

Newsletter



UNDERNUTRITION ASSESSMENT AND NUTRIENT INTAKE OF PEOPLE WITH TB IN THE PHILIPPINES

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We are thrilled to report the first publication from the initial round of Emory/GA TRAC pilot awards has been accepted for publication. **Glyzelle Lagason, MD**, at the De La Salle Health Sciences Institute, Dasmariñas, Philippines and **Peter Cegielski, MD, MPH**, from Emory University's Rollins School of Public Health were awarded a collaborative TRAC-Global pilot award in May 2023. Their project addressed a need to determine the proportion and degree of undernourishment among people with TB in the Philippines to help guide nutritional assessment, counseling, and support. The Philippines ranks among the 30 high TB burden countries and people are vulnerable to undernutrition due to food insecurity. However, a standardized nutritional care program for people with TB in the outpatient setting has not been implemented. We look forward to reading their paper titled "*Undernutrition Assessment and Nutrient Intake of people with TB in the Philippines*" in the [International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease Open](#) journal soon!

TRAColades

Congrats to **Frederick Quinn, PhD**, and **Christopher Whalen, MD, MS**, at the University of Georgia and **Noah Kiwanuka, PhD, MBChB, MPH**, at Makerere University on their collaborative R21 award titled 'Assessing the *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* carriage state'. They will perform an analyses of upper respiratory tract (URT) *M. tuberculosis* (Mtb) carriage in asymptomatic adults in Kampala, Uganda, exposed to people with active TB. Understanding whether Mtb possesses a URT carriage-like state in humans will be critical for more accurately diagnosing, controlling disease development and transmission and improving vaccine efficacy.



Congratulations **Jessica Rothman**, doctoral student in the Emory Rollins School of Public Health's (RSPH) Epidemiology Program, and mentor **Kristin Nelson, PhD** (Emory RSPH, Dept. of Epidemiology) on receiving a CFAR-K award for the project titled 'Estimating the Epidemiologic Impact of a Tuberculosis Vaccination Program among People Living with HIV in the U.S.' Jessica and Dr. Nelson jointly developed the proposal with support from

Dr. Kenneth Castro (Emory TB Center Co-Director), who will serve as the primary mentor for the project.

A huge congrats to **Russell Kempker, MD, MSc** on his promotion to Professor of Medicine with tenure!

Congrats!



Publication Highlights



Kudos to **Rachel Kinsella, PhD**, on her recent publication titled '**ATG5 suppresses type I IFN-dependent neutrophil effector functions during *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* infection in mice**' in Nature Microbiology. The paper shows that autophagy protein 5 (ATG5) functions independent of autophagy in neutrophils to restrict type I interferon-mediated release of neutrophil extracellular traps and neutrophil swarming, which would otherwise promote lung inflammation and susceptibility to infection. The paper's findings suggest that ATG5 may be a potential target for host-directed therapies.

A Review titled '**Management of individuals exposed to multidrug-resistant or rifampicin-resistant tuberculosis**' in the Lancet Infectious Diseases was co-authored by **Amy Malik, PhD, MBBS, MPH**, an Emory Rollins School of Public Health graduate and collaborator of TRAC investigator **Lisa Marie Cranmer, MD, MPH**. The Review concludes that management of people exposed to multidrug-resistant or rifampin-resistant TB has been hampered by a lack of high-quality data; however recent observational and randomized control trials now provide strong new evidence that 6 months of levofloxacin as TB preventive treatment should strongly be considered for contacts at high risk. Also stressed is the importance of implementing intense TB screening to detect all co-prevalent TB among exposed household contacts and adequate TB diagnostic facilities.



Kudos to **Nestani Tukvadze, MD**, as first author of an article detailing the protocol for a multi-site phase 2 randomized, controlled trial. The article is titled '**DRTB-HDT: a randomized controlled trial of two adjunctive host-directed therapies in rifampin-resistant tuberculosis**'. Current TB treatments leave a majority of cured participants with permanent, clinically significant lung impairment and radiographic evidence of bronchiectasis and fibrosis. The trial will determine if adjunctive host-directed drugs doxycycline or metformin can prevent these poor outcomes.

Congratulations to **Peter Cegielski, MD**, on his contribution to the Health Policy article titled '[A roadmap for integrating nutritional assessment, counselling, and support into the care of people with tuberculosis](#)' in the Lancet Global Health. The article proposes integrating nutritional assessment, counselling, and support into TB treatment as part of person-centred care. Furthermore, it calls for annual reporting of nutritional metrics by WHO, inclusion of nutritional assessment and care in national strategic plans, domestic or international support of nutritional programmes for people with TB, increased support for operational research initiatives, and integration of nutritional care into the WHO Multisectoral Accountability Framework.



Upcoming Events

TB WORKS IN PROGRESS SEMINAR IMMUNE DYNAMICS IN WOMEN WITH TB INFECTION DURING PREGNANCY AND POST-PARTUM



Friday July 18, 2025, 9 - 10 am
CNR Room 4001 and [Zoom \[Flyer\]](#)



Fregenet Tesfaye, PhD, MSc received her PhD in Clinical Infectious Diseases and her research focuses on the impact of pregnancy on immune control of TB infection and identifying diagnostic biomarkers for TB in pregnant women with and without HIV infection. As a Research Fellow with the Ethiopia-Emory TB Research Training Program, she expanded her research to investigate the immunological dynamics of TB infection during pregnancy. Through a **TRAC-G Pilot Grant** and in collaboration with **Cheryl Day, PhD** TRAC Basic Sciences Core Co-director, Dr. Tesfaye is studying *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*-specific T cell immune responses and single-cell transcriptional signatures during pregnancy and the postpartum period to better understand the pathogenesis of TB progression.

Bulletin Board

TRAC
Tuberculosis Research Advancement Center
Emory/Georgia

NIH Pre-submission Mock Study Section Review

- 1.** Express Your Interest by August 1

APPLY NOW HERE!
- 2.** Submit Your Draft by August 16
 for review by TB experts from the relevant fields
- 3.** Receive Expert Feedback by mid-September
 including written comments & open discussion review

Open to tuberculosis researchers affiliated with Emory/Georgia TRAC partner institutions who are planning to submit a proposal to NIH by the October and November 2025 deadlines.
 Due dates for the NIH November deadline can be adjusted accordingly.
 We encourage early-stage investigators to apply!

Recent NIH Notices:

- [Updated NIH Policy on Foreign Subawards](#), NOT-OD-25-104, May 1, 2025
- [Updated NIH Processes for No-Cost Extensions](#), NOT-OD-25-110, May 7, 2025

Funding opportunities for researchers impacted by federal funding cuts

UNIVERSITY RESEARCH COMMITTEE SEED GRANTS



EMORY UNIVERSITY

University Research Committee

The University Research Committee (URC) supports: 1) Early career faculty on their path toward research independence; 2) More advanced faculty who wish to engage novel questions that enhance their expertise; and 3) Teams of faculty who seek to transcend the boundaries of their respective disciplines and undertake transformative research.

Eligible applicants are regular, continuing full-time faculty of Emory University. [URC grants](#) are open to eligible applicants from all Emory schools and disciplines. More info [here](#).

OFFICE OF RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTIONAL FUNDING DATABASE

Office of the Senior
Vice President for Research

Emory's [Office of Research Development](#) (ORD) within the Office of the Senior Vice President for Research (SVPR) maintains a database of >40 Institutional funding opportunities that are predominately seed grants. The full list can be found [here](#).

Eligibility criteria for some programs extend beyond the Emory community and can be viewed within the database.

ERC GRANTS FOR NON- EUROPEAN RESEARCHERS

European Research Council
Established by the European Commission

The European Research Council (ERC) is a funding organization for frontier research. Researchers from anywhere in the world can apply for ERC grants provided the research they undertake will be carried out in an [EU Member State](#) or [Associated Country](#). Research projects funded by the ERC can last up to five years and can cover frontier research in any scientific domain, including social sciences, humanities and interdisciplinary studies. The grants may help both emerging research leaders ('ERC Starting Grants' and 'ERC Consolidator Grants') and already well-established and recognized scientists ('ERC Advanced Grants'). More Information can be found [here](#).

May Publications

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Collins JM, Bobosha K, Narayanan N, **Gandhi NR, Day CL, Rengarajan J, Kempker RR**, Lau MSY, Nellis M, **Tukvadze N, Shah NS, Brust JCM**, Nizam A, Ismail NA, Kauffman KD, Sakai S, Jones DP, Barber DL, Ziegler TR, Ernst JD, **Blumberg HM, Wassie L**. *A plasma metabolic signature to diagnose pulmonary tuberculosis and monitor treatment response*. *J Infect Dis*. 2025. DOI: 10.1093/infdis/jiaf240.

Ehrlich J, Suñer C, Churchyard G, Cobelens F, Hatherill M, Mendelsohn SC, **Nelson KN**, Scriba T, Theron G, Martinez L, Garcia-Basteiro AL. *Unveiling a hidden phenotype of early tuberculosis*. *Lancet Respir Med*. 2025;13(5):385-7. DOI: 10.1016/s2213-2600(25)00092-x.

Kempker RR, Salindri AD, Avaliani T, Kornfeld H, **Auld SC**, Jakobia N, **Day CL, Subuddhi A**, Krish KN, Vashakidze S, Avaliani Z, Goginashvili L, Bryan C, Bernheim A, **Kipiani M, Magee MJ**. *High rates of post-tuberculosis lung disease among persons successfully treated for drug-susceptible and resistant tuberculosis*. *Thorax*. 2025. DOI: 10.1136/thorax-2024-222350.

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Mave V, Paradkar M, Conradie F, Gupta A, Avihingsanon A, **Meintjes G**, Turkova A, Dooley KE, Chaisson RE. *Tuberculosis disease among people with HIV: therapeutic advances*. *Lancet HIV*. 2025;12(5):e367-e81. DOI: 10.1016/s2352-3018(25)00040-2.

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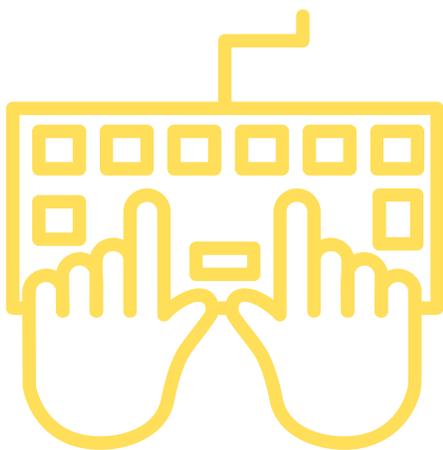
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**Have items to include in
a future newsletter?**

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