New Findings on Ketamine

Ketamine, a drug approved for use as a general anesthetic and sedative, also appears to provide significant relief to patients with major depressive disorder, and those with chronic post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), according to two separate studies conducted by researchers at Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai.

In the first study, which appeared online in the April 2 issue of Biological Psychiatry, Mount Sinai researchers found that using an intranasal ketamine spray worked within 24 hours to relieve depressive symptoms in patients previously considered treatment-resistant. Traditional antidepressants, such as selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs), can take weeks, or even months, to reduce symptoms of depression.

The second study, published online on April 16 in JAMA Psychiatry, showed that an IV infusion of ketamine provided rapid relief to patients with moderate-to-severe post-traumatic stress disorder. The low-dose intranasal spray and IV infusions appeared to...
New Findings on Ketamine (continued from page 1)

be safe and well tolerated by patients in the short term.

“One of the primary effects of ketamine in the brain is to block the activity of the NMDA (N-methyl-D-aspartate) glutamate receptor,” says James W. Murrough, MD, Assistant Professor of Psychiatry and Neuroscience, and Associate Director of the Mood and Anxiety Disorders Program at Icahn School of Medicine, who was the principal investigator of the study on major depression. “There is an urgent need to identify new treatments for depression that have novel mechanisms of action in the brain.” As many as 40 percent of depressed individuals, or 112 million people worldwide, are believed to be resistant to conventional therapies.

Adriana Feder, MD, Associate Professor of Psychiatry at Icahn School of Medicine, and a lead author on the study involving patients with PTSD, says her research “should be viewed as a proof of concept study. Longer-term clinical trials with ketamine will be required to determine if ketamine will be a clinically useful treatment for PTSD.” Mount Sinai’s was the first randomized study to demonstrate the rapid effect of ketamine on patients with PTSD.

“In recent years, we and others have shown that ketamine could often counter the symptoms of depression in treatment-resistant cases,” says Dennis S. Charney, MD, Anne and Joel Ehrenkranz Dean, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, and President for Academic Affairs, Mount Sinai Health System. “Now we have shown that ketamine is associated with significantly greater reduction in core PTSD symptom levels 24 hours after a single IV infusion. We hope to see this line of research developed further.” In 2000, Dr. Charney and John H. Krystal, MD, Chair of the Department of Psychiatry at the Yale School of Medicine, published the first controlled study showing that intravenous infusions of ketamine produced rapid antidepressant effects.

Dr. Dennis Charney and Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai have been named on a use patent on ketamine for the treatment of depression. The Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai has entered into a licensing agreement for the use of ketamine as therapy for treatment-resistant depression. Dr. Charney and Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai could potentially benefit from the results of the study. In addition, Dr. Charney and Dr. Adriana Feder are named co-inventors on a use patent application filed by Mount Sinai for the use of ketamine as a treatment for PTSD. If ketamine were shown to be effective in the treatment of PTSD and received approval from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for this indication, Dr. Charney, Dr. Feder, and the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai could benefit financially.

The Mount Sinai Hospital Salutes its Volunteers

Mount Sinai leaders saluted the more than 1,200 volunteers who support The Mount Sinai Hospital and Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai during a recent breakfast held to honor their commitment and dedication.

Following a performance by two volunteer flutists from the Music for Healing program, Peter W. May, Chairman, Boards of Trustees, Mount Sinai Health System, told guests: “There is a broad range of individuals who help Mount Sinai. While some have the capability to support us financially, many more give their valued time, spirit, and compassion to help patients, families, and staff. We salute your enthusiasm and accomplishments.”

Volunteers work in more than 200 placement areas, including patient care, research, education, and office support. “You have helped us expand and enhance many of our programs,” Kenneth L. Davis, MD, Chief Executive Officer and President, Mount Sinai Health System, told the volunteers. He noted that 18 volunteers, including two fluent in Spanish, are now able to staff the Derald H. Ruttenberg Treatment Center six days a week.

David L. Reich, MD, President and Chief Operating Officer, The Mount Sinai Hospital, said, “What I experience walking around the hospital is an amazing display of caring and compassion. Every volunteer is a hero to Mount Sinai.”

Jean C. Crystal, member, Boards of Trustees, has been an enthusiastic volunteer for 28 years. “The superb leadership of the Department of Volunteer Services has helped not only to recruit outstanding volunteers, but to retain them,” she said. Ms. Crystal founded the highly visible Ambassador Program, whose volunteers welcome a patient’s family and friends to Mount Sinai. The program resides in the Joseph F. Cullman Jr. Institute for Patient Care.

“We make a very big place seem small, and welcoming,” said Claudia Colgan, Vice President of Quality Initiatives. Concluded Cynthia Levy, Director, Department of Volunteer Services: “We should all be very proud that we are truly helping the mission of Mount Sinai.”
The Mount Sinai Hospital and Mount Sinai Queens (82 percent), Mount Sinai St. Luke’s and Mount Sinai Roosevelt (81 percent), and New York Eye and Ear Infirmary of Mount Sinai (78 percent). In total, 52,874 faculty, health care providers, and students received the influenza vaccination.

The effort involved dozens of staff from the Infection Control, Nursing, Emergency, and Environmental Health and Safety departments, and Employee Health and Wellness Service. “We are all extremely proud of the many health care workers who protected patients, their co-workers, themselves, and their families by getting vaccinated,” says Brian Koll, MD, Chairman of the Infection Prevention Committee for the Mount Sinai Health System, and Medical Director of Mount Sinai Beth Israel Infection Control and Prevention. “For those who chose not to get vaccinated, they adhered to the spirit of the law by masking.”

The campaign centered on an early and coordinated strategy to publicize the safety of the influenza vaccine and benefits of vaccination. Health care leaders at each hospital provided an unprecedented number of visible and convenient locations for staff to receive the influenza vaccine. Hospital lobbies and cafeterias, for example, as well as Grand Rounds and other large gatherings, became frequent venues for vaccination. Teams also offered the vaccine in patient care units.

“The engagement and commitment demonstrated by our front line staff and the associated support from leadership is a tribute to the strength of the Mount Sinai Health System team,” says Carol Porter, DNP, RN, FAAN, Edgar M. Cullman, Sr. Chair of the Department of Nursing, Dr. Porter is also Chief Nursing Officer/Senior Vice President, The Mount Sinai Hospital and Associate Dean of Nursing Research and Education, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai.

“This is a good reminder that influenza vaccination is the most effective way to prevent influenza infection among our patients, colleagues, and families,” says Madelynn Azar-Cavanagh, MD, MPH, Medical Director of Employee Health, Safety, and Wellness at the Mount Sinai Health System.

2014 Jacobi Medallion Honorees

Seven physician-leaders at the Mount Sinai Health System were honored recently with the 2014 Jacobi Medallion, the highest award bestowed by The Mount Sinai Alumni for excellence in patient care, research, and mentorship.

At a gala held in their honor at The Plaza on Thursday, March 27, Dennis S. Charney, MD, Anne and Joel Ehrenkranz Dean, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, and President for Academic Affairs, Mount Sinai Health System, commended the seven recipients on their achievements. Calling the physicians “the magnificent seven,” he said, “they have brought us to the forefront of American medicine.”

From left to right: Scott L. Friedman, MD; Barbara Murphy, MB, BAO, BCh, FRCPI; Lynne D. Richardson, MD; Dennis S. Charney, MD; Adrian Greenstein, MD; David L. Reich, MD; Martin S. Goldstein, MD; and Lester Silver, MD

Scott L. Friedman, MD, Dean for Therapeutic Discovery and Chief of the Division of Liver Diseases, Irene and Dr. Arthur M. Fishberg Professor of Medicine
Dr. Friedman’s scientific focus is on the biological causes of fibrosis, associated with chronic liver disease. A Senior Fulbright Scholar and Visiting Professor at the Weizmann Institute of Science in Israel, Dr. Friedman has been recognized as Master Educator by Mount Sinai, and was awarded the European Association for the Study of Liver Diseases International Recognition Award.

Martin S. Goldstein, MD, Associate Clinical Professor of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Reproductive Science
Dr. Goldstein’s career accomplishments include introducing gynecologic laparoscopy to The Mount Sinai Hospital, and his early work in tumor immunology. He served as President of the Mount Sinai Alumni and chaired the Development Committee, positions that enabled him to create innovative programs and increase scholarships for Mount Sinai students.

Adrian Greenstein, MD, Professor of Surgery, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai
A worldwide authority on inflammatory bowel disease, Dr. Greenstein has pioneered surgeries for complex fistulizing and obstructing Crohn’s disease and ulcerative colitis. He has authored more than 140 peer-reviewed articles and 30 textbook chapters, mostly on inflammatory bowel disease.

Barbara Murphy, MB, BAO, BCh, FRCP, Chair of the Samuel Bronfman Department of Medicine, Murray M. Rosenberg Professor of Medicine
Dr. Murphy is the first female chair of medicine at an academic medical center in New York City, and also serves as Dean of Clinical Integration and Population Health at the Mount Sinai Health System. She is best known for her groundbreaking work in transplant immunology, with a focus on genomics in determining outcomes in transplantation and the immunomodulatory role of MHC-derived peptides.

continued on page 4 >
May is Better Hearing and Speech Month

On Thursday, May 8, from 11 am – 2 pm, the Department of Otolaryngology will have a display in the Annenberg lobby to promote better hearing. An audiologist will be available to answer questions.

The Ambulatory Care Operations Department, Division of Audiology, will have a display table in the lobby of the Center for Advanced Medicine (17 East 102nd Street) on Friday, May 16, from noon - 3 pm. An audiologist will be available to answer questions.

Grand Rounds Medicine
Philip J. Landrigan, MD, MSc, Director, Children’s Environmental Health Center, Presents, “Global Health in a Changing Environment.”

Tuesday, May 6
8:30 am
Mount Sinai Beth Israel Podell Auditorium

Grand Rounds Pathology
Arief Suriawinata, MD, Section Chief, Anatomic Pathology, Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center, presents “Informatics for the Future of Pathology.”

Wednesday, May 7
Noon – 1 pm
The Mount Sinai Hospital Goldwurm Auditorium

Frontiers in Oncology Seminar
Kenneth C. Anderson, MD, Kraft Family Professor of Medicine, Harvard Medical School, presents “New Insights into Therapeutic Targets in Multiple Myeloma.”

Tuesday, May 13
4 – 5 pm
The Mount Sinai Hospital Hess Center, Davis Auditorium

2014 Jacobi Medallion Honorees (continued from page 3)

David L. Reich, MD, President and Chief Operating Officer, The Mount Sinai Hospital, and President, Mount Sinai Queens

Dr. Reich began his anesthesia training at Mount Sinai in 1984, and has held several leadership roles within the Mount Sinai community. He is the Horace W. Goldsmith Professor of Anesthesiology, and served as Chair of the Department of Anesthesiology from 2004 to 2014. He also served as President of Mount Sinai’s Medical Board from 2011 to 2012. He has published extensively in journals and textbooks and has co-edited three books.

Lynne D. Richardson, MD, Professor of Emergency Medicine, and Health Evidence and Policy, and Vice Chair for Academic, Research, and Community Programs of the Department of Emergency Medicine at The Mount Sinai Hospital

Dr. Richardson launched Mount Sinai’s Emergency Medicine Residency Program in 1996, and helped develop it into a premier training program. She is a leading emergency care researcher, and her Research Division is ranked No. 5 in National Institutes of Health funding. An expert and advocate for reducing health care disparities and improving access to care, Dr. Richardson currently Chairs the Centers for Disease Control ACD Health Disparities Subcommittee.

Lester Silver, MD, MS, Professor and Vice-Chairman, Department of Surgery, Chief of Plastic Surgery, and Director, Plastic Surgery Residency Program

Dr. Silver is a leader in plastic surgery, and is actively involved with many of the world’s prominent plastic surgery societies. His particular interest is in children’s reconstructive surgery at home and abroad. As a member of the International Scholar Program of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons, he has helped young plastic surgeons from abroad gain advanced specialty training in the United States.

Announcements

Scientific Symposium

Scientific leaders of the Samuel Waxman Cancer Research Foundation (SWCRF) summarize the foundation’s funded research projects and honor Kenneth C. Anderson, MD, Kraft Family Professor of Medicine, Harvard Medical School, and Director of the Jerome Lipper Multiple Myeloma Center, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, and breast cancer advocate and author Musa Mayer.

Monday, May 12
5 - 7 pm
The Mount Sinai Hospital
Hess Center, Seminar Room A
RSVP by May 7 to 646-398-5274 or swcrf@waxmancancer.org

Asthma Awareness Luncheon

In recognition of Asthma Awareness Month, The Mount Sinai Community Roundtable Luncheon in May features Gwen S. Skloot, MD, Associate Professor of Medicine (Pulmonary, Critical Care, and Sleep Medicine), presenting “Asthma in the Era of Personalized Medicine.”

Thursday, May 15
Noon
The Mount Sinai Hospital
Boardroom, Fifth Floor
Annenberg