



BY EMILY BAUCUM, NEWS 4 SAN ANTONIO REPORTER | MAY 8, 2019
PHOTO PROVIDED BY BY NEWS 4 SAN ANTONIO

UT HEALTH SAN ANTONIO DOCTORS DEVELOPING NONADDICTIVE PAIN RELIEVER

Doctors right here in San Antonio are working around the clock to develop a painkiller that's not addictive.

The Trouble Shooters got exclusive access to groundbreaking research that could be an antidote to the opioid crisis, just as doctors continue this work with our local military community.

Army veteran Amanda Terrell served in war zones, and helped New Orleans recover from Hurricane Katrina.

"We rebuilt homes," she says.

A car accident on the way to a training exercise changed the course of her life.

"This car just ran into our truck. I actually woke up to the antifreeze pouring on my face," Terrell says.

The antifreeze burned the left side of her head.

"It felt like a skillet. Like my head was a on a skillet. And it was constant pain," Terrell says.

Doctors at UT Health San Antonio want to stop that kind of pain for good.

"I've been studying pain relief most of my life," Dr. Ken Hargreaves says.

**"PAIN'S A DIFFICULT PROBLEM,
BUT THERE'S PROBABLY NOTHING
MORE IMPORTANT THAT YOU
CAN POSSIBLY STUDY. PAIN IS THE
NUMBER ONE SYMPTOM THAT
PATIENTS SEEK TO HAVE CURED."**

- DR. HARGREAVES

"What have you learned about pain?" reporter Emily Baucum asks.

He and his team have spent years developing a non-addictive pain reliever. They're getting closer, testing what they've come up with on mice and eventually humans.

While it takes time to get FDA approval for human testing, the opioid crisis has made this work a priority. Dr. Hargreaves wants to treat pain at the source. Opioids, on the other hand, work in the brain to mask pain - that's what makes them so addictive.

"If we can treat pain at the source, then medicines don't have to work in the brain at all," Dr. Hargreaves says.

"Because while you're working in this lab, people are dying," Baucum says.

"That's exactly right. And that's a motivation that our entire lab realizes," Dr. Hargreaves says.

His team just got a \$6 million grant from the Department of Defense to join forces with experts at Fort Sam Houston.

"We're able to collaborate with the Institute of Surgical Research, probably one of the preeminent burn research and burn treatment centers in the world," Dr. Hargreaves says.

The goal is for veterans like Terrell - and eventually, you - to no longer have to live with pain. I know how it feels and I know what other soldiers go through," Terrell says. "Anybody that's trying to better that, I'm rooting for you."

CLICK [HERE](#) TO WATCH VIDEO.

EARLY DETECTION IS THE KEY

TO LIVING WELL WITH BLOOD CANCERS, INCLUDING MULTIPLE MYELOMA

Once a frightful and terminal diagnosis, new approaches to the detection and treatment of blood cancers such as multiple myeloma have completely changed the story.

“With multiple myeloma, we’re now able to talk about a *chronic* condition rather than a deadly one, and that’s a big, big change,” says UT Health San Antonio MD Anderson Cancer Center oncologist Robyn M. Scherber, MD, MPH.

Multiple myeloma presents unique challenges. Unlike many cancers, which are linked to specific risk factors, multiple myeloma cannot be prevented in the traditional sense. “By being proactive, however, we have the opportunity to reduce this type of cancer’s detrimental effects considerably,” asserts Dr. Scherber.

New studies have demonstrated that there may be risk factors that are shared between family members that contribute to the development of multiple myeloma. The key to a successful outcome, says Dr. Scherber, is information. “If you have a family history of blood or marrow cancers, talk with your physician about it.”

Here are a few important pieces of advice from Dr. Scherber:

FAMILY HISTORY

The early indicator of your risk for developing multiple myeloma is a family history of cancers of the blood or bone marrow. “If relatives have been diagnosed with these cancers in the past,” says Dr. Scherber, “it’s wise to start talking with a primary care physician and putting together a routine blood monitoring plan.”

GENETIC SCREENING

Multiple myeloma has been found to have a high correlation with other genetic changes in the blood that leads to much of the blood being from one source. This entity, called CHIP (Clonal hematopoiesis of indeterminate potential). “While not a guarantee that someone will develop multiple myeloma or other blood-related cancers, the presence of the CHIP mutation does tell us who may be at risk,” Dr. Scherber shares. The [Cancer Genetics and High-Risk Screening Clinic](#) at UT Health San Antonio MD Anderson is one of the nation’s leading such testing facilities. Patients with family histories of multiple myeloma or other blood cancers should discuss genetic screening with their primary care physicians.

HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

“If we know early that someone is at increased risk for blood cancer, there are lots of creative things we can do to potentially slow its progress to a level that is no longer considered life-threatening,” Dr. Scherber says. Research currently underway at UT Health San Antonio suggests that reducing stress, eating foods rich in anti-inflammatory components, getting plenty of exercise, and undertaking calming activities, such as mindful practice and yoga, may be able to help. “We are learning that inflammation in the body is a major complicating factor for people with the CHIP mutation, but the good news is that there are things we can do about it,” she adds.

LISTEN TO YOUR BODY

“I cannot stress enough the importance of listening to your body; if something seems a little off, it may be an early signal for a blood issue, particularly if blood cancers run in your family,” Dr. Scherber says. Early symptoms of multiple myeloma typically include fatigue, kidney trouble, numbness in the hands and feet, a tendency to break bones easily, or bones that ache often. The presence of any or all of these symptoms, without another explanation, should prompt a visit with your doctor.

“The trick with any blood-related cancers is catching them early because the blood touches everything in our bodies,” stresses Dr. Scherber. Such cancers progress and spread very quickly if ignored. With proper care and diligence, however, it is possible to live with cancers such as multiple myeloma. “We now have access to more creative ways to help people diagnosed with blood cancers live long, healthy lives than ever before,” she says.



To learn more about blood or bone marrow cancers, or to schedule an appointment, [CLICK HERE](#) or call 210-450-1000.

GERIATRIC LECTURE SERIES

“DON'T BE AFRAID
TO BE ACTIVE”



THE PRESENTOR:
ALEX ORTIZ, PT, PH.D.,
CHAIR OF THE DEPARTMENT
OF PHYSICAL THERAPY AT
UT HEALTH SAN ANTONIO

EVENT INFORMATION:

- Friday, June 14
- 12-1 pm
- Mabee Conference Room
- Lunch will be provided
- CNE / CEU will be provided for RN, APRN, and Social Workers.

RECOGNIZING EXCELLENCE

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE DEPARTMENT OF RADIATION ONCOLOGY AT THE MAYS CANCER CENTER.

For the month of April, Radiation Oncology ranked No. 1 with the highest rating for patient experience across all of UT Health Physicians, which includes more than 120 clinical departments that provide care to patients. UT Health Physicians distributes patient experience surveys after each visit seeking real-time feedback on ways we can better serve our patients.

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2019 Official Annual Meeting Review

JUNE 22, 2019
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UT Health San Antonio ASCO Direct™ Highlights 2019 Official Annual Meeting Review a program licensed by the American Society of Clinical Oncology, Inc. This meeting will provide recent advances in the treatment of cancer presented at the 2019 American Society of Clinical Oncology's Annual Meeting.

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HAPPY NURSES WEEK 2019

