Issue 2: September 2020

A Message From The Chief:

Welcome to the fall edition of AnnouncemENTs, a quarterly email with updates in the field of otolaryngology and news from the Division of Otolaryngology at Yale. Thankfully, like most ENT’s and physicians in Connecticut, Yale Otolaryngology has gotten back to caring for patients by implementing a number of safety strategies for patients and providers.

*Please stay vigilant!* It’s easy to become comfortable and drop our guard as time goes by, which would be a mistake. As schools and Universities resume and some travel increases, it’s important to continue to follow safety measures diligently.

**Nationally ranked as top Otolaryngology program:** Otolaryngology at Yale New Haven Hospital was again highly ranked nationally by the US News & World Report. This year we were ranked 48th among all programs in the country. While this was a decrease from last year, the good news is that our reputational score was higher this year than it has ever been. We will work closely with the hospital on the other areas reflected in the scoring as the differences between top programs is very small!

**New faculty have Arrived:** We are very happy to have welcomed new faculty over the
summer. Providing subspecialty otolaryngology patient care and training for our residents in these areas is a core goal for Yale Otolaryngology. The additional of new faculty will help us with this mission. Please learn more about Sarah Maurasse, Avanti Verma, Michael Weinstock, Nofrat Schwartz and Bruno Cardosa, who all started this summer below.

**News and Updates:** Below are other announcements and information. Ken Yanagisawa is assuming the presidency of the American Academy of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery (AAO-HNS) at a tumultuous time and no one could be a better leader for this challenge. Doug Hildrew and Meg Narron Aud. started offering remote programming for cochlear implants during the COVID pandemic, see below for more details. We’ve added a new section to Announcements called “the coding corner” that is coordinated by Yan Lee. And our residents, medical students, and faculty continue to conduct and publish research at a blistering pace, see a list of publications below.

Please forward any suggestions about what you would like to see in future issues of Announcements or if you have other feedback. I look forward to working with you and to an exciting rest of 2020.

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**Welcome!**

Dr. Nofrat Schwartz earned her Medical Degree from The Hebrew University in Jerusalem, Israel. She served as a Physician Officer in the Israeli Defense Force for four years. She completed her residency in

Dr. Avanti Verma earned her Medical Degree from New York University School of Medicine, which is also where she completed her residency training in Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery. She went on to pursue a
Otolaryngology/Head and Neck Surgery at Meir Medical Center in Israel and went on to pursue fellowship in Neurotology/Skull Base Surgery at the University of North Carolina. Today we welcome her to our team as an Assistant Professor of Surgery (Otolaryngology) who specializes in Otology, Neurotology, and Skull Base Surgery, where her practice focuses on treating both adult and pediatric patients for a variety of middle and inner ear diseases. **Dr. Schwartz will be seeing patients at the Yale Physician’s Building, as well as Yale Otolaryngology in Stratford.**

Dr. Sarah Maurrasse earned her medical degree from Columbia University College of Physicians & Surgeons. She went on to complete her otolaryngology residency training at New York Presbyterian Hospital, and recently graduated from a pediatric otolaryngology fellowship at Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children’s Hospital of Chicago. Her clinical areas of focus include complex airway surgery and pediatric head and neck surgery, and her academic and research interests are medical education and technology. **Dr. Maurrasse will be seeing patients at Yale New Haven Otolaryngology/Head and Neck Surgery in New Haven.**

Dr. Michael Weinstock earned his Medical Degree at New York University School of Medicine. He completed his residency at Montefiore/Albert Einstein School of Medicine and went on to complete fellowship training in pediatric otolaryngology at the Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh. Today we welcome Dr. Weinstock to our team as an Assistant Professor of Surgery (Otolaryngology) who specializes in the diagnosis and treatment of diseases of the ear, nose, and throat in children. His specific interests lie in treating children with various...
forms of hearing loss and ear infections. Dr. Weinstock will be seeing patients at Yale New Haven Children’s Hospital, Greenwich Pediatric Specialty Center, and Norwalk Pediatric Specialty Center.

Dr. Cardoso earned his medical degree from The University of Vermont College of Medicine before completing his otolaryngology residency training at Yale New Haven Hospital. His clinical/surgical interests include surgery for obstructive sleep apnea, minimally invasive treatment of salivary gland disease, congenital cysts, sino-nasal disorders, head and neck masses, and general otolaryngology. Dr. Cardoso will be seeing patients at the Old Saybrook Medical Center, and the Yale Health Center.

Please join us in giving a warm welcome to Carly Hachey, APRN, the newest member of the Head and Neck APP team. Carly joins us from Saint Mary’s Hospital where she worked as a Nurse Practitioner in the Emergency Department for 2 years. Along with her experience in the ED, she has also worked in various Urgent Care settings throughout Connecticut and Westchester, NY since her graduation from Columbia University School of Nursing Family Advanced Practice Nursing Program in 2017.

Congratulations!

We are pleased to announce that Dr. Benjamin...
Judson is now officially **promoted to Professor on the Clinician/Educator track**. Promotion to Professor is one of the **highest academic achievements** that a faculty member can attain, and is a source of great pride for the department of ENT. Please join us in congratulating Dr. Judson on this well-deserved promotion. **We are so proud!**

Our newest addition, Dr. Sarah Maurasse, won two awards at the American Society of Pediatric Otolaryngology national meeting. First place: TORS Excision of a Lingual Thyroglossal Duct Cyst and the Central Hyoid Bone. Second Place: Laser Ablation of Posterior Glottic Stenosis via Flexible Cystoscope.

As our division continues to grow in numbers and across the state, we are faced with the opportunity to better our standard of efficiency within our clinical locations. The intention of the implementation of the role of a **Clinical Site Director** of our clinic in the Yale Physician's Building location will be to serve as spokesperson for Yale ENT at the locations which many physicians are practicing. **We would like to thank Dr. R. Peter Manes for his willingness to fulfil the role of Clinic Site Director at the Yale Physician's Building.** We congratulate him for this recognition and fully anticipate his success.
Congratulations to Dr. Ken Yanigasawa for assuming role of President of AAO-HNS!

We would like to extend our sincere appreciation to Jennifer Hopper, AuD, for her role in stabilizing and leading the Audiology group over the last year. We must also express our gratitude to Dr. Douglas Hildrew, who has acted as a great partner and advocate for Audiology, and who has done so without any sort of official position. Therefore, we are happy to announce that Dr. Hildrew has officially accepted the role of Audiology Services Medical Director for the Yale ENT Hearing and Balance Program! Dr. Hildrew looks forward to building a strong groundwork and we are excited for his success in working for the program at this capacity. Congratulations, Dr. Hildrew!

Connecticut Magazine’s Best Doctors in 2020 has graciously included our own Dr. Clarence Sasaki and Dr. Saral Mehra! We are honored to have such valued faculty representing Yale ENT. Congratulations to them both! View the list here.
Yale Surgery’s Citizenship Awards were implemented in 2019 to celebrate good citizenship within the department. The 3 awards allow colleagues to nominate Surgery employees of all levels based on their exemplary actions in leading by example. This quarter, The Extra Mile Award, which recognizes a surgery faculty, trainee or M&P who consistently goes above and beyond the call of duty, has been awarded to our Dr. Saral Mehra. We could not agree more that Dr. Mehra’s commitment to his patients, our ENT trainees, and his colleagues throughout the hospital truly does go above and beyond all expectations; and we certainly could not be more proud to have him on our team!

_Congratulations, Dr. Mehra!

 Retirement:

Many of you may know of Dr. Lowlicht’s legendary operative skills and of his devotion to our residents’ education over the years. When I recruited him to our faculty in the 1980’s what I did not appreciate was the depth of his enduring
friendship. You may not know, for example, of an old boat abandoned in a cornfield, a project we co-owned and meticulously restored for months resulting in a 15 foot outboard widely regarded to be the goofiest looking boat in Stony Creek Harbor (so we named it the Nasal Speculum) or the hours (with bruised knuckles and sprained thumbs) spent in replacing my BMW’s headlights only to discover that we had installed them backwards....but even more remarkable was Roger’s resolve to redo the entire 3 hour project “to get it right” again. So we can all agree that when Roger told you in the operating room or in your driveway that the project was a “piece of cake” he might have meant it was a worthy challenge but more importantly we knew it was instead an innocent pledge of an enduring friendship. Thanks from all of us, Roger.

-Clarence T. Sasaki

Updates

Cochlear Implants:

In response to the need for physical distancing and decreased resource utilization for non-COVID-19 related care, drastic modifications have been implemented to existing medical workflows around the United States. Despite its existence for over a decade, and well-demonstrated efficacy, telemedicine has for the most part remained on the fringe of Otolaryngology care delivery. As COVID-19 has rocked the health care system out of its comfort zone, there has been a much-needed push to bring telemedicine to mainstream medicine - and this includes the services related to implantable hearing devices. While it may seem at first that programming and maintaining cochlear implants would be too challenging to do remotely, these types of services end up being uniquely suited to telepractice. This is especially true in patients who are well established and high performing cochlear implant users.
Yale ENT’s Hearing and Balance Program was able to transition many of their services to a remote healthcare delivery model with relative ease. Dr. Hildrew states that alongside his colleague, Dr. Megan Narron AuD, the first fully remote cochlear implant programming session at Yale ENT took place in May of 2020. Continuing to build upon these early wins, Dr. Hildrew states “in no time this will become a routine part of our practice. It’s been a long time coming.”

-Dr. Douglas Hildrew

Events

On June 19, our division successfully hosted its first ever virtual Research Day for our three graduating Chief Residents and Head & Neck Fellow!

The day started with Grand Rounds. Thank you to all who submitted comments on our graduates’ posters which were made available online during the week leading up to presentations.

Jacob Tower, MD  Alexander Luryi, MD  Bruno Cardoso, MD  Faisal Alzahrani, MD

We were beyond honored to feature our esteemed guest speaker for the event -
Dr. Richard Smith, Director of the Head and Neck Service for the Montefiore Einstein Center for Cancer Care, and Professor of Clinical Otorhinolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery and Pathology at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine.

We continued with an extremely small and socially distant Diploma Ceremony on the front steps of the Yale School of Medicine.

To close the day, our residents, their families, and participating faculty and staff enjoyed dinner “together” from the comfort of their own homes via Zoom! Dr. Judson shared that despite the complications faced due to COVID, the “graduation events had a feeling of community and sense of purpose that were great.” Thank you to all who made this day possible during such an interesting time. And of course, congrats to our grads!
In August, the Yale ENT Residency Program hosted 2 virtual recruitment sessions via zoom. Due to the national decision to stop away sub-internships this year, we could only physically host local medical students in the university. Our virtual recruitments sessions were put together in the hope that our applicants, and even some sub-interns, could get to know our program from a safe distance. Our first session on August 11 featured program faculty leads, residents, and some alumni to provide first hand details about the residency program in New Haven. Our second session on August 25 included a virtual tour of the medical school and a discussion of successful strategies for couples matching in ENT. Both sessions resulted in an excellent turn-out! A big thank you goes out to the faculty and residents who helped make a positive impression.

**Upcoming Grand Rounds:**

10/9 – Mark D’Agostino

10/30 – Hear from our residents, Jordan Sukys & Candice Kremer

11/6 – Marc Brackett, PhD, founding Director of the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence

11/13 – Hear from our residents, David Kasle & Kevin Fujita

11/20 – QI Showcase from the residents, run by Dr. Kiley Trott

**Obituary:**

Howard Willis Smith M.D., F.A.C.S., D.D.S.
Howard Willis Smith of New York City, *former Professor at Yale University School of Medicine* and Columbia School of Medicine, founder of Chairs in Otolaryngology and Pediatric Otolaryngology at Columbia University School of Medicine, co-founder of the American Board of Facial Plastic Surgery and founder of a residency program in plastic surgery at the University of Honduras, died August 17 at his home in Lake Placid, NY. He was 100.

Over the course of his 43 years in medicine, Howard built a robust private practice in Otolaryngology and Maxillofacial Surgery and helped thousands of patients, but he never forgot his commitment to teaching. During his long teaching career, he trained generations of medical students, published over 130 scientific papers and wrote over 650 lectures for medical residents. To improve his teaching technique, he apprenticed with a former patient and master tool and die maker at Winchester Repeating Arms and acquired the skills to design and build a ground-breaking apparatus for filming his own operations, eventually producing over 40 teaching films and DVDs.

Howard will be remembered for his fierce determination, devotion to his wife Ora and their family, many private acts of generosity and compassion, and his unwavering belief in hard work and the enduring and transformative power of education. [Click here to read full obituary.](#)
CODING Q&A

Important: Coding Q&A provides general information regarding coding, billing, and documentation that is available at the time of publication. Yale and its affiliates are not responsible for any action(s) taken in regards to the information contained in this section.

Topic: CPT 31502 (Tracheotomy tube change prior to establishment of fistula tract)

Q: How is CPT 31502 used?
A: This code should be used when the indwelling tracheostomy tube is removed and replaced fairly soon after the tracheostomy before the patient has had sufficient time to heal. This time frame is usually between 7 to 14 days, but the exact time is not specified and it is up to the physician’s clinical judgement to make this determination. The reasoning behind this code is it is more difficult to change the tube if the tract is not “established”. If this code is chosen, the surgeon should specifically document the status of the fistula tract.

This code should not be used for patients who have long-term, established tracheostomies. If a trach tube change is performed beyond the 7 to 14 day period in the office or at the patient’s bedside, consider using an E/M code to bill for this service. To put things into perspective, the most current information is that Medicare reimburses $38.54 for 31502. The reimbursement for an E/M code when documented appropriately, may lead to a similar or even higher reimbursement. (See table) Medicare reimburses $118.29 for a level 4 office visit, and $84.95 in a provider-based setting. If performed at bedside with a subsequent hospital care code 99233, Medicare would reimburse $111.94. If the trach change is performed in the OR, unlisted code 31899 should be used.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CPT</th>
<th>Medicare Reimbursement*</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>31502 (Tracheotomy tube change prior to establishment of fistula tract)</td>
<td>$38.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outpatient</td>
<td>Provider-Based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>99212 (Evaluation and management of an established patient in an office or outpatient location, Level 2)</td>
<td>$27.83</td>
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<td>Code</td>
<td>Description</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>99213</td>
<td>Evaluation and management of an established patient in an office or outpatient location, Level 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>99214</td>
<td>Evaluation and management of an established patient in an office or outpatient location, Level 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inpatient</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>99231</td>
<td>Inpatient hospital visits: Initial and subsequent, Level 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>99232</td>
<td>Inpatient hospital visits: Initial and subsequent, Level 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>99233</td>
<td>Inpatient hospital visits: Initial and subsequent, Level 3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*These are estimations based on the most current information for Connecticut.

There is no literature stating 31502 could be billed after the 7 to 14 day period. However, since this time interval is not officially defined, and the CPT code describes “tube change prior to establishment of fistula tract”, if there is sufficient documentation that the tract is not established (i.e. bleeding, granulation tissue, or other reason for a non-established tract), it may be possible to bill 31502. If the medical necessity is clearly documented, it should be appealable.

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Yale ENT in the News

Dr. Hildrew discusses the positive impact telemedicine will have on Cochlear Implant development in an article by The Hearing Journal.
Dr. Clarence T. Sasaki and The Yale Larynx Lab’s recent paper published on September 1, 2020 has been selected to be on the cover page of the issue. *Oncotarget* chose Figure 4 of the paper, "The temporal effects of topical NF-κB inhibition, in the in vivo prevention of bile-related oncogenic mRNA and miRNA phenotypes in murine hypopharyngeal mucosa: a preclinical model" by Dimitra P. Vageli, David Kasle, Sotirios G. Doukas, Panagiotis G. Doukas, and Clarence T. Sasaki featured. [Click here to read the article.](#)

Dr. Lerner discusses COVID-19 and asymptomatic carriers as a featured expert in an article by *Healthline*. [Click here to read more.](#)

### Publications

**July - September 2020**

**Author Correction: Prestin kinetics and corresponding frequency dependence augment during early development of the outer hair cell within the mouse organ of Corti.**

Bai JP, Navaratnam D, Santos-Sacchi J.


[Read here]>

**Pass/Fail Scoring of USMLE Step 1 and the Need for Residency Selection Reform.**

Salehi PP, Azizzadeh B, Lee YH.


[Read here]>

[Click here to read more.](#)
Prognostic Significance of Extranodal Extension in HPV-Mediated Oropharyngeal Carcinoma: A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis.
Benchetrit L, Torabi SJ, Givi B, Haughey B, Judson BL.  
[Read here >>]

Re: "Value of Intensive Care Unit-Based Postoperative Management for Microvascular Free Flap Reconstruction in Head and Neck Surgery" by Yalamanchi et al.  
Morse E, Salehi PP, Mehra S.  
[Read here >>]

Izreig S, Torabi SJ, Kasle DA, Rahmati RW, Manes RP.  
[Read here >>]

Salivary and lacrimal dysfunction after radioactive iodine for differentiated thyroid cancer: American Head and Neck Society Endocrine Surgery Section and Salivary Gland Section joint multidisciplinary clinical consensus statement of otolaryngology, ophthalmology, nuclear medicine and endocrinology.  
[Read here >>]

Changes in Population-Level and Institutional-Level Prescribing Habits of Radioiodine Therapy for Papillary Thyroid Cancer.  
Jacobs D, Breen CT, Pucar D, Holt E, Judson BL, Mehra S.  
*Thyroid.* 2020 Aug 18.  
[Read here >>]

The epidemiology, surgical management, and impact of margins in skull and mandibular osseous-site...
tumors.
Read here>>>

Calcium-induced calcium release in proximity to hair cell BK channels revealed by PKA activation.
Bai JP, Xue N, Lawal O, Nyati A, Santos-Sacchi J, Navaratnam D.
*Physiol Rep.* 2020 Aug.
Read here>>>

Change in stage of presentation of head and neck cancer in the United States before and after the affordable care act.
Panth N, Barnes JM, Simpson MC, Adjei Boakye E, Sethi RKV, Varvares MA, Osazuwa-Peters N.
*Cancer Epidemiol.* 2020 Aug.
Read here>>>

Examining Referral Patterns between Otolaryngology and Gastroenterology: A Window into Potential Inter-Specialty Knowledge Gaps.
Haines A, Kohli N, Lerner BA, Lerner MZ.
Read here>>>

From the Deep-Plane Rhytidectomy to the Vertical Platysma Advancement.
Gordon NA, Tower JL, Paskhover B.
Read more>>>

Pandemic Recovery Using a COVID-Minimal Cancer Surgery Pathway.
Read here>>>

An Epidemiological Analysis and Comparison of Single Site and Multiple Site Fracture Repair: An NSQIP Analysis.
Torabi SJ, Brauer PR, Salehi PP, Ma AK, Lee JY, Lee YH.

*J Craniofac Surg. 2020 Jul-Aug*

Read here>>>

Screenshot Photography: Optimizing Photo-Documentation While Using Telehealth Video Platforms.

Tower JL, Lee JY, Lee YH.

*Facial Plast Surg Aesthet Med. 2020 July/Aug*

Read here>>>

The In Vivo Preventive and Therapeutic Properties of Curriculum in Bile Reflux-Related Oncogenesis of the Hypopharynx.

Doukas SG, Doukas PG, Sasaki CT, Vageli D.

*J Cell Mol Med. 2020 Jul 21*

Read here>>>

An Analysis of Otolaryngology Medical Malpractice Payments from the National Practitioner Data Bank.

Breen CT, Mehra, S.

*Otolaryngol Head Neck Surg. 2020 Jul 21*

Read here>>>


Salehi PP, Johnson AB, Rubinstein B, Pahlavan N, Azizzadeh B, Hamdan US.

*J Craniofac Surg. 2020 Jul 17*

Read here>>>

Comparison of associated comorbid conditions in patients with benign paroxysmal positional vertigo with or without migraine history: A large single institution study.

Hilton DB, Luryi AL, Bojrab DI, Babu SC, Hong RS, Bojrab DI 2nd, Santiago Rivera OJ, Schutt CA.

*Am J Otolaryngol. 2020 Jul 15*

Read here>>>


Ferris RL, Flamand Y, Holsinger FC, Weinstein GS, Quon H, Mehra R, Garcia JJ, Hinni ML, Gross ND,


[Read here>>](#)

**Molecular Diagnosis and Extracranial Extension in Cushing Disease.**

Hong CS, Murari K, Gossmann M, Mahajan A, Erson-Omay Z, Manes RP, Omay SB.


[Read here>>](#)

**Indications and Outcomes of the Osteoplastic Flap Procedure With or Without Obliteration.**

Lee YH, Lee JY, Lawson W.


[Read here>>](#)

**Potential Added Value of PET/CT Radiomics for Survival Prognostication beyond AJCC 8th Edition Staging in Oropharyngeal Squamous Cell Carcinoma.**


*Cancers (Basel).* 2020 Jul 3.

[Read here>>](#)

**State Medicaid expansion status, insurance coverage and stage at diagnosis in head and neck cancer patients.**


*Oral Oncol.* 2020 Jul 3.

[Read here>>](#)

**Effect of Coronavirus Disease 2019 and Pandemics on Global Surgical Outreach.**

Azizzadeh K, Hamdan US, Salehi PP.


[Read here>>](#)

**Progressive Trigeminal Hypoesthesia.**
Bourdillon AT, Tower JI, Edwards HA.


[Read here]>

**Application of a Modified Endoscopy Face Mask for Flexible Laryngoscopy During the COVID-19 Pandemic.**

Narwani V, Kohli N, Lerner MZ.


[Read here]>

**Ethical and Public Health Implications of Targeted Screening for Congenital Cytomegalovirus.**

Gievers LL, Holmes AV, Loyal J, Larson IA, Oliveira CR, Waldman EH, Khaki S.


[Read here]>

**Outpatient Otolaryngology in the Era of COVID-19: A Data-Driven Analysis of Practice Patterns.**

Kasle DA, Torabi SJ, Savoca EL, Judson BL, Manes RP.


[Read here]>

**A Manufacturer and User Facility Device Experience Analysis of Upper Aerodigestive Endoscopy Contamination: Is Flexible Laryngoscopy Different?**

Jiang R, Kasle DA, Alzahrani F, Kohli N, Lerner MZ.


[Read here]>

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**In Case You Missed It!**

*If you missed out on our past Yale Announcements newsletter,*
NEW HAVEN COUNTY
Yale Physicians Building
800 Howard Avenue, 4th Floor
New Haven, CT 06519

Smilow Cancer Hospital
35 Park Street, 4th Floor, New Haven, CT 06519

Yale New Haven Children's Hospital
1 Park Street, 2nd Floor, New Haven, CT 06504

Veteran Affairs Medical Center
VA CT Healthcare
950 Campbell Avenue, West Haven, CT 06516

FAIRFIELD COUNTY
Greenwich Hospital, Holly Hill Campus
55 Holly Hill Lane, Suite 130
Greenwich, CT 06830

Norwalk Pediatric Specialty Center
747 Belden Avenue, Norwalk, CT 06850

Park Avenue Medical Center
5520 Park Avenue, Trumbull, CT 06611

Yale Otolaryngology
2874 Main Street, 1st Floor, Stratford, CT 06614

MIDDLESEX COUNTY
Old Saybrook Medical Center
633 Middlesex Turnpike, Old Saybrook, CT 06475