ISSUE #16

Pediatrics Monthly Newsletter

October - November 2026

November often marks the start of a season of reflection. It is also National Diabetes Awareness Month, offering an opportunity to recognize the families living with diabetes and to acknowledge the colleagues and community partners working to improve our patients' lives. Together, we have much to appreciate in how far diabetes care has come.

We live in an exciting time, with innovations that can improve clinical outcomes while reducing the daily burden of management. Options range from continuous glucose monitors and smart insulin pens to tubed and tubeless insulin pumps and increasingly sophisticated automated insulin delivery systems. Each has its own features, level of automation, and opportunities for personalization. Helping families navigate these choices allows us to support shared decision-making and identify the approach that best fits each child's needs and lifestyle.

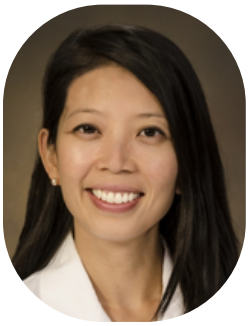
Several notable FDA approvals and expanded indications over the past year include:

- **Teplizumab (Tzield):** Expanded approval to delay progression to Stage 3 type 1 diabetes (T1D) in at-risk individuals ages 1 year and older, and to help preserve insulin production in children ages 8–17 with newly diagnosed Stage 3 T1D.
- **Afrezza**: Expanded approval of inhaled insulin for children ages 6 years and older, broadening insulin delivery options.
- **Libre Duo**: FDA authorization of the first dual glucose-ketone sensing technology for people with diabetes ages 2 years and older. Detecting rising ketone levels may provide earlier awareness of DKA risk.

Meaningful progress comes from both innovation and collaboration. Diabetes care extends well beyond the endocrinology clinic, and I am grateful to our pediatric community for helping our patients flourish at home, in school, and everywhere in between.

Thank you for being part of this shared effort.

With gratitude,
Cindy Chin, MD
Division Chief, Pediatric Endocrinology



Research & Publications

October 2026



Recent Publications:

This study found that eliminating acid ceramidase (AC) in myeloid immune cells reduced inflammation and partially protected against chronic colitis in mice by altering lipid metabolism and limiting the recruitment of inflammatory immune cells to the colon. These findings identify AC as a promising potential therapeutic target for inflammatory bowel disease (IBD).

Espinoza, K. S., Dahl, B. K., Wysong, J. N., Ryan, E. M., Gordon, M. R., Doll, C. L., Marron, M. T., Beard, C. A., Dey, P. D., Simpson, R. J., Snider, J. M., Wilson, J. E., Kiela, P. R., & Snider, A. J. (**2026**). Loss of Acid Ceramidase in Myeloid Cells Protects from Chronic Colitis in IL10-Deficent Mice. bioRxiv : **the preprint server for biology**, 2026.01.05.697503. https://doi.org/10.64898/2026.01.05.697503

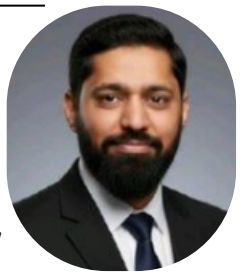
This study identified a novel long noncoding RNA, MSTRG.479558.1, that plays an important role in regulating dendritic cell development and immune function. Researchers found that reducing this RNA impaired the cells' ability to engulf and process antigens, present them to T cells, and activate immune responses. These findings highlight MSTRG.479558.1 as a potential target for understanding and treating inflammatory diseases.

Khan SH, Naqvi RA, Singh AS, Valverde A, Chanu MT, Gupta M, Shaik S, Singh G, Nares S, Shukla D, Naqvi AR, Suzuki S. A Novel Long Noncoding RNA MSTRG.479558.1 Regulates Immune Response in Dendritic Cells. **J Cell Physiol**. **2026 Oct**;241(10):e70242. doi: 10.1002/jcp.70242. PMID: 42922007. IF 4.0 https://doi.org/10.1002/jcp.70242

This case report describes a previously healthy adolescent who developed Pott's puffy tumour, a rare but serious complication of sinusitis involving infection of the frontal bone and an abscess beneath the scalp, following intensive underwater training. The case highlights how pressure changes during diving and swimming may contribute to sinus injury and subsequent infection. The patient was successfully treated with sinus surgery and antibiotics, making a full recovery. These findings emphasize the importance of recognizing underwater pressure exposure as a potential risk factor and identifying complications of sinusitis early in adolescent patients.

Dellinger M, Shehab K. Pott's puffy tumour in a healthy adolescent following sinus barotrauma from underwater training. **BMJ Case Rep**. **2026 Oct 22**;19(10):e275187. doi: 10.1136/bcr-2026-275187. PMID: 42914188; PMCID: PMC13691452. IF 0.4 https://casereports.bmj.com/content/19/10/e275187

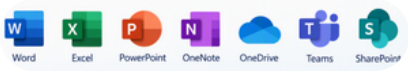
Welcome, Dr. Wasif Ilias Vohra



I am pleased to introduce our new first-year Pediatric Gastroenterology fellow, Dr. Wasif Ilias Vohra. Dr. Wasif completed his pediatric residency training for four years at the Aga Khan University Pediatric Residency Program, an ACGME-I accredited program. Following residency, he served as a Pediatric Gastroenterology Instructor for one year before joining our fellowship program. Please join me in welcoming Dr. Wasif to our team. We are excited to have him with us and look forward to his contributions to our division.

Thank you,
Dr. Walaa Elfar

Microsoft 356 License Update



Organizational Contributors (OCs) and Designated Campus Colleagues (DCCs) will now receive **Microsoft 365 web apps** (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, and OneDrive) as their standard license. Current OC and DCC employees with desktop licenses will retain access through **July 1, 2027.** After that, departments may purchase a Microsoft 365 desktop license for employees whose job duties require it at a cost of **$46 per year**. Please include an **account number** when submitting a desktop license request. For questions, please contact **Teresa Reyna**.

Upcoming Grand Rounds



“Advances in Valley Fever”
Dr. Jane Symington, University of California, San Francisco
Cohosted with Valley Fever Center for Excellence
Tuesday, November 24
12pm - 1pm, COM-T room 5403

Upcoming Presentations:

Dr. Emily Johnston, University of Alabama at Birmingham
- Wednesday, December 9, 1pm - 2pm

Abhilasha Madhvi Mishra, Postdoctoral Research Associate II
- Tuesday, January 26

Dr. Sara Bode, Nationwide Children’s Hospital
- Wednesday, February 3rd

Doctors Daniel Laubitz, Esteban Symonds, and Maureen Galindo
- Tuesday, February 23

Dr. Aimee Amrstrong, John Hopkins School of Medicine
- Tuesday, March 4

Please keep an eye on your inbox for a calendar invitation with the meeting time, room number, and Zoom link for virtual attendance. We encourage everyone to attend and help ensure our department is well represented as we show our support for both our internal and external speakers.





Pediatrics in the news

Our annual trick-or-treat event brought Halloween joy to patients and families, thanks to Spirit Halloween and Spirit of Children! Patients enjoyed choosing costumes, festive crafts, games and activities, while Spirit of Children continues to support our hospital’s Child Life Department year-round. A big thank-you to our Child Life team, volunteers, staff and leaders for making this annual tradition special!

A Tucson family has turned their son's medical journey into an opportunity to help other children! After experiencing extended hospital stays with their son, Jennifer and her family founded Caysen's Crew, a nonprofit providing fun socks, books and toys to hospitalized children. Through programs like Socks and Stories and its annual Christmas Cheer Toy Drive, the organization continues spreading comfort and joy to local hospital patients and families. Read the full story on ABC15.

Welcome



Richard Park, PhD
Scientific Analyst I, Panda Core



Richard took the first edition of Dr. Daniel Laubitz's Microbiome Analysis class, and that's how he got hooked on this field. He used the knowledge he gained in the Microbiome Analysis course for his own PhD thesis and decided to join our team once he defended his PhD.

Sydney Swanson
Student Worker, Dr. Simpson's Lab



Welcome back, Sydney! We are excited to have you working with us in the hem/onc lab again!

Congratulations, Dr. Rickie Simpson!

Dr. Simpson has received two exciting invitations to share his expertise in cancer research! He was selected to speak at the 2027 American Association for Cancer Research (AACR) Annual Meeting in Orlando, Florida, as part of the Advances in Prevention Research session, presenting on "The Impact of Exercise on Cancer Progression and Treatment Response" on April 7, 2027.

Additionally, he has been invited to present his work as part of the UPMC Hillman Cancer Center Director's Seminar Series at the University of Pittsburgh, Hillman's flagship scientific seminar program.

Congratulations, Dr. Simpson, on these well-deserved opportunities and the recognition of your contributions to cancer research!





Crystal Stubbins and Carlene Hugues attended the University of Arizona's 2025–2026 Service Awards, celebrating the dedication and milestones of university employees.

While there, they had the opportunity to meet UA President Suresh Garimella and join in celebrating Wildcat pride!

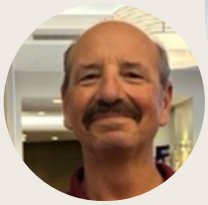
We wish you luck in El Tour De Tucson!

Best of luck to Doctors Klewer and Hoyer as they take on the 62-mile noncompetitive ride at El Tour de Tucson on Saturday, November 21, 2026!

They'll be riding with Tempe Elks member Larry Pratt. We're cheering you on and wishing you a great ride!







Happy Milestone Work Anniversary

5 Years

Dr. Rees “Chip” Lee
Professor in Pulmonology
11/2021



15 Years

Laura Lee
Senior Outreach
Program Manager
11/2011



Congratulations, PANDA, on Two Rocky Mountain Emmy Awards!

PANDA’s 2026 patient film, “A Quiet Strength: A Film About Unseen Resilience,” has taken home two Rocky Mountain Emmy Awards! Congratulations to everyone involved in bringing this powerful story to life and highlighting the strength and resilience of our patients and families.

Watch the award-winning film: A Quiet Strength

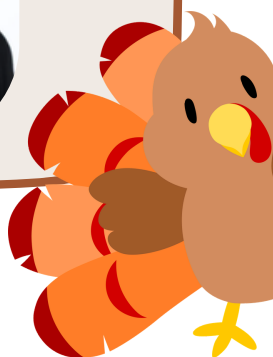




Congratulations, Dr. Cori Daines!

Please join us in congratulating Dr. Cori Daines on becoming the newest member of the American Pediatric Society! This prestigious recognition celebrates her contributions to pediatrics and commitment to advancing child health.





Thanks a Bunch



Homecoming Tailgate

Our team joined the UAFDN Homecoming Tailgate on October 24 for a day of hands-on science, trivia, and community engagement! Our booth sparked curiosity and great conversations with future scientists, students, and families interested in research and internship opportunities.

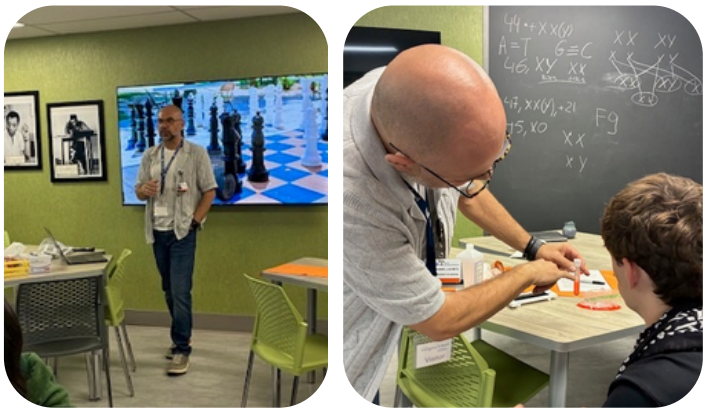
A special thank-you to Shabana Shaik, PhD; Claudio Bernardazzi, PhD; and Nabahi Hickman, Research Assistant, for bringing the fun as our tattoo artist, ring toss expert, and trivia master!



PANDA

Panda bus tour 10/20

A HUGE thank-you to Dr. Seckeler, Rickie Simpson, PhD, Pawel Kiela, PhD, Dr. Mthembu, McKenna May (PhD student), Dr. Scoville, Dr. Katsanis, Dr. Meziab, and Dr. Carr for sharing their time, expertise, and passion. You helped make the day incredibly meaningful and impactful for our PANDA friends



The Gregory School – Exploring High School

The Gregory School's Exploring High School group joined Daniel Laubitz, PhD, for a hands-on DNA adventure, including extracting DNA from a strawberry!

A big THANK YOU to Daniel for inspiring future scientists and to Amber with Kids of Steele for making this community connection possible. Students also learned about supporting patient families and the impactful research happening at Steele Children's Research Center!



Tempe Elks Annual Christmas Toy Run

A big THANK YOU to Melissa Halpern, PhD, from the Neonatology Lab, for speaking at the Tempe Elks Annual Christmas Toy Run! Motorcycles and cars visited nine Elks lodges to collect toys benefiting children at Steele Children's Research Center. We're grateful for this wonderful community support!

Celebrating Kids of Steele Fam Fest Supporters!

A heartfelt THANK YOU to these amazing supporters who helped make our Kids of Steele Fam Fest at Fantasticks for a special experience for our patients and families!

- Supercuts – Heather and Randy Dix
- Hazen Enterprises – Brandt and Vicki Hazen
- State Industrial Supply Corp. – Mark Larson

Their generosity helped create a fun-filled day of smiles, memories, and special moments for our Steele families. We are so grateful for their continued support and commitment to our community!















Around Pediatrics



Hem/Onc: Why We Do What We Do

Courtney's Courage and Candlelighters teamed up for an Essentials Drive, providing 29 pediatric cancer families with household necessities and pantry staples. Volunteers came together to pack and distribute supplies, offering meaningful support to families navigating the challenges of cancer treatment. A wonderful example of community coming together to make a difference!



Coffee with our Chair

Our residents enjoyed some coffee and conversation with Department Chair, Dr. Lisa Chamberlain! A great opportunity to connect, share ideas and get to know our newest leader.



Upcoming Conferences

December	January
1. 18th Excellence in Pediatrics Conference (EIP2026) - Virtual	1. Mayo Clinic Pediatric Days 2027 2. Western Society for Pediatric Research (WSPR)

Connect with us:

For suggestions or additional recipients that should receive this newsletter, please contact:
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caseycastle@arizona.edu
medicine.arizona.edu/pediatrics



Open positions in Pediatrics:

Banner: **Click here!**

UA: **Click here!**