



Miller School Cardiologists Present Research Findings at American Heart Association's Scientific Sessions

From advances in stroke therapy to the use of medications after a heart attack, University of Miami Miller School of Medicine cardiologists presented leading-edge studies at the American Heart Association Scientific Sessions 2019 in Philadelphia.



Dr. Lina Shehadeh, left, and postdoctoral fellow Camila Irion, Ph.D., presented on the role of osteopontin in cardiac regeneration.

“Our faculty, residents and fellows presented a robust stream of papers, clinical studies and laboratory discoveries,” said Jeffrey J. Goldberger, M.D., M.B.A., chief of the Cardiovascular Division. “We addressed a number of timely issues related to the treatment of cardiovascular disease.”

A summary of the highlights of the AHA's Nov. 16-18 annual meeting – which drew more than 20,000 U.S. and international attendees – was presented in the final session on “Trending Topics in Cardiac Development, Structure and Function.” It was presented by several scientists, including Lina Shehadeh, Ph.D., associate professor of medicine in the Division of



Cardiology and the UM Interdisciplinary Stem Cell Institute (ISCI). “One topic we discussed was work done on new mechanisms for SGLT2 inhibitors [FDA-approved medications for lowering blood sugar], which have shown great success in clinical trials for heart failure in patients with or without diabetes,” she said.

Dr. Shehadeh teamed with Joshua M. Hare, M.D., Louis Lemberg Professor of Medicine and ISCI founding director, to discuss the important role of the protein osteopontin in regulating adult cardiomyocyte division in a heart failure model.

Maria Delgado-Lelievre, M.D., presented the findings of her work with Dr. Goldberger on the relationship between isolated systolic hypertension and slow heart rates. “We evaluated this in a large cohort of patients and found that heart rate may be an important determinant of blood pressure in older people with isolated systolic hypertension,” said Dr. Goldberger. He joined cardiologists Litsa Lambrakos, M.D., and Gilson Fernandes, M.D., in a study presented on “Treatment Modalities for the Prevention of Implantable Cardioverter Defibrillator Shocks: Systematic Review and Network Meta-Analysis.” Dr. Fernandes also presented a systematic review of pacemaker therapy for neurocardiogenic syncope.



Dr. Mauricio Cohen, third from left, with cardiology residents presenting posters.

Mauricio G. Cohen, M.D., professor of medicine and director of the Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory, lectured at a cardio-oncology session on transcatheter aortic valve replacement



(TAVR) in cancer patients. In his presentation he said, "Aortic stenosis is a malignant disease by itself. TAVR in cancer patients might allow for more aggressive oncology treatments and decrease the risk of cancer surgery." Dr. Cohen also delivered a presentation on "TAVR Controversies," and concluded that TAVR is an established evidence-based treatment for low-, intermediate-, and high-risk patients with aortic stenosis. However, some aspects of TAVR require further study and refinement.

A "Step by Step" presentation on transcatheter mitral valve replacement (TMVR) was given by Eduardo de Marchena, M.D., professor of medicine and surgery, associate dean for international medicine, director of interventional cardiology, program director of the International Structural Heart Interventional Training Program, and director of the Miami Valves conference. His talk focused on complex clinical situations in patients with percutaneous treatment for complex coronary artery or mitral valve disease.

Dr. de Marchena teamed with Odunayo Olorunfemi, M.D., M.P.H., a cardiovascular fellow, in a presentation on "Anticoagulation in Patients with Atrial Fibrillation after a Transcatheter Aortic Valve Replacement: A Systematic Review."

Other Miller School presenters and topics included:

- Claudia Martinez, M.D., "Cardiovascular Complications Related to Zika Virus and Increased Prevalence of Diastolic Dysfunction in an HIV Clinical Cohort in Miami, FL: A Retrospective Analysis" and "Atrial Fibrillation in Persons Living With HIV: A Single-Center Retrospective Analysis."
- Chunming Dong, M.D., "Plasma Extracellular Vesicles



MicroRNAs Serve as Potential Mediators for Atherosclerotic Cardiovascular Disease in HIV Patients.”

- Azar Radfar, M.D., “Air Pollution Associates with Leukopoietic Activity: A Link to Atherosclerotic Inflammation” and “Poster Presentation: RF117- Hepatic Fat Associates with Arterial Inflammation: Novel Insights Linking Liver Adiposity to Cardiovascular Diseases.”