

IN CONVERSATION WITH

DR. ROBERT TORREY

Urology, Hoag



"I am so grateful to be a part of Hoag and appreciate our community and donors for their dedication to making Hoag a better hospital. Medical expertise is just one side of good health care; it also requires a supportive community."

What influenced you to come to Hoag, and when did you come?

I was recruited to Hoag in September 2012 by Dr. Yoshida while I was completing a two-year urologic oncology fellowship at City of Hope. Although I was about six years behind him, Dr. Yoshida and I had both trained at the same residency program. When we reconnected at a graduation ceremony, he shared the amazing potential to build cancer programs at Hoag. Even though I grew up in California, Hoag wasn't on my radar because I didn't know about the opportunities here. Upon visiting, I was drawn to the technological advances available at Hoag. For example, Hoag has more da Vinci® robots than most academic hospitals. It was clear to me that Hoag was very focused on developing and adapting technologies that help improve patient care and outcomes.

What drew you to specialize in urology?

Physicians spend a lot of time during medical training rotating through different specialties. You may start medical school with an idea about what area may interest you, but during these rotations, that concept sometimes changes. I originally had an interest in plastic surgery or ENT. During my rotations, I found these specialties didn't interest me as much as I thought they would. It was during a rotation in urology that I became very interested in this field, which happens to be the area my father chose as his specialty. I became very excited about urology and felt it was an area in which I could positively impact patients and make progress in care and treatments throughout my career.

What do you think will be the most exciting development in your specialty?

In oncology, we are starting down the very exciting pathway of precision medicine. The type of surgeries we do at Hoag are part of advancing technology and patient treatment. Incorporating precision medicine allows us to treat tumors based on genomic profiles, an incredible advancement in cancer management as we continue to expand our understanding and ultimately improve patient outcomes. Hoag hosts a monthly urologic oncology tumor board where we incorporate patient genetic profiles in treatment planning.

We are developing a multidisciplinary bladder cancer clinic which will offer patient education and early detection surveillance programs to ensure the highest quality of care for patients. This multidisciplinary clinic will eliminate communication gaps and fragmented patient care by combining surgeons, medical oncologists, radiation oncologists and other specialists who will work together to develop coordinated care.

Hoag is very involved in critical clinical trials. We are currently developing a urine-based study for early detection of bladder cancer. As of now, we still rely on scopes and cystoscopy for monitoring and surveillance of bladder cancer. This trial and others will help develop cancer detectors/biomarkers for early, noninvasive detection of bladder and other cancers.

What sets Hoag apart, or what do you think is the best thing about Hoag?

Technology, commitment to excellence and quality care are what set Hoag apart. Hoag has always been more interested in the delivery of exceptional versus fast turnaround care. Hoag supports physicians by investing in the latest technology and science that brings the highest level of care to patients.

How has philanthropy contributed to your work at Hoag?

Community leaders and donors have been responsible for a lot of what happens in cancer care at Hoag. We have resources that are typically only available at top academic institutions. Donor support keeps Hoag at the forefront of medicine. Physicians know that many of the tools of our trade have been provided by donors, and we are extremely grateful for this generous philanthropic support and impact on our work.

What do you like to do when you are not at Hoag?

I spend most of my time with my family. Our kids are very interested in sports, and we like to watch their games and spend quality family time together. They play soccer, football and tennis. We enjoy riding bikes and going to the beach. I play a little guitar and piano, but it is definitely a hobby—I could use more practice.

Education and Training

Medical Doctor

Loma Linda University School of Medicine
Loma Linda, CA

General Surgery Internship

Loma Linda University Medical Center
Loma Linda, CA

Urology Residency

Loma Linda University Medical Center
Loma Linda, CA

Urologic Oncology Fellowship

City of Hope National Medical Center
Duarte, CA

Board Certifications

American Board of Urology

CONTACT

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