



# Resident Connections Quarterly

Rutgers NJMS Internal Medicine Residency Program

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Summer 2013

## Welcome to Our New Interns!



by Ralph Bernardo

For many interns, July first can be a time of both excitement and apprehension. This year, Rutgers New Jersey Medical School welcomed forty-nine new medicine and medicine-pediatric residents,

and to make the transition from student to resident easier, the Department of Medicine held its annual Intern Meet and Greet.

True to tradition, this year's event was held at the Verona Park Boathouse in Verona, NJ. The turnout was amazing, with most of the first year class gathering for this great event.



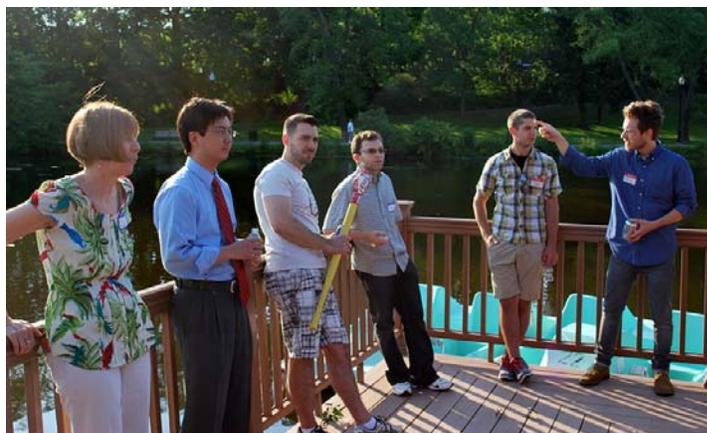
The afternoon started off with a steady flow of soon-to-be interns trickling through the front door and onto the pier where both handshakes and names

were exchanged. With a cold soda in hand, the conversations continued underneath the partly cloudy sky until the smell of grilled mahi mahi, eggplant rollatini, filet mignon, and grilled vegetables flooded the air. The evening continued indoors where the

conversation continued over the eclectic menu from Frank Anthony's Gourmet Italian restaurant. With the cacophony of music



and voices filling the air, intern year suddenly seemed just a little less frightening.



Following dinner, the festivities continued outdoors with a variety of activities including an intense game of whiffle ball amidst horseshoes and a football flying across the sky. With bellies full, spirits high, and the sun just below the horizon, everyone gathered one last time to say goodnight. Just over a week before the new academic



year was to start, several new friendships had already been made. Congratulations and best of luck to our new residents!

### Inside this issue

<i>Welcome Rutgers</i>	2
<i>SP Clinic Revealed: Time to Clean Up the Rumor Mill</i>	2
<i>Who's Who—Resident</i>	3
<i>Who's Who—Attending</i>	3
<i>Rounding on Residents</i>	4
<i>Bernardo's Best</i>	4
<i>In-House Connections</i>	5
<i>The Oriscello 5AM-5K Run</i>	5
<i>Graduation Ceremony</i>	6
<i>Graduation Dinner</i>	7
<i>Birthdays</i>	8
<i>Sean and Trent's 2 Cents</i>	8
<i>EKG Challenge</i>	8



## Welcome Rutgers!



By Sean Bednarz

On July first 2013, as a result of the New Jersey Medical and Health Sciences Education Restructuring Act, seven of UMDNJ's eight medical, dental and health sciences schools were absorbed by Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey. The eighth school, UMDNJ's School of Osteopathic Medicine in South Jersey, became a part of Rowan University in Glassboro.

During the restructuring process, University Hospital in Newark became a free-standing state-owned medical center, continuing its mission as a teaching hospital and level one trauma center.

Barnabas Health was chosen as a management consultant that will advise the board and leadership of University Hospital on ways to improve its financial performance and ability to survive in the evolving health care market.

The transformation at Rutgers is part of a statewide higher education restructuring process designed to build up New Jersey's public universities. Virtually all of the top public universities across the United States boast medical schools. Proponents of the merger hope that the combined laboratory and clinical research will create private-sector partnerships that stimulate job growth and make the state university a more attractive investment to pharmaceutical and technology companies. The merger places Rutgers in a position to morph into a research juggernaut, one that can attract more federal research grants and draw in top faculty from around the country. Lastly it provides legacy UMDNJ employees with an opportunity to sport new lab coats and cheer for a home state team, The Rutgers Scarlet Knights.



## SP Clinic Revealed: Time to Clean Up the Rumor Mill



By Lauren Blackwell

Ever since the unveiling of the master schedule, the rumor mill has been churning over the mysterious "sp clinic". We have decided to take this time to answer your questions and quiet those fears once and for all.

Confused 2<sup>nd</sup> year resident: "What does "sp clinic" stand for?"

Me: "Sp clinic" does, in fact, stand for specialty clinic. However, this is a misnomer. The real title of this program is Community Outreach and Simulation Training. We will start calling it COST. It is structured in two parts. The mornings are spent at the VA doing procedures in the simulation lab and the afternoons are reserved for community outreach activities at the UH ambulatory care center. This program is still "under construction" and some things may change over the next few weeks. Stay tuned for updates!

Annoyed 3<sup>rd</sup> year resident: "I heard that we had to write essays for 2 weeks...ugh! I'm not doing that..."

Me: You're right, you will not be writing essays for two weeks straight. First of all, I don't want to read them. Second, if I were asked to do that I would refuse and justifiably so. On the first day, you are asked to do an introspective "essay", which is ten questions that require short answers. On the last day, you are given a similar task called the reflection "essay". So, this is really just answering questions—not free texting a 12-page essay. However, if any of you

want to write a 12-page essay, Dr. Kothari would love to read it.

3<sup>rd</sup> year resident's bff: "I heard we had to talk about our feelings"

Me: I have absolutely no interest in your feelings.

Annoyed 3<sup>rd</sup> year resident's special call room friend: "It sounds like this will be very touchy feely and a waste of my time"

Me: As you all are finding out, I am not at all touchy feely. Most of my close friends and family members think I am devoid of all human emotion. The purpose of the community outreach portion is to include narrative medicine into your training and give you a different patient care experience.

Timid intern in the voice of Milton Waddams from Office Space:

"Um, excuse me.... I don't have sp clinic on my schedule. Um... I just wanted to know why sp clinic is not on my schedule. Can any one explain why sp clinic is not on my schedule...I could set the building on fire..."

Me: Whoa! Settle down there...I'll get you a stapler. Yes, the interns do not have "sp clinic" on their schedule. Honestly, I forgot we had interns when planning this—my bad.

Annoyed 3<sup>rd</sup> year resident's frienemy: "I have sp clinic on my schedule like 9 times. What's up with that?"

Me: We are in the process of fixing your schedules. This was added to the master schedule before the curriculum was finalized, and we understand that one person should probably not do this 9 times. Instead you will be given VA ambulatory selective or Hackensack office practice depending on the tally. Please be patient with us; this is a work in progress.

## Who's Who Among NJMS Residents - Nisha Suda, MD

Born in stunning Paterson, NJ, raised in the land of lakes and bears, aka – Kinnelon NJ; Nisha grew up enjoying finer things in life such as sports and Simpsons reruns. Her first taste of Newark came when she began to attend Newark Academy for grades 6-12; alas, the school was not in Newark at all, but in Livingston. Nevertheless, the school remained close to its roots by setting up numerous volunteer and service opportunities in the Newark community.



It is here that Nisha got the opportunity to help organize athletics events for Newark



community kids, and even throw them annual Christmas parties.

During this time Nisha also became an avid tennis player and eventually went on to be recruited to play at Cornell before she went on to compete internationally. While at Cornell she attempted to major in everything for at least a semester: starting out in Astrophysics, moving on to Russian literature, then finally finding her passion in the field of Animal Science and Physiology. It is this interest in science that led her to pursue research in Neuroendocrinology, where despite getting bit by angry mice, she was always excited about her work. Upon completion of undergrad, she was accepted into Cornell's Masters in Health Administration program. During these two years she continued as an assistant coach for the Cornell women's tennis team and took on a new research project in the field of Evaluation and Translational Research. On top of all that she even took an internship working in Harlem to help educate locals about clinical trials and medical access. Although she dealt with a lot of resistance at times, she was persistent and was able to contribute positively by implementing protocols to facilitate the health care needs of the community. At the end of her graduate school years she was offered the Head women's tennis coaching position, however the day before she was to accept the position she got a call from Dr.

George Heinrich offering her a position at NJMS. Although she initially suspected it was a prank call, upon realizing it was truly Dr. Heinrich, Nisha was thrilled. Needless to say, after many excited shouts and falling off her chair (allegedly), Nisha gratefully accepted the offer.



During her 4 years at NJMS Nisha was an active member of the community, however the most meaningful activity for her was her participation in the student run free clinic (SFHCC). She was able to combine her passion for patient care and interest in management as a Clinic Director, thus helping to serve the healthcare needs of the Newark community. She went on to follow in the footsteps of both her parents by matching at NJMS.

Nowadays when she's not figuring out how to return a page she can be found roaming the halls chatting with patients about sports and looking for cookies in her spare time. Don't be afraid to say hi, and maybe teach her how to work her pager.

## Who's Who Among Medicine Faculty - Julius Gardin, MD



By Ruchi Kumari  
Dr. Julius Gardin has been Chairman of the Department of Medicine at Hackensack University Medical since 2008. However, after just a few minutes with Dr. Gardin,

you realize that he may just be one of the most fascinating individuals one can possibly meet. From military service in the Army reserves to having over >190 original publications to obtaining a patent related to cardiac medicine, Dr. Gardin has done it all. He's even an ordained rabbi! To understand the works behind such an incredible man, we have to first rewind a bit.

Dr. Gardin was born and raised in Detroit, Michigan. His enthusiasm in medicine stemmed from a personal experience, after his father suffered a heart attack. And his

determination to pursue medicine has never wavered since then. Years later as a medical student at University of Michigan, a long-haired Julius was using an ophthalmoscope when his attending commented, "Doesn't seem like ophthalmology is for you," after seeing that his hair was covering the scope.



Indeed, his heart was somewhere else (no pun intended). After graduating medical school *cum laude*, Dr. Gardin continued at the University of Michigan for residency, which was followed by a cardiology fellowship at Georgetown University. There his interest in research sparked, after working with renowned specialists in the field at the

NIH. He later joined University of California – Irvine. It was during this time that Dr. Gardin co-authored a textbook in 2D ECHO imaging, received NIH funding for his research, and rose through the ranks to become Chief of Echocardiography, and later, Chief of Cardiology. His journey continued, bringing him back to his hometown, where he became Chief of Cardiology at St. John Hospital and Medical Center before joining the HackensackUMC family in 2008.

When asked about his favorite part about working at HackensackUMC, he states, "There is such an emphasis on quality of care and working in teams to improve such care." Despite his tremendous accomplishments, the humility in which Dr. Gardin practices is quite remarkable. Outside his work life, he takes great pride in sharing with us the recent wedding of his daughter. From a family man to a reputable leader, Dr. Gardin is a true all-rounder, and we are fortunate and proud to have his continued support in the Rutgers NJMS family.

## Rounding on Residents



by Nneoma Okoronkwo

On a bright sunny afternoon, a group of Rutgers NJMS residents headed out to the Double Tree Hilton hotel to attend a cardiology symposium. The event was hosted by the American Association of Indian Physicians (AAPI) on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of June 2013. The conference focused on recent advances in the management of cardiac patients and application of this knowledge to improve the outcome and quality of patients. The event was well-attended by cardiologists and other physicians. Representing Rutgers NJMS were Sean, Arpita, Ruchi, Nneoma, Priya, Sukhjeet, Birju, Umair, and NJMS cardiologist, Dr. Pallavi Solanki. After brief introductions, the conference kicked off with a buffet lunch of various Indian delicacies and desserts which we happily

indulged in.

Lunch was immediately followed by informative lectures given by renowned cardiologists in their various subspecialty fields. Dr. Shamin Sharma from Mt. Sinai discussed recent advances in interventional cardiology, while Dr. Joseph Parrillo from HUMC reviewed management of critically ill cardiovascular patients. Also in attendance were Dr. David Baran from Newark Beth who spoke of cardiac transplantations as well as Dr. Atul Prakash who talked about device therapy in the management of chronic CHF. Our very own chairman, Dr. Marc Klapholz, was also present and gave a comprehensive review on the current practices and future trends in the diagnosis and management of heart failure.

*(continued on page 5)*

## Bernardo's Best: Capellini with Pesto & Ricotta



### Ingredients:

- 3 cups chopped fresh basil
- 1 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1/2 cup pine nuts
- 2/3 cup grated parmesan cheese
- 2 tablespoons minced garlic

**Directions:** Bring 4 to 6 quarts of water to a boil and add salt to taste. In the meantime, place the basil into a blender. Add the olive oil and blend the basil to a paste-like consistency. Add the pine nuts, Parmesan cheese, and minced garlic continuing to blend ingredients until smooth. Set the pesto aside. Add one pound capellini to the boiling water and stir gently. Return the water to a boil and cook for approximately 8 minutes. Remove the pot from heat and drain pasta well. Serve with the pesto. For an extra kick, add a dollop of ricotta cheese right on top.

## "In House" Connections

Look out for these recent NJMS residency graduates—your former colleagues, now your lovable bosses.



Kristin Wong, MD  
Asst. Professor, Medicine & Pediatrics  
Medicine Hospitalist



Anabella Moharita, MD  
Asst. Professor, Medicine



Jose Churrango, MD  
Gastroenterology Fellow



Aleksey Tentler, MD  
Asst. Professor, Medicine & Pediatrics  
Medicine Hospitalist



Kavita Gupta, MD  
Geriatrics Fellow



Marijesmar Gonzales, MD  
Asst. Professor, Medicine  
Medicine Hospitalist



Fatima Samad, MD  
Cardiology Fellow



Ned Okarter, MD  
Medicine Hospitalist, HUMC



Steven Kim, MD  
Pulmonary/Critical Care Fellow



Morium Akhtar, MD  
Pulmonary/Critical Care Fellow

## Rounding on Residents

*(continued from page 4)*

The event was followed by an evening of music and entertainment at the Prudential Center by an award-winning Indian band, Shankar Ehsaan Loy. The concert was sponsored by AAPI in their campaign to raise awareness about childhood obesity. Surprisingly, we ran into our dearly beloved, Dr. Rajendra Kapila, who was not there for clinical expertise on the various diseases but was there with his dancing shoes, ready to rock out to the band!

The packed hall was charged with much energy as the crowd waited for the famous band

that did not disappoint in any way. The concert was enthralling, with most leaving their seats and dancing in the crowd near the stage. Sean brought out his Polish-Indian moves grooving to the beat of the music. Ruchi, Arpita and Priya danced away effortlessly, while Nneoma picked it up quickly and carried an Indian beat like a pro. Birju, Gaurav and Sunil watched on from their seats, nodding along to the beats.

All in all, the event was a huge success. The symposium was very informative and Shankar Ehsaan Loy left the crowd wanting more each time

they tried to stop. Like all good things, this eventually came to an end. Until next year and we do this all again!



## The Oriscello 5AM-5K

By Matthew Michaels

The excitement and anticipation has been building for months...graduation for 3<sup>rd</sup> year internal medicine residents you ask?



No way! We're talking about the annual Dr. Oriscello 5K run at 5am. Much like last year, it was a damp and rainy spring morning, but that did not stop more than forty Rutgers NJMS internal medicine residents and fellows from gathering in Cranford Park, NJ this past June 5<sup>th</sup> for the 4th annual Dr. Oriscello 5K run.

The annual event has garnered immense popularity since its inception back in 2009. The annual run has served as a great chance to put on running shoes and hit the trail, with the opportunity to engage in a fun-spirited and healthy event among fellow colleagues, and of course, with the man himself. Anticipation for the event was spurred on by the production of commemorative new t-shirts, donning Dr. Oriscello as Uncle Sam, which

were worn by nearly all in attendance. Despite the rain and the early-morning hours the crowd was enthusiastic and ready to race.



New faces among the event included VA attendings Drs. Ohri and Kim. Other event front runners among the faculty included VA attendings Drs. Tsai, Sender, Srinivasan and Stanislaus. Also on hand were the Cranford Police to assist with the escort and make sure there were no stragglers (or crazy male residents wearing woman's sports bras).

First place was awarded to George Nahas, who strutted through the finish line effortlessly in a record time of 17 minutes and 28 seconds, followed by an extremely close

Evan Grant at 7 minutes and 30 seconds. The men were not to be overshadowed by our women finalists; Hailey Choi and ICU attending Dr. Jenny Kim, who were awarded nifty trophies by Dr. Oriscello.

Upon completion of the race, and a bit of encouragement for the late finishers, festivities moved to the nearby Oriscello home, where refreshments waited for all. As has been said before, what force other than Dr. Oriscello could bring 40+ residents,



fellows, and attendings out for a 5K run at 5 am with such enthusiasm and excitement!



## Last Graduating UMDNJ Class of 2013!

It was a moment filled with excitement, laughter, family and friends, as the graduating resident class of 2013 readied themselves for the day they had been so anxiously waiting for. Graduation day came as a bittersweet moment in time, as this was absolutely the last graduating UMDNJ class with the arrival of the new Rutgers merger. As graduating residents alongside fellows gathered for this momentous day, it was hard not to reminisce. With days of grueling hard work, rewarding patient experiences, newfound friendships and a grounded, strong medical foundation, these graduates were well-prepared for their future endeavors.



The formal event took place in the Grand Foyer of the New Jersey Medical School. Welcoming introductions by Drs. Klapholz and Kothari as well as a keynote address given by Dr. Maria Soto-Greene marked the occasion. Many faculty attendings, staff

**Top:** Chief Residents Drs. Kristin Wong, Jose Churrango, Madiha Tufail, Umair Ahmed, Aleksey Tentler, Anabella Moharita, and Natalie Furka stand in-line to present the annual awards to residents.

**Right:** Faces full excitement for these graduating residents! From R-L: Drs. Steven Kim, Cordero Floyd, Lauren Blackwell, Miranda Tan, Lauren Parker, Elizabeth Vassallo-DeLuca, and Monika Holbein

**Bottom:** The last graduating UMDNJ class of residents and fellows. As of July 1, NJMS became a part of Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey.

members and fellow residents showed their support for the graduates by surrounding the hall with cheers. Invigorating smiles filled the room, as the graduates came up one by one to be awarded their training certificates. Light refreshments were served throughout the ceremony, and the event included special award presentations by the chief medical residents to distinguished residents, fellows and faculty, as listed below.

The event will be a cherished moment for all those involved, a capsule in time as the last class of the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey.

### Resident and Fellow Awards:

Most Scholarly Resident: Tariq Niazi, DO  
 Best Teaching Resident: Tariq Niazi, DO  
 Best Teaching Resident: Syed Safdar, MD  
 Most Humanistic Resident: Ahmad Yousaf, MD  
 Best Teaching Fellow: Hayder Hashim, MD  
 Intern of the Year: Nneoma Okoronkwo, MD  
 Outstanding Professionalism: Peter Ricketti, DO  
 Excellence in Clinical Skills: Raffaele Bernardo, DO



### Faculty Teaching Awards: Excellence in Teaching

University Hospital : Rajendra Kapila, MD  
 HackensackUMC: Weekon Choi, MD  
 VA Hospital: Ralph Oriscello, MD



## Graduation Dinner 2013!

After the graduation ceremony, everyone put on their dancing shoes for an evening filled with laughter, music, amazing food, and of course, good family and friends. The celebration marked the end of the UMDNJ era and the start of new beginnings for the graduating residents and fellows.

The event took place at the classy Wilshire Grand Hotel in West Orange, New Jersey on the 26th of June, 2013. After a heart warming welcome by the Chief Medical Residents, the evening kicked off with a fun-filled slide presentation of pictures and superlatives for all the graduating residents. Following the slideshow, the residents surprised the Chiefs with special engraved coffee mugs to help keep them awake for their upcoming fellowship or faculty attending positions.

Highlights of the event included some fierce dance moves from current cardiology fellow, Dr. Hayder Hashim, and resident Dr. Theodore Markou. Attendings were not far behind—Drs. Quinlan, Dever, Natale and Klapholz were amongst many of the faculty spotted showing off their moves on the dance floors.

After some fine dining, the dancing continued into the night. Flashing lights from cameras capturing these unforgettable moments lit up the dance hall like strobe lights. As the night winded down, the graduates shared photos and stories with one another over delectable desserts.

All in all, the event was an great success and enjoyed by all who attended—just take a look at these smiling faces below!

Congratulations once again to all the 2013 graduates!



## RCQ brought to you by :

**Chief Residents**—Sean Bednarz, Ralph Bernardo, Lauren Blackwell, Cordero Floyd, Ruchi Kumari, Matthew Michaels, Trent Wang

**Program Director**—Neil Kothari

**Suggestions?**

Please send them to [ruchiefs@gmail.com](mailto:ruchiefs@gmail.com)

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*...and don't forget to join the Rutgers NJMS Internal Medicine Residency Group on Facebook!*

## Birthdays

**July:**

- Roopa Roy—16th
- Sean Sullivan—17th
- Craig Van Dien—26th
- Nabil Abou Baker—24th



**August:**

- Faria Irani—1st
- Mariam Wassef—2nd
- Mitesh Shah—8th
- Rabail Razi-Akmal—16th
- Shira Saul—23rd
- Nancy Mutoro—24th
- Chinonye Ogonnaya-Odor—12th
- Yucai Wang—21st
- Priya Patel—28th
- Vinnidhy Dave—28th
- Tasnim Imran—28th
- Peter Choi—31st

**September:**

- Sajid Mirza—7th
- Gaurav Gandhi—12th
- Mandeep Samra—19th
- Nneoma Okoronkwo—28th

## Sean & Trent's



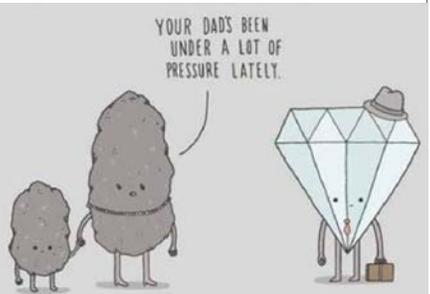
LAUGHTER IS THE BEST MEDICINE.



*(unless you're seriously ill and then maybe you should go see a doctor)*

Want to hear a joke about Potassium?

- K.



## Get to Know the Chiefs

### Matching Game

**Favorite Vacation Spot**

- |                  |                     |
|------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Italy         | A. Trent Wang       |
| 2. Key West      | B. Ruchi Kumari     |
| 3. Saint Martin  | C. Sean Bednarz     |
| 4. Switzerland   | D. Cordero Floyd    |
| 5. South Florida | E. Ralph Bernardo   |
| 6. Las Vegas     | F. Lauren Blackwell |
| 7. Miami         | G. Matthew Michaels |



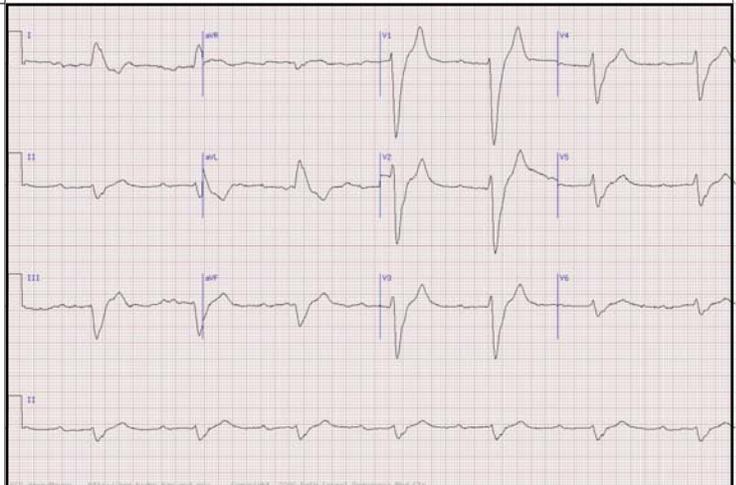
**Favorite Color**

- |                |                     |
|----------------|---------------------|
| 1. Yellow      | A. Cordero Floyd    |
| 2. Red         | B. Lauren Blackwell |
| 3. Cobalt Blue | C. Sean Bednarz     |
| 4. Black       | D. Matthew Michaels |
| 5. Azure       | E. Ruchi Kumari     |
| 6. Green       | F. Trent Wang       |
| 7. Blue        | G. Ralph Bernardo   |



Answers: 1. E, 2. G, 3. D, 4. B, 5. A, 6. F, 7. C / 1. A, 2. F, 3. G, 4. D, 5. C, 6. E, 7. B

## EKG Challenge



Answer: Hyperkalemia

## Questions? Need to talk? Call us!



**UH Chiefs**  
 973-972-5584 or 6054

**HUMC Chiefs**  
 201-996-2591 or 2592

**VA Chiefs**  
 973-676-1000 x1873,  
 1874, or 2803