



Media Alert

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Pathologists: Vital Members of the Patient Care Team Why Patients Should Get to Know Them

What:

For many Americans, the word “pathologist” brings to mind television shows from the past and present, such as “CSI: Crime Investigation” and “Quincy M.E.” Yet, many are unaware that 70 percent of all decisions about a patient’s diagnosis, treatment, hospital admission, and discharge rest on the pathologist’s report. Who are pathologists and why are they important?

Pathologists are specialists in disease diagnosis and prevention. They are physicians who use laboratory tools to identify the cause and access the development of disease. Pathologists interpret biological changes in the body affected by diseases and initiate the use of new laboratory tools to detect and treat public health threats. They collaborate with other specialists and treating physicians to care for patients.

Whether it’s cholesterol or cancer screening, blood donation or influenza, pathologists diagnose and treat patients every day.

Who:

Michael J. Misialek, associate chair of Pathology at Newton-Wellesley Hospital and assistant clinical professor of Pathology at Tufts University School of Medicine in Boston, Mass.

Dr. Misialek is available to speak to:

- The role of the pathologist on the patient care team
- How pathologists are involved in disease prevention and diagnosis
- How to read a pathology report

Why:

Medicine is made up of many specialties—oncologists, cardiologists, family practitioners, pathologists, and more. It’s this multidisciplinary approach to patient care which leads to better patient outcomes.

As patients become more informed health care consumers, asking to speak with their pathologist can lead to more informed decisions about their health and well being for themselves and their families.

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About the College of American Pathologists

As the leading organization for board-certified pathologists, the College of American Pathologists (CAP) serves patients, pathologists, and the public by fostering and advocating excellence in the practice of pathology and laboratory medicine worldwide. With more than 18,000 physician members, the CAP has led laboratory accreditation for more than 50 years with more than 7,500 CAP-accredited laboratories in 50 countries. Find more information about the CAP at cap.org.

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