGISTER TODAY!**

the expression of genes involved in the growth and survival of cancer cells, and the formation of abnormal blood vessels that support tumor growth. However, they were surprised to learn that the two treatment groups had some differences, indicating different pathways may be involved.

[Pratap Kumar, Ph.D.](#), professor in the UT Health San Antonio Department of Molecular Medicine, was a key investigator on the study. Dr. Kumar has carried out extensive work with Nexrutine in various cancers including a clinical study in prostate cancer patients.

Dr. Patel said that more research will be needed to better understand the separate mechanisms and how they work. **“Perhaps a combination treatment could be developed in the future that would attack the cancer on several fronts,” he said.** “Nexrutine also may be a good alternative for people who find it difficult to exercise,” Dr. Kumar said.

Both Drs. Patel and Kumar are members of the Population Sciences and Prevention program of Mays Cancer Center, a National Cancer Institute-designated cancer center. Dr. Kumar is also co-leader of this program.

“The results of these research studies by Mays Cancer Center investigators is deeply exciting. If confirmed in subsequent human clinical trials, the discovery of this new way to control aggressive prostate cancer is an important addition to our arsenal against cancer,” said Mays Cancer Center Director Ruben Mesa, M.D., FACP.

According to the American Cancer Society, prostate cancer is the second most common type of cancer in men behind skin cancer and is the second-leading cause of cancer deaths in men after lung cancer.

**REGISTER TODAY!**

# Living Beyond Cancer A-Z

UT Health San Antonio MD Anderson  
Cancer Center Symposium

Saturday, March 28, 2020 | 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

*The symposium will feature world-renowned cancer experts, including medical oncologists, radiation oncologists, surgeons and other supportive care team members. These experts will lead disease-specific breakout sessions, share insights on several different types of cancer, including the latest treatment options, and be available to answer questions.*

In addition, attendees will be able to participate in breakout sessions to identify resources, tools and support mechanisms to stay physically, emotionally and mentally strong throughout their cancer journey

#### **TOPICS INCLUDE:**

- The Role of Integrative Medicine in Cancer Care
- Mindfulness and Spirituality
- Taking Care: A Guide for Family Caregivers

**Cancer survivors, cancer patients, friends, family, caregivers and faculty and staff are invited to attend.**

**Holly Auditorium  
on UT Health San Antonio's  
Long campus**

**7703 Floyd Curl Drive  
San Antonio, TX 78229**





# WHY CLINICAL TRIALS ABOUT CANCER ARE SO IMPORTANT IN SAN ANTONIO

KENS5 | JEREMY BAKER, REPORTER | 02.11.20

*Whenever a new drug comes on the market it is backed by years of testing called clinical trials. Right now the Mays Cancer Center here in San Antonio is conducting over 180 trials, most of which aim to save lives.*

"I'm alive today and it was a very aggressive form of cancer," said Elsada Wilson who was diagnosed with breast cancer in late 2018. Wilson added, "The only thing I could think of, it was a death sentence if you have breast cancer."

After diagnosed, Wilson, who is half Panamanian and half Jamaican, was asked to participate in a clinic trial. Minorities are under-represented in most of these trials. "That was for a short time and it was fish oil, where you take fish oil which

is very beneficial to help you with your cancer," she said.

"We want to make sure that the drugs that are available reach the greatest number of people, and right now underrepresented minorities including Hispanics African-Americans and others are not well represented," said Dr. Amelie Ramirez, the Chair of Population and Health Sciences and Associate Director for Community Outreach and Engagement for the Mays Cancer Center within UT Health San Antonio.

Over a five year period the CDC found that across the U.S. the rate of new cancers for Hispanic women were 327 for every 100,000 people, but for men that number was 354 for every 100,000 people. Those numbers are expected to explode by the year 2030, more than doubling with a

142 percent jump in new cases. That's why clinical trials in San Antonio where the population is 64 percent Hispanic is so important. Dr. Ramirez added, "The Hispanic population is growing exponentially and by 2015 one of every three individuals will be Latinos so it's really critical that we understand the issues that are facing our population."

Dr. Ramirez stresses you never get a placebo, it is always the standard treatment plus the new tested form of treatment to see if it's effective and they're always safe. Wilson says doing these trials is a no-brainer. Wilson told us, "If I'm going to help somebody being cured I want to be part of that group."

To find out more about clinical trials at the Mays Cancer Center, click [here](#).

## EDGE

### Early results from the Business Services Center prototype show real efficiency improvements

#### HERE ARE THE LATEST EDGE UPDATES:

- The Business Services Center (BSC) is reviewing opportunities to add more departments to the prototype and service delivery model. BSC is gathering feedback from leaders who have been using the newly organized services to find ways to improve future prototype rollouts. Since its launch in November, the BSC has reduced the number of requisitioners who managed only a few transactions per year from 36 to now a highly efficient team of 3 members dedicated to supporting financial transactions. The BSC team has completed more than 200 transactions per month since forming.
- Stakeholders are giving input on Service Catalogs and Service Partnership Agreements for IT, HR and Marketing and Communications.

- Human Resources is clarifying HR Partner roles for recruiting and hiring staff as well as expectations for requisitions.
- The IT Partner Manager job description has been finalized.
- The School of Dentistry IT prototype team is engaging numerous department chairs who are providing feedback on the Service Partnership Agreements to move closer to finalizing them.

### New positions hired to support EDGE

*New positions are being finalized and hired to support the launch of more EDGE prototypes.*

#### HERE ARE THE LATEST EDGE UPDATES:

- The School of Dentistry IT prototype team finalized its project plan and timeline and held the first monthly Dentistry and IMS leadership meeting. The team confirmed the approach and gathered feedback on IT services outlined in the Service Partnership

Agreement and discussed the IT Partner and IT Partner Manager roles.

- Project plans have been finalized with the Financial Transitions prototype team for the School of Nursing, School of Health Professions and Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences. The School of Nursing may be able to accelerate the timeline to start its Business Services Center prototype.
- The Chairs of Long School of Medicine (LSOM) prototype departments participated in focus groups to introduce EDGE and understand current service needs and expectations.
- Leadership from LSOM, Finance, and Human Resources met to finalize the Financial Specialist job description and expedite the process to fill open positions.

Watch for Weekly Updates on the [EDGE website](#) and send questions to [EDGE@uthscsa.edu](mailto:EDGE@uthscsa.edu).

# San Antonio lands one of its largest CANCER GRANTS TO BRING IN NEW TALENT



*The Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas has awarded a total of \$12.2 million to the University of Texas at San Antonio, UT Health San Antonio and University Hospital System in its latest round of grant allocations.*

BY W. SCOTT BAILEY – SENIOR REPORTER, SAN ANTONIO BUSINESS JOURNAL, 2.20.20



## CANCER PREVENTION & RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF TEXAS

CPRIT officials said this is one of the largest amounts San Antonio institutions have collectively received from the institute in a single funding round since it was established by Texas voters in 2007.

CPRIT CEO Wayne Roberts said it's also further indication that the Alamo City "continues to expand its cancer research and prevention prowess."

A major portion of the funding will support the recruitment of new research talent to San Antonio, including \$6 million that CPRIT said it has awarded to UTSA.

UT Health San Antonio has scored \$5.2 million through a pair of CPRIT grants, including a \$4 million Rising Star award supporting the recruitment of Shaun Olsen, an assistant professor in the Department of Biochemistry at the Medical University of

South Carolina, whose research has been funded by the National Institutes of Health. Olsen is a member of the Developmental Cancer Therapeutics Program at the Hollings Cancer Center and will join the Department of Biochemistry and Structural Biology in the Long School of Medicine at UT Health San Antonio where he will work as an investigator in the university's Mays Cancer Center.

"Dr. Olsen will introduce cryo-electron microscopy to our growing structural biology program," said Patrick Sung, professor and interim chairman of biochemistry and structural biology at UT Health San Antonio.

Cryo-electron microscopy is a state-of-the-art structural biology tool that allows investigators to obtain high-resolution structures of protein complexes.

"It can certainly be used to pinpoint prime targets for novel cancer therapies," Sung said. "This technology will greatly complement x-ray crystallography and nuclear magnetic resonance expertise that we already have on campus."

**The two CPRIT recruitment awards are tied to the Center for Innovative Drug Discovery, a joint venture between UTSA and UT Health San Antonio. CPRIT officials said the CIDD funding support is an example of how the state can encourage collaboration and how institutes can leverage resources.**

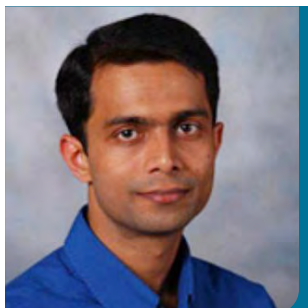
UT Health San Antonio has also been awarded a \$1.2 million grant to support Dr. Manjeet Rao's work at the Greehey Children's Cancer Research Institute addressing osteosarcoma growth and metastasis. Dr. Yogesh Gupta, also of the Greehey Institute, is the co-principal investigator on the grant.

In addition, CPRIT has awarded UHS more than \$973,000 for its work in addressing the high rate of tobacco use among individuals living with HIV/AIDS in Bexar County.

The San Antonio funding is part of \$78 million CPRIT has awarded through 55 new grants in its latest allocation.



SHAUN OLSEN, PH.D.



MANJEET RAO, PH.D.



YOGESH GUPTA, PH.D.



## INVITATION TO APPLY: 2020 V FOUNDATION V SCHOLAR CANCER RESEARCH GRANT

The V Foundation for Cancer Research is soliciting a nomination from the Mays Cancer Center at UTHSA for the 2020 V Scholar Award. This grant funds laboratory based fundamental and translational research from a **junior-level investigator in a tenure-track faculty position**. The Mays Cancer Center may submit up to two nominees if at least one of the two nominee applicants identify as someone from an underrepresented in science minority ethnic group for the Stuart Scott Memorial Cancer research funding. Among the highly ranked 2020 finalists they will designate at least one of the highest ranked applications from a minority applicant as the recipient of a 2020 Stuart Memorial Fund V Scholar Award.

*Any adult cancer research area is permitted, however, research on cancers that are more prevalent or aggressive in specific ethnic populations is encouraged, but not required. Cancers in which ethnic and racial disparities have previously been shown include lung and bronchus, colon and rectum, breast, prostate, uterine, cervix, stomach and liver.*

### ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applicants must demonstrate expertise and promise in cancer research. Applicants must have completed at least two years of fellowship training and currently hold a tenure-track faculty position at Assistant Professor or lower level. For MDs, a minimum of one year fellowship is acceptable if only one year is required for the specialty. Applicants may not have been faculty (at the Instructor or Assistant Professor level) for more than 5 years. Applicants with institutional or K08 awards are eligible. **However, applicants may not have received or been notified that they will receive an R01 or an R01-equivalent grant including research projects as part of a P01, P50 or U01, as well as DP1, DP2, R37, R23, or R29 grant.**

### Funding Mechanism and Terms and Conditions:

Each grant will total \$200,000 and will be given in two annual installments of \$100,000 each.

**Pre-Application Format:** For consideration to be the Mays Cancer Center applicant, please submit a pre-application as a single PDF including:

- Letter of introduction by the applicant (limited to one-page) including:
  - Summary of his/her research interest
  - Description of his/her reason for doing cancer research
  - What the applicant would like the V Foundation to know about him/her
- One-page proposal summarizing:
  - Hypothesis and specific aims
  - Rationale
  - Supporting data (if any)
  - Expected outcomes
  - Progress specific to aims for each of the two years
- Applicant's other support, clearly delineating funds specific to this project both current and pending
- Applicant's biosketch
- One page budget (NIH format suggested) description of applicant's plans for career development or mentoring and how this award would enhance this (limited to one page)

Application should be named as follows:  
**lastname\_VScholar2020.pdf**

*Please note incomplete applications or applications not adhering to the format above will not be considered.*

### Pre-Application Review Process

Pre-applications will be reviewed by members of the Mays Cancer Center Research Executive Committee and be ranked to determine which applicant will be nominated for the V Scholar Award.

### SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS

Applications in PDF format should be emailed to the Mays Cancer Center office at [mccgrants@uthscsa.edu](mailto:mccgrants@uthscsa.edu)

### DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF ALL PRE-APPLICATIONS

**5:00 PM on March 13, 2020. NO LATE APPLICATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED.**

The Mays Cancer Center must notify the V Foundation by April 2, 2020 with the name and email address of our nominated applicant.

### FULL APPLICATION DEADLINE

The full nomination to the V Foundation is due **May 6, 2020 by 5:00 PM Eastern Time**. Grants will be awarded August/September 2020 and the first payment will be Fall 2020. Please see the V Foundation [website](#) for full details on the application process.