



## Spring Greetings From nPOD

May 2011

Issue 10

### OPO Spotlight

The Network for Pancreatic Organ Donors with Diabetes (nPOD), is a collaborative, type 1 diabetes project supported by the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JDRF). At this time, we partner with nearly 20 OPOs nationwide and support over 60 not-for-profit scientific research studies in type 1 diabetes and are still growing! Recently there have been some new and exciting developments:

- nPOD-E has officially **partnered with Uppsala University** in Sweden
- We have developed **interactive learning tools** including informative videos that are soon to come
- Since the last quarter we have **reached hundreds of OPO coordinators** with our regular webinars
- nPOD looks forward to seeing you at one of the many conferences we are attending this year. Please see the list below, and please stop by the booth to register to win an iPod.

For more about nPOD [click here](#).

### LifeLink®



[LifeLink Foundation](#) includes three organ recovery organizations:

LifeLink of Florida, serving west and southwest Florida; LifeLink of Georgia, serving the state of Georgia; and LifeLink of Puerto Rico, serving Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. This organization also houses the LifeLink Tissue Bank, which makes tens of thousands of tissue grafts available for transplant each year.

Their Transplantation Immunology Laboratory serves as “matchmaker” between potential transplant recipients and organ donors for three transplant centers. This state-of-the-art lab conducts research to identify early detection of rejection to improve patient outcome, making them unique among organ and tissue recovery organizations.

LifeLink Foundation collectively makes possible more than 1,500 lifesaving organ transplants each year, through the generosity of donors and their families in our communities.

### This Summer nPOD is On The Move

June 14-17th	AOPO: Association of Organ Procurement Organizations Annual Meeting in Denver, CO
June 23-26th	FOCIS: Federation of Clinical Immunology Societies in Washington D.C.
June 24-28th	ADA: American Diabetes Association 71st Scientific Sessions in San Diego, CA.
August 13-16th	NATCO: The Organization for Transplant Professionals 36th Annual Meeting in San Francisco, CA

### nPOD Day at FOCIS



The Immunology of Diabetes Society (IDS) and JDRF have organized a forum for discussion of results of nPOD research projects, as well as other studies of type 1 diabetes, at the upcoming Federation of Clinical Immunology Societies (FOCIS) meeting, June 23, 2011, in Washington, D.C. Over 10 nPOD investigators will be in attendance to present their research projects. The nPOD team looks forward to hearing the exciting developments in diabetes research. For more information, please view the agenda for the meeting by clicking [here](#).

### OPO Webinars

nPOD is always available to provide webinars for new OPO coordinators to explain our program and importance of our OPO partners in the nPOD project. Please contact the nPOD coordinator via email at [npod@pathology.ufl.edu](mailto:npod@pathology.ufl.edu) or by phone at (352) 273-9271. Webinars can be created to suit your organization’s needs – from half hour to one hour sessions, and can be done for individuals or groups.

### Investigator Spotlight



#### Helena Reijonen, Ph.D.

Benaroya Research Institute at Virginia Mason

Dr. Reijonen has published extensively on immunological studies of diabetes. Her focus includes identifying and investigating immune cell (T cell) responses and biological features in samples provided by the nPOD project. One aspect of her research has allowed her to identify T cell populations that react against specific islet autoantigens and are restricted by either susceptibility or protective genetic elements. Another exciting aspect of her studies involves the role of bone marrow-derived immune cells in the disease process. There is a growing interest in the role of immune cells from bone marrow, but has not been previously studied in human donors with type 1 diabetes due to the unavailability of tissue samples. Along with bone marrow samples, the nPOD project has been able to provide Dr. Reijonen with other tissues of interest for her research, which she feels “has provided an outstanding opportunity to access precious samples from the pancreas and pancreatic lymph nodes of type 1 diabetic patients and individuals with underlying islet autoimmunity.” For more about Dr. Reijonen’s research, please [click here](#).

### nPOD Publications

**The following publications are findings from studies using nPOD tissues. They are representative of the many publication emanating from nPOD investigators. Thank you to our OPO partners who recover these tissues and to our dedicated investigators who are working to find a cure.**

**Title:** [Genetic control of  \$\beta\$ -cell mass homeostasis](#)

**Authors:** Soundarapandian, M. M., Nieves, M. L., Pasquier, R., Bergström, U., Atkinson, M. A., & Tyrberg, B.

**Summary:** This article addresses different scientific conclusions of how beta cells regenerate in humans and aims to reconcile existing contradictions within the literature. The authors conclude that regeneration is dependent on many pathways and is influenced by genetic factors that control beta cell mass.

**Title:** [Prevention of diabetes by FTY720-mediated stabilization of peri-islet tertiary lymphoid organs](#)

**Authors:** Penaranda, C., Tang, Q., Ruddle, N.H., Bluestone, J. A.

**Summary:** This article studies the potential prevention of diabetes by “locking” immune cells in the pancreatic lymph node and pancreas to block to exit of these cells and subsequent beta cell damage. The authors show that continuous treatment of a particular immunosuppressant drug in mice can prevent diabetes development.

**Title:** [Residual insulin production and pancreatic  \$\beta\$ -cell turnover after 50 years of diabetes: Joslin Medalist Study](#)

**Authors:** Kennan, H.A., Sun, J.K., Levine, J., Doria, A., Aiello, L.P., Eisenbarth, G., Bonner-Weir, S., King, G.L.

**Summary:** This article evaluates the extent of beta cell function in insulin-dependent diabetic patients with a disease duration of 50 years or greater (Medalists). The authors characterize the clinical and physiological aspects of long-standing diabetes and conclude that the persistence of beta cells suggests a steady state of turnover, where enhancement of beta cells through stimuli could be a viable therapeutic approach for diabetic patients.

Want to learn more about nPOD? Please contact the nPOD coordinator via email at [npod@pathology.ufl.edu](mailto:npod@pathology.ufl.edu), by phone at (354) 273-8277 during regular business hours. To refer a donor to nPOD please call our 24hr toll free referral line at (866) 731-6585 or contact IIAM if you are an OPO partner through them.

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