



FAMIS

Foundation for the Advancement of Minimally Invasive Surgery

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FAMIS Research Initiatives

Currently, FAMIS is supporting 27 clinical and 24 laboratory research studies. These projects include a wide range of different minimally invasive surgical topics ranging from the development of new surgical techniques, applications of molecular biology to improve the diagnosis of cancer, evaluation of novel technologies, and improved understanding of the physiology and anatomy of the human body. While diverse in their nature, all of these projects have the same central core goal; to make surgery less invasive and more tolerable for patients. Here are a few of the many active projects.

EZ Trainer – The future of laparoscopic surgical education

In our last FAMIS update we reported on the development of the EZ Trainer device, which was completely funded by FAMIS. This simple training system was formally unveiled at the FAMIS fundraising event in April where the prototype was available for viewing by all guests. The device is a training system that will help surgeons around the world learn how to do laparoscopic surgery. Laparoscopy has been shown to have tremendous patient benefits as it decreases blood loss, decreases pain, and speeds patient recovery. To date, laparoscopic training has been a challenge and many surgeons in the US and abroad do not offer their patients laparoscopy simply because it is hard to learn. The EZ trainer is the first device to offer surgeons the opportunity to train in a cost-effective and efficient manner. The EZ trainer has been tested by students and laparoscopic surgeons, and been shown to be an effective training tool. Results regarding the EZ trainer will soon be published in the Journal of Urology, and will also appear of the FAMIS website. Production has been initiated, and the first 100 EZ trainers will be available in February 2008.



EZ Trainer



Anastomosis Device – Is this the end of surgical sewing?

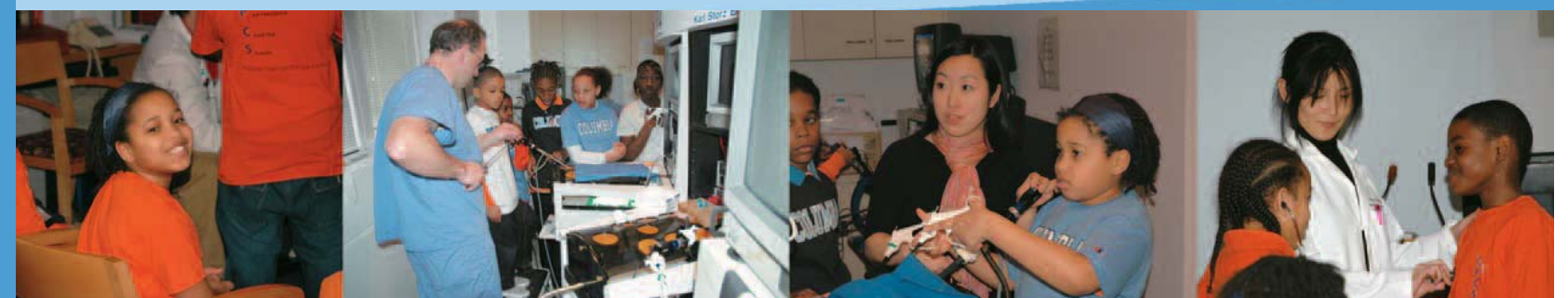
FAMIS supported research is already changing the way surgeons see the world! Recently, pre-clinical testing done by the Columbia University minimally invasive research team demonstrated that the body can be reconstructed after minimally invasive cancer surgery without sutures. Indeed, a new device has been able to allow the body to heal itself so that no stitches are required! Presently, with permission of the FDA and under formal protocol, the anastomosis device was used in 10 patients after prostate cancer surgery to anastomose (bring together) the bladder and urethra. All ten patients did very well and a larger clinical trial is in progress. This device will allow prostate cancer surgery to be done less invasively, more efficiently, and, if preliminary results hold true, with a better outcome than has ever been seen before. The current device is designed for prostate cancer surgery, but the concept may be applicable to many different types of surgery in the future. FAMIS is already supporting applications of the device after bladder cancer surgery.



Anastomosis Device

BoTox for minimally invasive surgery?

Botulinum Toxin or BoTox has been in the news and is well known as being used for cosmetic purposes. FAMIS supported research is currently evaluating BoTox after kidney stone surgery to improve patient comfort with kidney stents. Kidney stents, while critical to protecting the kidneys, are well known to cause tremendous discomfort to patients. Indeed, 80% of patients with these stents have significant deterioration in their quality of life. Initial results are promising, and soon BoTox may not just be another “pretty face” in the minimally invasive world.



photography by Marcia Ciriello

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For any questions:

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FAMIS NEWS

FAMIS Education Goes On-Line!

The internet is revolutionizing global communication and FAMIS will soon contribute to wealth of information available through the internet. In collaboration with Columbia University Department of Urology and HiLite Media, FAMIS has developed a website interface with simple navigational tools to allow for easy access of relevant up-to-date FAMIS activities. By the end of December 2007 the website will be fully functional. Located at www.FAMISurgery.org, FAMIS will be represented on multiple levels. Detailed sections describing news on past and current FAMIS supported domestic and international fellows, recent clinical and laboratory FAMIS funded research, and FAMIS event descriptions will be presented through this platform.

Additionally, potential researchers and international physicians will be able to use the website as a tool for grant applications for minimally invasive research and international fellowship support, respectively.

The website will act as a gateway for the general public, students and physicians to communicate FAMIS activities, and receive feedback from potential donors, and grant recipients. We encourage FAMIS supporters to visit FAMISurgery.org for a unique look at minimally invasive education and research.

A New FAMIS Family Member

FAMIS is pleased to announce a new member of the "family." We have hired Mr. Greg Hruby as Chief Administrator to the organization. Mr. Hruby hales from St. Louis and is currently a graduate student at Columbia University in the Biotechnology program. Greg is also Director of the Columbia University Minimally Invasive Urology Laboratory where he has personally implemented some of FAMIS's minimally invasive surgery research endeavors, including award winning work on the EZ Trainer (see FAMIS research). In his very limited free time, Greg has also become a triathlete and recently completed the half Ironman Mighty Montauk Triathlon. Greg is truly dedicated to minimally invasive surgery and hopes to go to medical school in the future. He has already coordinating FAMIS fundraising efforts and we are thrilled to have him on board. Mr. Greg Hruby won best poster presentation at the annual meeting of the American Urological Association for his work on the EZ Trainer. Greg engendered the EZ Trainer project and was instrumental in the design and current construction of this training device. With this device, FAMIS hopes that more surgeons domestically and around the world will be able to offer more patients a minimally invasive solution to their diseases.



Mr. Greg Hruby

Fundraising Events

In April 2007, the FAMIS Board of Directors hosted FAMIS's first fundraising event, and it was a smashing success. The event took place at the restaurant Citrus in Manhattan and over 100 guests gave of their time and money to support a better future for minimally invasive surgery. The evening included the first public unveiling of the FAMIS supported EZ Trainer project (see FAMIS research) as well as the FAMIS person of the year award given to an individual who strongly supported the objectives of FAMIS. Overall, it was a great evening for networking and fun, and over \$85,000 were collected to support minimally invasive education and research. Currently, the FAMIS event committee (Ms. Laura Alterman, Ms. Diane Cohen, Mrs. Jocelyn Turken-Gould, and Mrs. Pamela Landman) are planning FAMIS's next event in April 2008. This team will certainly put the "fun" in fundraising and we all look forward to a great event. Please visit our website for updated information in the near future.



Fundraising Event 2007

FAMIS AWARDS

FAMIS is Winning Awards!

FAMIS would like to congratulate the following FAMIS supported researchers for their ground breaking, and award winning efforts.

Dr. Daniel Lehman won first prize in the Endourology Society's fellow's essay contest. Dr. Lehman presented research on the indications for cryoablation for kidney cancer. His clinical findings have clarified which patients are best suited for kidney cancer cryoablation, and will therefore help surgeons to offer patients with kidney cancer the best, safest, and least invasive treatment possible.



Dr. Daniel Lehman

Dr. Courtney Phillips won best paper award in the Engineering and Urology Society for her research on minimally invasive surgical technologies. For over 100 years surgeons have used energy in surgery. Courtney's innovative research was the world's first effort at evaluating physiologic parameters that contribute the functioning of surgical energy devices. We hope that her research will be the groundwork for future technologies that will help minimally invasive surgeons to make surgery better and safer.



Dr. Courtney Phillips

FAMIS person of the year

Mr. Chen Barir

In April, at the FAMIS fundraising event, Mr. Chen Barir was honored as FAMIS's first "person of the year." Chen graciously flew from Tel Aviv Israel where he currently resides to accept our award. Chen has contributed greatly to minimally invasive surgery at many levels. Currently, he is the President and CEO of Galil Medical where he helps produce equipment for the minimally invasive treatment of cancers. Galil cryoablation technology allows surgeons to apply a minimally invasive approach to many diseases including lung, liver, kidney, and prostate cancers. Chen has created companies that have created technologies for minimally invasive imaging of the gastrointestinal system, and for retinal replacement. As such, Chen has both literally and figuratively put "vision" into minimally invasive surgery. We are proud to have him as the first FAMIS person of the year.



Mr. Chen Barir

FAMIS EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVES

FAMIS Post Baccalaureate Scholarship

FAMIS is proud to announce that we are continuing a tradition of education for minimally invasive surgery by creating what will be the world's first minimally invasive education scholarship. Each year, FAMIS will grant on the basis of need and merit full tuition to one student accepted to the Post-Baccalaureate program at Columbia University. This program is designed to help students transition from a non-medical career into medicine. Students in the program spend two years fulfilling basic science courses that are required to enter medical school. They attend class with students from Columbia University's highly competitive undergraduate population.

We proudly congratulate our first scholarship winner, Ms. Ingrid Lauer-Arnold. Ingrid graduated from the University of Michigan with a B.A. in History in 2005. During her undergraduate years, Ingrid also spent a semester studying abroad in Japan. After graduation, she worked as the Production Manager for DiversityInc Magazine. Although she found the business world to be exciting and challenging, Ingrid wanted to pursue a career that directly affected the quality of life of others. She is passionate about working with children and improving their mental and physical well being. In 2007, Ingrid was accepted to and enrolled in Columbia University's Postbaccalaureate Premedical Program. Ingrid is already actively doing research with the Minimally Invasive Urology Laboratory at Columbia University including work on technologies for minimally invasive targeting of cancer. She is interested in pursuing a career as a pediatric oncology surgeon. Ingrid will enroll in medical school in 2010. We are confident that Ingrid will make an excellent physician and will work with FAMIS to improve the future of minimally invasive surgery.



Ms. Ingrid Lauer-Arnold

International Fellow

The FAMIS international fellowship continues to grow and flourish seeding minimally invasive surgical thinking throughout the globe. Recently, Dr. Gabriella Mirabile, and Italian Urologist, completed a one year minimally invasive surgery fellowship with the Columbia University minimally invasive urology team. Gabriella participated in numerous laboratory projects and developed endoscopic and laparoscopic skills which she is already sharing with surgeons in Rome. FAMIS also welcomes our newest international fellow, Dr. Zhamshid Okhunov from Russia. Zhamshid will spend a year researching and learning minimally invasive surgery techniques.



Dr. Gabriella Mirabile

Visiting Professorship

Last year FAMIS supported the visit of Dr. Ralph Clayman, Professor and Chair of the Department of Urology at the University of California - Irvine. Dr. Clayman has distinguished himself as one of the world's most innovative surgeons and his lectures during this visit clearly impacted minimally invasive surgery in the New York area. This year FAMIS has invited Dr. Glenn Preminger, Professor of Surgery at Duke University, to lecture. Dr. Preminger is also the Director of Education for the American Urological Association and therefore has great insight into the future of both minimally invasive surgery and the future of surgical education. We look forward to his visit and will soon have details available on-line. All FAMIS supporters are invited to Dr. Preminger's upcoming visit.