Miller School GI Clinicians Share Advances, Insights at Regional Conference

University of Miami Miller School of Medicine gastroenterologists and liver specialists shared their knowledge, expertise, and commitment to advancing gastrointestinal (GI) research and patient care at the Fourth Biennial South Florida Conference of the GI and Liver Association of the Americas (GALA).

From left, Dr. Ram Bhamidimarri; Dr. Morgan Sendzischew Shane; Dr. Paul Martin; Dr. Maria Abreu; Dr. Siobhan Proksell

Managing complications of inflammatory bowel disease (IBD), diagnosis and treatment of opioid-induced constipation, and addressing the clinical challenges of advanced liver disease were among the highlights.
“These regional meetings are a very important way to disseminate recent advances in the management of patients with gastroenterology and liver disorders,” said Paul Martin, M.D., professor and chief of the Division of Digestive Health and Liver Diseases at the Miller School. “The format facilitates interaction between referring practitioners and faculty.”

During the one-day event, held November 20, 2021, at the Hollywood Diplomat Hotel, five of the Miller School’s GI and hepatology faculty members shared insights in their areas of specialized expertise.

Dr. Martin discussed best practices for managing complications of cirrhosis such as varices (enlarged veins) and hepatic encephalopathy, in which toxins accumulating in the blood travel to the brain, causing confusion and other neurologic effects.

Maria Abreu, M.D., vice chair of research in the Department of Medicine and director of the Crohn’s and Colitis Center at UHealth, presented practical approaches to selecting IBD therapies and managing IBD complications.

Advice on managing fertility and pregnancy in women with IBD came from Siobhan Proksell, M.D., assistant professor of medicine.

In addition to addressing the clinical challenges of opioid-induced constipation, Morgan Allyn Sendzischew Shane, M.D., assistant professor of medicine, presented practical tips on the diagnosis and treatment of chronic constipation as well as constipation associated with irritable bowel syndrome.
Kalyan Ram Bhamidimarri, M.D., M.P.H., chief of hepatology, provided an update on screening for and diagnosis of non-alcoholic fatty liver disease and non-alcoholic steatohepatitis.

The conference reflected and reinforced the reach of the Miller School and University of Miami Health System beyond the medical campus. “Community-based GI practitioners look to us for guidance in the management of their patients,” Dr. Martin said. “So our leading-edge, research-driven care benefits not only our own patients, but those managed by attendees at regional conferences like this one.”

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