

Division of Vascular Surgery

Benjamin Starnes, MD, Chief

The University of Washington Vascular Surgery Division has experienced unprecedented growth in volume over the past two and a half years. An aging population combined with the availability of new, minimally invasive treatment options has resulted in an explosion in the number of vascular surgical procedures conducted across the affiliated University of Washington hospitals. Due to this unprecedented growth, Harborview Medical Center and UW Medicine leadership approved the development of a "Vascular Center of Emphasis" to be based at Harborview Medical Center. The development of a Center of Emphasis in vascular care is a priority in the newly developed UW Medicine strategic plan.

Vascular Center of Emphasis at HMC

Plans are underway to build a consolidated Vascular Center on the fourth floor of the new Maleng Building on 9th Avenue at Harborview Medical Center. An emphasis on multi-disciplinary care and a patient-centered approach is the plan for this Center. Access to state of the art imaging and computer software for creating virtual procedures will allow for a streamlined approach to managing patients with a wide variety of vascular pathologies.

In addition, planning has begun for a new hybrid operative theatre with capabilities to combine traditional open and endovascular procedures, and incorporate the use of perfusion teams and cardiothoracic surgical expertise. In these instances, this collaborative effort will be under the direction of Professor of Surgery and Chief of Adult Cardiac Surgery, **Dr. Gabriel Aldea**.

The Vascular and Cardiothoracic Surgery Divisions have seen an exponential increase in the number of patients harboring diseases of the aorta and we have experienced immense success working together as a consolidated team implementing these new technologies.

Dr. Mark Meissner oversees the programmatic activities on the UWMC Campus. In that regard, the Vascular Division is partnering with the Interventional Radiology Section of the Department of Radiology to establish a Venous Malformation Clinic based at UWMC which will be under the direction of **Dr. Meissner** and **Dr. Sandeep Vaidya**.

New Technologies and Collaborations Produce Lower Mortality Rates

Utilizing these new technologies, Vascular Surgeons at UW Medicine have recently reported a dramatic drop in the mortality rate for patients presenting with ruptured abdominal aortic aneurysms from a traditional 58% to 32%, with patients undergoing a purely endovascular approach having a mortality rate of just 18%. This is the first time in over three decades that there has been such an impact of new technology on the mortality rate of this devastating disease process. This report garnered national attention for UW Medicine and firmly established the Division of Vascular Surgery as leaders in this endeavor.

Vascular Resident Training

With rapid increases in surgical volumes come additional opportunities for training. Under the leadership of **Drs. Edward Verrier, Ted Kohler and Benjamin Starnes**, a new, integrated five-year vascular surgery residency will begin in July of 2010. Residents in this program will become fully competent vascular surgeons in just five years following medical school.

Research

In addition to the increase in clinical work, the Division continues to produce academically as well. Bench and translational research continues under the leadership of **Drs. Alec Clowes, Tom Hatsukami, Michael Sobel, and Guenter Daum**.

A number of clinical trials are also in process within the Division, involving many of the vascular faculty, including **Drs. Nam Tran and Gale Tang**.

Overall, the future of Vascular Surgery at the University of Washington is extremely bright. We look forward to a new and exciting chapter in the history of UW Medicine.



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