



NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR ALPHA-GAL SYNDROME

Turning Alpha-gal Syndrome Knowledge
Into Coordinated Action



October 27–28, 2026

The Dupont Circle Hotel
Washington, D.C.



Welcome to FARE's National Convening on Alpha-gal Syndrome!



This is a special convening. Rarely do experts from such diverse disciplines come together to create a national roadmap around a single disease.

A tick bite that leads to alpha-gal syndrome (AGS) can change what a person can eat, the medications they can take, the products they can safely use, and even the work they are able to perform. And for a growing number of people in the United States, many of whom may not yet know the cause of their symptoms, this bewildering disease can reach into nearly every aspect of daily life.

Understanding why requires us to look to experts across the full spectrum of AGS's impact, from the immune system to the environment; from wildlife and livestock to the food supply; from the laboratory and clinic to farms, workplaces, grocery stores, and homes.

That is why FARE has brought this remarkable group together.

FARE is stepping into this work because people living with AGS are increasingly looking for the same resources every person affected by food allergy deserves: answers, trusted information, better clinical care, effective prevention, and treatments that improve their lives. As the nation's leading food allergy patient organization, FARE has an opportunity—and a responsibility—to bring together the scientific, clinical, public health, industry, and patient communities needed to accelerate progress. We can also bring to AGS what we have learned from more common food allergies to proteins: meaningful progress happens when we break down silos, center the patient experience, and align research, education, and awareness around a common strategy.

Our purpose is not simply to review what we already know about AGS. We are here to confront what we do not yet know, identify the gaps that are most limiting progress, and determine which opportunities have the greatest potential to improve prevention, diagnosis, treatment, clinical management, and quality of life.

Throughout our time together, I encourage you to keep one fundamental question in mind: If meaningful new resources were available to accelerate progress, where should they be invested to have the greatest impact?

To answer that question, we must consider what is achievable, what infrastructure and partnerships are

needed, where investment could unlock progress, and—most importantly—what would make the greatest difference for people living with AGS.

The breadth of expertise represented here is intentional. Over the course of the convening, we will examine AGS from tick exposure and disease development through its clinical manifestations, diagnosis, treatment, and long-term management, as well as the complex issues surrounding agriculture, the food supply, labeling, and population-level prevention.

Our goal is ambitious: to emerge with greater clarity about the investments that can move the field forward, the collaborations necessary to make them possible, and the priorities that will form the foundation of a national roadmap for alpha-gal syndrome.

FARE is honored to convene this effort, but our commitment extends beyond today. This convening is intended to be the beginning of a coordinated national effort—one that translates the priorities identified here into a roadmap for research, education, awareness, and investment. FARE is committed to helping sustain that momentum and bringing partners together around the opportunities this group identifies.

Thank you for lending your expertise and your experience to this important work. I look forward to what we will accomplish.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Sung Poblete".

Sung Poblete, PhD, RN

Chief Executive Officer

FARE (Food Allergy Research & Education)



Agenda for Wednesday, October 28, 2026

7:15 AM – 8:00 AM Registration, Breakfast, and Networking

8:00 AM – 8:15 AM Welcome & Opening Remarks

- Jennifer Bufford, MS, FARE and Kelly Cleary, MD, MPH, FARE
- Sung Poblete, PhD, RN, CEO of FARE
- Maya Jerath, MD, PhD, Washington University in St. Louis and Jeffrey Wilson, MD, PhD, University of Virginia

8:15 AM – 8:55 AM Alpha-gal Syndrome 101 and the Patient Perspective

Description: This opening session will provide a concise overview of the current state of alpha-gal syndrome (AGS), including what is known about its underlying mechanism, clinical relevance, prevalence, public health impact, and disease burden. The session will also illustrate the patient's lived experience and the day-to-day impact of AGS. The presentations will highlight emerging geographic patterns, the role of tick exposure and environmental drivers, and persistent gaps in surveillance, diagnosis, management and education. This session will establish a shared foundation for the day's discussions and frame the key scientific, clinical, patient-centered, and public health questions that remain.

Presenters:

- Maya Jerath, MD, PhD, Washington University in St. Louis and Jeffrey Wilson, MD, PhD, University of Virginia
- Kelly Cleary, MD, MPH, FARE and Mary Lynn Cady, AGS Patient

8:55 AM – 10:05 AM SESSION 1: From Tick Bite to Disease: The Critical Gaps in Alpha-gal Syndrome Risk and Emergence

Description: This session will examine the factors that contribute to the development of alpha-gal syndrome, moving from tick exposure and immune sensitization to the environmental, geographic, and host factors that shape individual and population risk.

Moderator: Solny Adalsteinsson, PhD, Washington University in St. Louis

Three Lightning Talks (10 minutes each)

- **Where Does AGS Begin? Mapping Risk, Tick Exposure, and the Biggest Unknown**

Presenter: Yoonseong Park, PhD, Kansas State University

- **The Biology of AGS Begins Here: Critical Gaps in Tick-Host Immune Interactions**

Presenter: Loren Erickson, PhD, University of Virginia

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- **Who Develops AGS—and Why? Research Priorities in Understanding Individual Risk**

Presenter: Eleanor Saunders, MD, MPH, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Consensus Building Discussion

10:05 AM – 10:20 AM Break

10:20 AM – 11:40 AM SESSION 2: Clinical Complexity in Alpha-gal Syndrome: Why Better Evidence Is Needed

Description: This session will explore the broad clinical spectrum of alpha-gal syndrome, including sensitization alone, symptomatic disease, comorbidities, as well as medical products, medications, and procedural care considerations.

Moderator: Joshua Kennedy, MD, University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences

Four Lightning Talks (10 minutes each)

- **Defining the Clinical Spectrum: What We Still Need to Understand**

Presenter: Thomas Platts-Mills, MD, University of Virginia

- **When Alpha-gal Syndrome is Not Alone: Why Associated Conditions Deserve Focus**

Presenter: Onyinye Iweala, MD, PhD, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

- **Medications and Procedures in Alpha-gal Syndrome: Evidence Gaps with Real-World Safety Implications**

Presenter: Cosby Stone Jr., MD, MPH, Vanderbilt University

- **From Patient Records to Predictions: How AI Could Help Close AGS Data Gaps**

Presenter: W. Grant Day, MD, Uniformed Services University

Consensus Building Discussion

11:40 AM – 12:40 PM Group Photo, Lunch, and Networking

12:40 PM – 1:55 PM SESSION 3: Improving Alpha-gal Syndrome Diagnosis and Management: Where More Research Could Lead

Moderator: Jonathan Hemler, MD, University of Virginia

Description: This session will focus on clinical diagnosis and day-to-day management of alpha-gal syndrome, highlighting current evidence, areas of uncertainty, and practical needs for patient and provider guidance.



Four Lightning Talks (10 minutes each, unless denoted otherwise)

- **What Would Better Alpha-gal Syndrome Diagnostics Make Possible?**

Presenter: Peggy Kendall, MD, Washington University in St. Louis

Presenter: Jonathan Friedlander, PhD, MBA, Atanis Biotech (5 minutes)

- **Uncertainty in Alpha-gal Syndrome Dietary Guidance: Research Priorities**

Presenter: Sarah McGill, MD, MSc, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

- **Can Monoclonal IgE Transform Alpha-gal Syndrome Treatment?**

Presenter: Scott Smith, MD, PhD, University of Virginia

Consensus Building Discussion

1:55 PM – 2:10 PM

Break

2:10 PM – 3:30 PM

SESSION 4: Alpha-gal Syndrome and the Food System: Gaps in Evidence, Transparency, and Consumer Protection

Description: This session will examine alpha-gal syndrome through the lens of agriculture, food science, and the broader food system, including implications for livestock producers, food manufacturing, ingredient sourcing and labeling, and consumer guidance.

Moderator: Priscilla Brenes, MPH, PhD, Kansas State University

Four Lightning Talks (10 minutes each)

- **Alpha-gal Syndrome and Agricultural Communities: Occupational Risk, Livestock Exposure, and Rural Health Needs**

Presenter: Shaun Cross, PhD, University of Nebraska Medical Center

- **Beyond Red Meat: Mammalian- and Red Algae-Derived Ingredients and Alpha-gal Syndrome—Research Needs and Practical Implications**

Presenter: Joseph Baumert, PhD, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

- **Alpha-gal as an Allergen of Public Health Importance—What Evidence is Needed?**

Presenter: Stefano Luccioli, MD, U.S. Food and Drug Administration

- **Alpha-gal in Food and Medicine: What We Need to Measure and Why**

Presenter: Parastoo Azadi, PhD, University of Georgia

Consensus Building Discussion



3:30 PM – 4:50 PM

SESSION 5: Preventing Alpha-gal Syndrome at Scale: What Evidence Is Needed to Move Beyond Tick Avoidance

Description: Current approaches to alpha-gal syndrome prevention largely focus on individual protection from tick bites. This session will look further upstream, exploring innovative ecological, environmental, and biological strategies that could reduce tick populations, disrupt tick–host interactions, and ultimately decrease the risk of alpha-gal sensitization and alpha-gal syndrome.

Moderator: Lea Hamner, MPH, Martha's Vineyard Tick Program

Four Lightning Talks (10 minutes each)

- **Lone Star Tick Behavior and Habitat Considerations: Research Priorities for Urban Planning**

Presenter: Holly Gaff, PhD, Old Dominion University

- **Prescribed Fire and Alpha-gal Syndrome Prevention: What Evidence Is Needed Before Scaling?**

Presenter: Elizabeth Gleim, PhD, Hollins University

- **Biotechnology Approaches to Alpha-gal Syndrome Prevention: Why This Frontier Deserves Consideration**

Presenter: Joanna Buchthal, PhD, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

- **How Much Could Deer Reduction Contribute to Lone Star Tick Control?**

Presenter: Sam Telford III, ScD, Tufts University

Consensus Building Discussion

4:50 PM – 5:25 PM

Defining the Alpha-gal Syndrome Priorities & Investment Agenda: What Matters Most

Description: This facilitated culminating session will invite attendees to vote on research priorities they believe should guide the alpha-gal syndrome field, react to the collective results, and share key insights, takeaways, and testimonials from the day.

Moderator: Lee Gimpel, BS, Better Meetings

5:25 PM – 5:30 PM

Closing Remarks and Adjourn

Moderators: Maya Jerath, MD, PhD, Washington University in St. Louis and Jeffrey Wilson, MD, PhD, University of Virginia

5:30 PM – 7:00 PM

Afterglow

Attendees are welcome to gather for cocktails and continue conversations, deepen relationships, and process the day's discussions between the formal program and dinner.

7:00 PM

Dinner

Biographies of Speakers



Solny Adalsteinsson, PhD
Washington University in St. Louis

Dr. Adalsteinsson is a Senior Scientist at Tyson Research Center, the environmental field station of Washington University in St. Louis, and serves as Co-Director of VIREO, a newly formed interdisciplinary center for Vector-borne Infection Research, Education, and Outreach. Her lab studies how human changes to the environment shape the ecology of tick-borne diseases, with a focus on the Lone Star tick and how prescribed fire, plant communities, and urbanization affect its population dynamics. Using landscape-scale experiments and models, her team examines how ticks, pathogens, and wildlife respond, with implications for predicting and reducing human exposure to alpha-gal syndrome. Dr. Adalsteinsson is also responsible for co-leading biodiversity monitoring programs (including ticks) at Tyson Research Center and in the greater St. Louis region, collecting long-term data to share with incoming researchers, international data networks, and to guide land management on the 2,000-acre field station property. Dr. Adalsteinsson regularly gives outreach presentations to the public about ticks and tick-borne disease prevention and collaborates with local public health agencies to improve education and awareness.

Dr. Adalsteinsson earned her bachelor's and master's degrees in biology at The Pennsylvania State University and worked for several years as a conservation biologist in Iceland and the Hawaiian Islands. She received her PhD in Entomology & Wildlife Ecology from University of Delaware, where she examined how urbanization and invasive plants affect the ecology of Lyme disease in the Mid-Atlantic United States. She then completed postdoctoral training in vector-borne disease ecology at Washington University in St. Louis.



Parastoo Azadi, PhD
University of Georgia

Dr. Azadi is an internationally recognized leader in glycoscience and advanced glycan structural analysis. She serves as Associate Director of the Complex Carbohydrate Research Center (CCRC) and Executive Technical Director of Analytical Services and Training at the University of Georgia, where she leads national and international collaborations focused on the characterization of complex carbohydrates, glycoproteins, glycolipids, and other biologically important glycoconjugates.

Over more than three decades, Dr. Azadi has pioneered innovative analytical approaches in glycomics and glycoproteomics using mass spectrometry, chromatography, and integrated structural biology techniques. Her research has advanced understanding of glycosylation in infectious diseases, therapeutic proteins, and biopharmaceutical development, including landmark contributions to the structural characterization of SARS-CoV-2 glycoproteins. As a principal investigator and collaborator on numerous National Institutes of Health, National Science Foundation, and Department of Energy-funded programs, she has partnered with investigators worldwide and has trained thousands of scientists through the CCRC's internationally recognized analytical programs.

Continued

Dr. Azadi is widely recognized for her expertise in biologically significant carbohydrate epitopes, including galactose- α -1,3-galactose (alpha-gal). Her work has advanced understanding of alpha-gal biology, glycoengineering, xenotransplantation, and immune responses to glycans, providing important scientific insights that continue to inform research on alpha-gal syndrome and other glycan-mediated diseases.



Joseph Baumert, PhD
University of Nebraska–Lincoln

Dr. Baumert is Professor of Food Science and Technology and Director of the Food Allergy Research and Resource Program (FARRP) at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln. His research focuses on the detection and measurement of allergenic proteins in foods, the effects of food processing and digestion on allergens, and the development of quantitative approaches for assessing the risk posed by allergenic ingredients.

Through FARRP, Dr. Baumert works closely with researchers, food manufacturers, and other stakeholders to translate food allergy science into practical approaches for allergen management and food safety. His outreach efforts include training and consultation for the food industry on allergen control, cross-contact prevention, analytical testing, and quantitative risk assessment.

Dr. Baumert's expertise in food allergen detection, risk assessment, ingredient management, and labeling brings an important food science perspective to alpha-gal syndrome, particularly as stakeholders consider how mammalian-derived ingredients can be identified, measured, managed, and effectively communicated to people living with AGS. He earned his bachelor's degree in Agricultural Sciences, master's degree in Animal Science, and PhD in Food Science and Technology with a focus on food allergens from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln, where he also completed postdoctoral training in food allergy research.



Priscilla Brenes, MPH, PhD
Kansas State University

Dr. Brenes is an Extension Assistant Professor and Nutrition Extension State Specialist in the School of Health Sciences at Kansas State University. Her work focuses on nutrition education, chronic disease prevention, and translating scientific evidence into practical resources that improve community health. Fluent in both English and Spanish, she is committed to expanding access to evidence-based nutrition education for diverse populations.

Dr. Brenes's research includes emerging work on alpha-gal syndrome (AGS), with a particular emphasis on public awareness, dietary management, and the challenges faced by individuals living with AGS in rural communities. She has led studies examining knowledge gaps surrounding AGS and co-authored research evaluating public awareness and barriers to care in the Midwest. Through Kansas State University Extension, she has developed educational materials and outreach programs that help patients, healthcare professionals, and community organizations better understand AGS and its nutritional implications.

Beyond her work in AGS, Dr. Brenes leads and collaborates on initiatives addressing hypertension, diabetes prevention, and food access through community-based nutrition programs. Her expertise in public health nutrition, community engagement, and science communication provides an important perspective on improving education, awareness, and patient support for individuals living with alpha-gal syndrome.



Joanna Buchthal, PhD
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Dr. Buchthal is Research Director of Mice Against Ticks and a Postdoctoral Associate in the Esvelt Lab at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).

Dr. Buchthal leads research on Mice Against Ticks, a community-guided project to heritably immunize white-footed mice against *Borrelia burgdorferi*, the bacterium that causes Lyme disease. Because these mice are a primary wild reservoir of Lyme disease, releasing immune mice into the environment could offer a safe, scalable, and long-lasting avenue to break the transmission cycle. In pursuit of this goal, her team created the first Lyme-immune laboratory mice and engineered the first white-footed mice, work that has been featured by 60 minutes, CNN, the New York Times, and elsewhere.

Through Mice Against Ticks, Dr. Buchthal also works directly with communities to explore whether and how emerging biological interventions should be considered and implemented. The project engages affected communities in defining goals, weighing potential benefits and uncertainties, and identifying the evidence needed before field-based interventions are considered. Although her published mouse research focuses on Lyme disease rather than alpha-gal syndrome (AGS), her expertise in ecological disease prevention and community-guided research can inform how AGS stakeholders evaluate scalable approaches to reducing tick exposure across diverse regions and environments.

Dr. Buchthal earned her PhD in Media Arts and Sciences from MIT. Prior to beginning her doctoral studies, she was a research assistant at the Wyss Institute for Biologically Inspired Engineering at Harvard University where she worked at the intersection of genomics, synthetic biology, and biotechnology.



Jennifer Bufford, MS
FARE (Food Allergy Research & Education)

Ms. Bufford is Vice President of Research at FARE (Food Allergy Research & Education), where she leads research operations and initiatives aimed at advancing the science, prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and understanding of food allergy. Her work brings together researchers, clinicians, government agencies, industry, patients, and other partners to identify critical research gaps, foster collaboration, and accelerate scientific progress.

Prior to joining FARE, Ms. Bufford spent nearly two decades in academic medicine, where she developed and strengthened programs supporting investigator-initiated clinical research. She brings extensive experience in research program development, management of multidisciplinary research consortia, and implementation of multisite clinical trials.

At FARE, Ms. Bufford helps develop and oversee research funding programs, scientific collaborations, clinical research infrastructure, and national scientific convenings designed to move emerging areas of food allergy research toward coordinated action. Her work on alpha-gal syndrome has focused on bringing together experts across disciplines—including allergy and immunology, tick biology and ecology, public health, food science, agriculture, diagnostics, and therapeutics—to identify research priorities and opportunities for collaboration.

Ms. Bufford earned both her bachelor's degree in Medical Microbiology and Immunology and her master's degree in Biotechnology from the University of Wisconsin–Madison. She also brings a personal connection to FARE's mission as the parent of a son with food allergy.



Mary Lynn Cady **St. Louis County Library**

Ms. Cady is a community educator and longtime alpha-gal syndrome (AGS) patient in the St. Louis, Missouri area. Raised on a farm in Canada, she developed an early passion for the outdoors and earned a bachelor's degree in agriculture from the University of Guelph. She began her career as a farm manager at a University of New Hampshire research facility before moving to the St. Louis area in 2000. In 2007, she joined the St. Louis County Library as a Library Assistant, leading story times and

science programs for children.

In 2011, after having no prior history of allergies, Ms. Cady began experiencing allergic reactions after eating and went several months without a clear diagnosis. Now under the care of Maya Jerath, MD, PhD, at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, she has adapted to AGS as a way of life. Avoiding mammalian-derived ingredients is essential, making dining out difficult and grocery shopping time-consuming.

Drawing on her personal experience and commitment to helping others, Ms. Cady has become an advocate for AGS education, tick awareness, and community connection. She began organizing tick-prevention educational programming at her library in 2018 and leads the Living with Alpha-Gal support group at the Daniel Boone Branch of the St. Louis County Library, which meets monthly and brings together people from across the greater St. Louis area to share experiences and practical guidance. In her spare time, she volunteers with a pet therapy group that brings therapy animals to libraries to help children develop reading skills. Her perspective as both a patient and community educator highlights the everyday realities of AGS and the importance of accessible information, peer support, and patient voices in shaping research and future solutions.



Kelly Cleary, MD, MPH **FARE (Food Allergy Research & Education)**

Dr. Cleary is Medical Director and Vice President of Health and Education at FARE (Food Allergy Research & Education), where she oversees national education efforts and a broad portfolio of programs, resources, and partnerships supporting individuals with food allergy alongside their families and caregivers.

A pediatrician by training, Dr. Cleary brings clinical, educational, and public health expertise to her work at FARE. She has helped advance efforts to better understand and communicate the experiences of people living with alpha-gal syndrome (AGS), including contributing to research examining patient-reported symptoms, diagnostic experiences, and the broader burden of the condition. Her work focuses on translating emerging evidence into practical education and resources that address the real-world needs of patients and families.

Prior to joining FARE, Dr. Cleary served as Medical Director of Psychopharmacology for PM Behavioral Health, where she oversaw medication management and clinical operations. She also co-founded UrgiKids, a pediatric urgent care practice in Naperville, Illinois, which was subsequently acquired by PM Pediatrics.

Dr. Cleary earned her medical degree from Albert Einstein College of Medicine, completed her pediatrics residency at NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center, and completed a fellowship in Pediatric Emergency Medicine at NYU-Bellevue. She earned her Master of Public Health from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health in 2026. She also has a personal connection to FARE's mission as the mother of a child with food allergy, bringing both a professional and family perspective to her work on behalf of the food allergy community.



Shaun Cross, PhD
University of Nebraska Medical Center

Dr. Cross is an Assistant Professor in the College of Public Health at the University of Nebraska Medical Center, where he studies tick-borne diseases and their impact on public health. His research integrates epidemiology, community engagement, and public health surveillance to better understand tick-associated illnesses and develop strategies that reduce disease burden in affected populations.

A major focus of Dr. Cross's work is alpha-gal syndrome (AGS) and its impact on individuals and communities, particularly within rural and agricultural settings. Through his work with the Central States Center for Agricultural Safety and Health, he examines the occupational, economic, and quality-of-life consequences of AGS among farmers, ranchers, and others with frequent tick exposure. His research combines surveillance, community-based surveys, and stakeholder engagement to better characterize the public health impact of this emerging condition.

In addition to his research, Dr. Cross is committed to public education and regularly partners with healthcare providers, agricultural organizations, and community groups to improve awareness of tick identification, bite prevention, and tick-borne diseases. His expertise in rural health, occupational risk, and public health implementation brings an important population-based perspective to the study and management of AGS.



W. Grant Day, MD
Uniformed Services University

Dr. Day is an Assistant Professor of Medicine at the Uniformed Services University and a physician specializing in Allergy and Immunology at Naval Medical Center Portsmouth in Portsmouth, Virginia. A U.S. Navy physician, Dr. Day is board-certified in both Allergy and Immunology and Internal Medicine and brings experience spanning clinical care, research, medical education, and military medicine.

Dr. Day completed his medical degree at Eastern Virginia Medical School and his internal medicine training at Naval Medical Center Portsmouth, where he also served as Chief Resident. He subsequently pursued advanced training in Allergy and Immunology at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center. His research has addressed a range of topics in allergy, immunology, and military medicine, including approaches to improving the evaluation and removal of inaccurate drug allergy labels and the diagnosis and management of immune disorders.

Dr. Day brings a particularly valuable military health perspective to the study of alpha-gal syndrome (AGS). Through Naval Medical Center Portsmouth and collaborations across the Military Health System, his work helps advance opportunities to better understand AGS among active-duty service members and other military-connected populations, including how clinical data and research infrastructure can be leveraged to improve understanding of disease risk, diagnosis, and outcomes.



Loren Erickson, PhD
University of Virginia

Dr. Erickson is an Associate Professor in the Department of Microbiology, Immunology, and Cancer Biology and a resident member of the Beirne B. Carter Center for Immunology Research at the University of Virginia School of Medicine. His research focuses on the adaptive immune mechanisms that drive pathogenic antibody development, with a primary emphasis on alpha-gal syndrome (AGS).

Integrating human subject studies with translational mouse models, Dr. Erickson's laboratory investigates the immune pathways that trigger IgE sensitization to alpha-gal following tick exposure. His work seeks to understand how tick bites alter the immune response, how alpha-gal-specific IgE develops and persists, and which immune cells and pathways may represent future targets for preventing or treating AGS.

Dr. Erickson's broader research program examines the development and function of memory B cells and antibody-producing plasma cells, including their roles in pathogenic IgG responses in autoimmune disease. This expertise in B-cell biology and antibody responses provides an important foundation for addressing fundamental questions about the initiation and persistence of allergic sensitization in AGS.

Dr. Erickson earned his BS in Biology with honors from Seattle Pacific University and his PhD in Immunology from the University of Iowa. He completed his postdoctoral training in immunology at Dartmouth Medical School.



Jonathan Friedlander, PhD, MBA
Atanis Biotech

Dr. Friedlander is Chief Business Officer at Atanis Biotech, where he leads business development, partnering, and commercial strategy. Atanis is developing functional allergy diagnostics designed to measure how a patient's immune system responds to an allergen, rather than relying solely on the detection of sensitization.

A key focus of the company's work is FAST-PASE, a serum-based mast cell activation test built on a proprietary mast cell line. The platform is being developed to help distinguish clinical allergy from sensitization and potentially reduce reliance on oral food challenges. This distinction is particularly relevant to alpha-gal syndrome (AGS), where sensitization to alpha-gal can occur without clinical disease and alpha-gal-specific IgE levels alone do not reliably predict whether or how an individual will react. By evaluating functional mast cell activation in response to alpha-gal, this approach may provide additional information to help distinguish sensitization from clinically meaningful allergy.

Dr. Friedlander brings more than a decade of experience spanning biotechnology company creation, venture investing, corporate development, and strategy. Prior to joining Atanis, he served as Senior Director of Corporate Development and Strategy at Agenus and as a Principal at Digitalis Ventures, where he led investments and served on the boards of portfolio companies.

Dr. Friedlander earned his PhD in Cellular and Developmental Biology from the University of Cambridge and his MBA from Harvard Business School. His experience at the intersection of science, diagnostics, biotechnology, and commercialization provides a translational perspective as AGS stakeholders consider what evidence will be needed to develop, validate, and ultimately implement improved diagnostic tools.



Lee Gimpel, BS **Better Meetings**

Mr. Gimpel is the founder of Better Meetings, a Washington, DC-based meeting design, facilitation, and training firm. A professional facilitator and event strategist, he specializes in meeting design, group facilitation, and audience engagement, helping organizations make their meetings, retreats, and conferences more effective, participatory, and human-centered.

Mr. Gimpel has designed and facilitated convenings for nonprofit organizations, government agencies, associations, and corporations, with clients including the World Bank, Sodexo, and Conservation International. He produced the Conference Organizers Summit and has long led a global community of practice for innovative meeting facilitators. He is a frequent speaker on meeting design and facilitation and has been featured or quoted in outlets including USA Today, The Guardian, Association Conventions & Facilities, and Forbes, where he has served as an expert contributor.

Earlier in his career, Mr. Gimpel directed training and product development at LifeWise Strategies, worked in Capital One's training division, and served as a software product manager. He currently serves on the board of the Association of Meeting Professionals.

For the AGS National Strategy Convening, Mr. Gimpel is designing and facilitating a collaborative process through which participants across disciplines and sectors can share expertise, identify common priorities, build consensus, and translate discussion into actionable next steps.



Holly Gaff, PhD **Old Dominion University**

Dr. Gaff is Professor and Chair of the Department of Biological Sciences at Old Dominion University (ODU) in Norfolk, Virginia. A mathematical ecologist, she leads the ODU Tick Research Team, which combines field surveillance, ecological research, and mathematical modeling to better understand ticks and tick-borne disease.

Dr. Gaff's research examines where ticks are found, how their populations change over time, and how ecological and environmental conditions influence human exposure. Her team has conducted long-term active tick surveillance in Virginia, using field observations together with quantitative models to characterize tick populations, anticipate where tick encounters may occur, and inform surveillance and prevention efforts.

Dr. Gaff also studies approaches to tick control, including the development and evaluation of TickBot, a robotic system designed to reduce tick populations through targeted treatment of residential and other environments. By combining surveillance data, field-based interventions, and mathematical modeling, her research helps clarify which prevention strategies can be tested, what evidence is needed to evaluate their effectiveness, and what information public health partners need to act.

Her expertise in tick ecology, surveillance, modeling, and prevention is particularly relevant to alpha-gal syndrome (AGS), where reducing bites from the Lone Star tick is central to preventing sensitization and subsequent exposures. Her work provides an important framework for considering how AGS prevention might move beyond individual tick avoidance toward evidence-based approaches that reduce human-tick encounters at the community level.

Dr. Gaff earned her BS in Mathematics and Environmental Science from Taylor University and her PhD in Mathematics, with a concentration in mathematical ecology, from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.



Elizabeth Gleim, PhD
Hollins University

Dr. Gleim is an Associate Professor of Biology and Environmental Science at Hollins University in Roanoke, Virginia, where she maintains an active research program and teaches courses including Ecology, Conservation Biology, One Health, and Wildlife Disease. A wildlife disease ecologist, Dr. Gleim uses both field- and laboratory-based approaches to study ticks and tick-borne disease, with primary research interests in tick control methods and Lyme disease ecology.

Dr. Gleim's research examines how ecological and environmental factors influence tick populations, tick-borne pathogens, and human exposure. Her work has explored tick distribution and seasonality, wildlife and habitat interactions, and the effects of land-management practices on tick abundance. She has particular expertise in prescribed fire as a potential tick-control strategy and has conducted long-term field research examining how repeated prescribed burns affect ticks and tick-borne disease risk.

Her research encompasses multiple tick species, including the Lone Star tick (*Amblyomma americanum*), the species most closely associated with alpha-gal syndrome (AGS) in the United States. By examining how land management, wildlife, habitat, and environmental conditions shape tick populations, Dr. Gleim's work provides an important ecological perspective on strategies for reducing human-tick encounters. Her One Health approach—recognizing the interconnected health of people, animals, and the environment—is particularly relevant as AGS stakeholders consider prevention strategies that extend beyond individual tick avoidance.

Dr. Gleim earned her BA in Biology from Hollins University and worked at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for two years before pursuing her doctorate in Wildlife Ecology and Management, with a focus on wildlife disease ecology, from the University of Georgia's Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources.



Lea Hamner, MPH
Martha's Vineyard Tick Program

Ms. Hamner is a public health epidemiologist specializing in tick-borne diseases, alpha-gal syndrome (AGS), and community-based public health systems. She serves as an epidemiologist for the Martha's Vineyard Tick Program, where she works closely with healthcare providers, researchers, public health agencies, and community partners to strengthen surveillance, prevention, and public education related to tick-associated diseases.

Ms. Hamner is recognized nationally for her leadership in advancing public health approaches to alpha-gal syndrome. She has been instrumental in advocating for AGS surveillance and reportable disease status in Massachusetts and has contributed to state and national efforts to improve disease monitoring, healthcare provider education, and public awareness. Her work emphasizes translating epidemiologic data into practical public health action through interdisciplinary collaboration and a One Health framework that integrates human, animal, and environmental health.

In addition to serving on the FARE Alpha-gal Syndrome Advisory Council, Ms. Hamner serves on the Steering Committee of the Alpha-gal Coalition Expert Advisory Council and on the Board of Directors of the Alpha-Gal Alliance. Her expertise in surveillance, public health policy, and community engagement provides a critical perspective for advancing national strategies to improve recognition, prevention, and management of alpha-gal syndrome.



Jonathan Hemler, MD
University of Virginia

Dr. Hemler is a pediatric allergist and Associate Professor of Pediatrics at the University of Virginia, where he serves as Director of the Division of Pediatric Allergy, Immunology & Rheumatology and Director of the Pediatric Food Allergy Program. He is a nationally recognized clinician-scientist whose work focuses on improving the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of food allergy in children.

Dr. Hemler leads a robust clinical research program as Principal Investigator for the University of Virginia's FARE Clinical Network site and oversees multiple clinical trials evaluating novel immunotherapies and emerging approaches to food allergy treatment. His research spans food allergy genetics, early-life immunotherapy, and mechanisms of allergic disease, with numerous peer-reviewed publications advancing the understanding of pediatric food allergy. He has received multiple honors recognizing his contributions to clinical care, research, and medical education.

In addition to his broader food allergy research, Dr. Hemler has contributed to advancing knowledge of alpha-gal syndrome (AGS), including investigations into the unique clinical features and triggers associated with mammalian meat allergy. His combined expertise in pediatric allergy, clinical trials, and translational research provides valuable insight into improving diagnosis, treatment, and patient outcomes for individuals living with AGS.



Onyinye "Onyi" Iweala, MD, PhD
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Dr. Iweala is an allergist and immunologist and Associate Professor in the Department of Medicine, Division of Rheumatology, Allergy, and Immunology at the University of North Carolina (UNC) at Chapel Hill. She is Director of the UNC Allergy Mast Cell Disorders Program and a member of the UNC Food Allergy Initiative, UNC Children's Research Institute, and UNC Thurston Arthritis Research Center.

A physician-scientist, Dr. Iweala seeks to understand the mechanisms that drive mast cell activation and anaphylaxis, with the ultimate goal of improving diagnostic and treatment options for patients with mast cell activation disorders, food allergies, and other mast cell-driven conditions. Her federally funded research program has a particular focus on alpha-gal syndrome (AGS), investigating the roles of T cells and mast cell activation in the immune response to alpha-gal.

Dr. Iweala's research examines how tick exposure can initiate immune pathways that lead to IgE sensitization to alpha-gal and subsequent allergic reactions. By integrating mechanistic research with the care of patients with allergic and mast cell disorders, her work helps address fundamental questions about why AGS develops, what drives anaphylaxis and other clinical manifestations, and which immune pathways might ultimately offer opportunities for improved diagnosis and treatment.

Dr. Iweala earned her PhD in Experimental Pathology from Harvard University and her medical degree from Harvard Medical School. She completed her residency in Internal Medicine at Massachusetts General Hospital and clinical and research fellowships in Allergy and Immunology at UNC-Chapel Hill. She was also a recipient of a 2020 American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology (AAAAI) Foundation Faculty Development Award.



Maya Jerath, MD, PhD
Washington University in St. Louis

Dr. Jerath is Professor of Medicine and Associate Chief of Clinical Operations in the Division of Allergy and Immunology at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis. A physician-scientist with multidisciplinary training in engineering, computer science, and medicine, she specializes in the diagnosis and management of complex allergic and immunologic diseases.

Dr. Jerath's clinical and research programs focus on food allergy, hypersensitivity reactions, and alpha-gal syndrome (AGS). She cares for one of the nation's largest cohorts of well-characterized patients with AGS, providing the foundation for clinical and translational research aimed at improving diagnosis, understanding disease mechanisms, and advancing patient care. She currently serves as Chair of the Alpha-gal Workgroup within the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology (AAAAI) Adverse Reactions to Foods Committee and leads multiple clinical research initiatives involving allergic diseases and hypersensitivity disorders.

Beyond her research, Dr. Jerath is an accomplished clinical leader and educator, serving as Vice Chair for Ambulatory Clinical Operations at Washington University while mentoring fellows and junior faculty. Her expertise in clinical care, research, and national guideline development provides an important perspective for advancing evidence-based approaches to alpha-gal syndrome.



Peggy Kendall, MD
Washington University in St. Louis

Dr. Kendall is the Virginia Minnich Distinguished Professor of Medicine and Chief of the Division of Allergy and Immunology at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis. A physician-scientist and allergist-immunologist, Dr. Kendall studies how B cells and antibodies contribute to allergic and autoimmune diseases, including alpha-gal syndrome (AGS).

Dr. Kendall's laboratory investigates how harmful antibody responses arise and persist and explores strategies for selectively targeting disease-causing B cells while preserving the immune cells needed to protect against infection. Her research spans fundamental B-cell biology and translational immunology, with the goal of identifying immune pathways that can be leveraged to develop more precise approaches to treating allergic and autoimmune disease.

In AGS, this expertise provides an important framework for investigating why some individuals develop clinically significant allergy following tick exposure, how alpha-gal-specific antibody responses are established and maintained, and which immune pathways might represent potential treatment targets. Her work helps connect fundamental questions about B-cell and antibody biology with the longer-term goal of developing targeted therapies for AGS.

Dr. Kendall earned her undergraduate degree from the University of Texas at Austin and her medical degree from the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School. She completed a combined residency in Internal Medicine and Pediatrics and a fellowship in Allergy and Immunology at Vanderbilt University. In addition to her research and clinical leadership, she mentors trainees pursuing careers in translational immunology.



Joshua Kennedy, MD
University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences

Dr. Kennedy is Professor of Pediatrics and Internal Medicine, Associate Vice Chair for Basic and Translational Research at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, and a physician-scientist at Arkansas Children's Research Institute. Board certified in Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, and Allergy and Immunology, he has dedicated his career to advancing research in food allergy and allergic diseases.

Dr. Kennedy has developed a nationally recognized research program focused on alpha-gal syndrome (AGS), particularly in pediatric populations. He co-authored one of the landmark publications describing the clinical presentation of AGS in children, helping define the unique features of delayed allergic reactions to mammalian meat. His subsequent research has examined the epidemiology, regional disease burden, and clinical implications of AGS in Arkansas, including investigations of allergic reactions to snake antivenoms in an alpha-gal endemic region. His work has substantially improved recognition and clinical management of AGS among pediatric providers and allergy specialists.

In addition to his work in AGS, Dr. Kennedy leads NIH-funded research investigating asthma, respiratory viral infections, and allergic inflammation in children. Through his clinical research, mentorship, and national collaborations, he continues to advance understanding of allergic diseases while helping shape the future of pediatric food allergy research.



Stefano Luccioli, MD
U.S. Food and Drug Administration

Dr. Luccioli is Senior Physician and Allergen Coordinator in the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's Human Foods Program. An allergist and internist by training, Dr. Luccioli provides scientific and clinical expertise on food allergen issues, including identifying allergen hazards in the food supply, assessing the risks associated with exposure, and communicating those risks to consumers.

Dr. Luccioli's work addresses food allergen labeling, unintended allergen exposure, allergen thresholds, and the evidence needed to inform food safety and regulatory decisions. His research also considers how people with food allergies interpret ingredient lists and precautionary statements when making everyday choices and how risk information can be communicated in ways that are both scientifically grounded and meaningful to consumers.

This expertise is particularly relevant to alpha-gal syndrome (AGS), where mammalian-derived ingredients may occur in a variety of foods and questions remain about which ingredients and levels of exposure pose clinically meaningful risks. Dr. Luccioli brings a regulatory and clinical perspective to discussions about what is known about alpha-gal exposure, what food labels currently communicate, how mammalian-derived ingredients can be identified and disclosed, and where additional evidence or clearer information may be needed to support people living with AGS.

Dr. Luccioli completed his medical degree and residency training in Internal Medicine at Georgetown University and his fellowship in Allergy and Immunology at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases at the National Institutes of Health. He also serves on the clinical and teaching faculty at MedStar Georgetown University Hospital.



Sarah McGill, MD, MSc
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Dr. McGill is Professor of Medicine in the Division of Gastroenterology and Hepatology at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. A board-certified gastroenterologist, she specializes in the care of patients with gastrointestinal disorders and has become a leading authority on the gastrointestinal manifestations of alpha-gal syndrome (AGS).

Dr. McGill's research has significantly expanded understanding of AGS by demonstrating that recurrent gastrointestinal symptoms may represent a primary clinical presentation of the disease. She published the first case series describing this presentation and has since collaborated with allergists, gastroenterologists, patient advocates, and biomedical researchers to better characterize the gastrointestinal spectrum of AGS. Her work has helped improve recognition of this often-underdiagnosed presentation and has influenced clinical evaluation of patients with unexplained gastrointestinal symptoms.

In addition to her research, Dr. McGill maintains an active clinical practice caring for patients with AGS and other complex gastrointestinal disorders. Her expertise at the intersection of allergy and gastroenterology provides an important multidisciplinary perspective on improving diagnosis, clinical management, and quality of life for individuals living with alpha-gal syndrome.



Melissa Nolan, PhD, MPH
University of South Carolina

Dr. Nolan is an Associate Professor in the Arnold School of Public Health at the University of South Carolina and a research scientist with Prisma Health. An epidemiologist with expertise in vector-borne and emerging infectious diseases, her research integrates field surveillance, molecular diagnostics, and data science to better understand disease transmission and improve public health response.

Dr. Nolan has established a nationally recognized research program focused on ticks, tick-borne pathogens, and alpha-gal syndrome (AGS). Her work combines epidemiology, laboratory science, and geospatial analysis to improve surveillance, advance diagnostic approaches, and characterize the public health burden of emerging tick-associated diseases. She has led and contributed to numerous federally funded studies investigating vector ecology, pathogen transmission, and health disparities associated with tick-borne illnesses.

In addition to her research, Dr. Nolan is an award-winning educator and mentor who actively contributes to national scientific initiatives focused on infectious diseases and public health preparedness. Her expertise in surveillance, diagnostics, and translational epidemiology provides an important population health perspective for advancing research and public health strategies related to alpha-gal syndrome.



Yoonseong Park, PhD
Kansas State University

Dr. Park is Professor of Entomology at Kansas State University and an internationally recognized expert in tick biology and vector physiology. His research focuses on the molecular and physiological mechanisms underlying tick-host interactions, with particular emphasis on factors that contribute to the development of alpha-gal syndrome (AGS).

Dr. Park's laboratory has made important contributions to understanding the biological mechanisms of alpha-gal sensitization. His research investigates tick salivary gland physiology, tick-derived alpha-gal sensitizers, and host genetic susceptibility factors that influence the development of AGS. His team has demonstrated significant variation in alpha-gal content among Lone Star ticks and has identified factors that may influence sensitization following tick feeding. These discoveries have advanced understanding of the biological processes that contribute to AGS and continue to inform future diagnostic and prevention strategies.

In addition to his laboratory research, Dr. Park collaborates with regional AGS task forces and public health partners to translate scientific discoveries into practical strategies that improve patient safety and quality of life. His expertise in vector biology and disease mechanisms provides a critical scientific perspective for advancing research into the causes and prevention of alpha-gal syndrome.



Thomas Platts-Mills, MD
University of Virginia

Dr. Platts-Mills is Professor Emeritus of Medicine and Microbiology at the University of Virginia School of Medicine and a pioneering physician-scientist in allergy and immunology. Working with colleagues, Dr. Platts-Mills helped identify the connection between tick bites, IgE antibodies to alpha-gal, and delayed allergic reactions to mammalian meat—discoveries that established the scientific foundation for understanding and diagnosing alpha-gal syndrome (AGS).

Dr. Platts-Mills and his colleagues first identified IgE antibodies to alpha-gal while investigating severe allergic reactions to the cancer drug cetuximab. They subsequently connected alpha-gal sensitization with delayed reactions to mammalian meat and demonstrated the association between Lone Star tick bites and the development of alpha-gal-specific IgE in the United States. His work on AGS illustrates how observations from patients, laboratory assays, and investigation of environmental exposures can come together to explain an unexpected pattern of allergic disease.

His research has continued to examine alpha-gal sensitization, its clinical consequences, and why some sensitized individuals develop symptoms while others do not. His foundational discoveries provide an important scientific framework for identifying the next unanswered questions in AGS, from the mechanisms that drive sensitization and clinical disease to opportunities for improved diagnosis, prevention, and treatment.

Over a career spanning more than five decades, Dr. Platts-Mills has also made influential contributions to the understanding of IgE-mediated disease, environmental allergens, asthma, and anaphylaxis, including seminal work establishing the importance of dust mite exposure in allergic disease and asthma.

Dr. Platts-Mills studied at Balliol College, Oxford, received his medical training at St. Thomas' Hospital Medical School in London, and earned his PhD from the University of London. He completed fellowship

Continued

training in Allergy and Immunology at Johns Hopkins University and previously served as Chief of UVA's Division of Allergy and Clinical Immunology and as President of the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 2010.



Sung Poblete, PhD, RN
FARE (Food Allergy Research & Education)

Dr. Poblete is the CEO of FARE (Food Allergy Research & Education). She joined the organization in May 2022 from Stand Up To Cancer (SU2C) where she had served as Chief Executive Officer since 2011. Dr. Poblete has an extensive and varied background that spans nursing, academia, and executive leadership. She received her Bachelor of Science and Master of Science degrees, as well as her PhD in nursing, from Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey. She began her teaching career at Rutgers over

30 years ago and continues to serve as a visiting associate professor at its School of Nursing. In 2016, Dr. Poblete was inducted into Rutgers Hall of Distinguished Alumni, joining a select group of more than 250 honorees since the university's founding in 1766 who have devoted time and energy to the greater good of society.

Early in her career, Dr. Poblete held executive positions with a focus on patient outcomes and disease management. Notably, as vice president of clinical operations for a subsidiary of Fresenius Medical Care North America, she developed and operated national chronic kidney disease management programs. As executive director of the Oxford Health Plans Foundation, she facilitated grants that furthered research and programs aimed at improving health care delivery.

The recipient of numerous high-level research funding grants from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Institutes of Health, National Science Foundation, and private foundations, Dr. Poblete also serves on several boards, including the Scientific Board of the Osteosarcoma Institute and the board of directors of Apricity Health, UbiVac, and Neurofinity.



Eleanor Saunders, MD, MPH
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

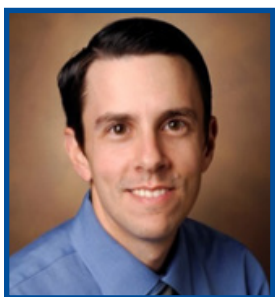
Dr. Saunders is a Clinical Assistant Professor of Medicine at the University of North Carolina (UNC) School of Medicine. Board certified in Internal Medicine and Infectious Diseases, she practices both Hospital Medicine and Infectious Diseases and conducts research focused on the epidemiology and public health implications of alpha-gal syndrome (AGS).

Working with Dr. Scott Commins and colleagues at UNC, Dr. Saunders studies fundamental epidemiologic questions surrounding AGS, including who is affected, the natural history of the allergy, and the clinical significance of alpha-gal sensitization. Her work helps address an important challenge in understanding the true burden of AGS: sensitization to alpha-gal does not necessarily indicate clinical disease, making it essential to better define which populations develop symptoms and how the condition changes over time.

From 2023 to 2025, Dr. Saunders served as an ORISE Fellow in the Rickettsial Zoonoses Branch at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), where her work focused on AGS, including healthcare provider education and its broader public health implications. This experience brings a valuable perspective to questions about disease recognition, surveillance, epidemiology, and the evidence needed to characterize AGS as an emerging public health concern.



Dr. Saunders earned both her MD and MPH from the University of North Carolina, receiving her public health training through the UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health. She completed her residency in Internal Medicine at Bellevue Hospital/NYU Langone Health and fellowship training in Infectious Diseases at UNC.



Scott Smith, MD, PhD
University of Virginia

Dr. Smith is Associate Professor of Medicine in the Division of Allergy and Immunology at the University of Virginia, where he leads a physician-scientist research program focused on human antibody responses in allergy and infectious diseases. His work bridges basic immunology and translational medicine to improve understanding of allergic disease mechanisms and accelerate the development of novel diagnostics and therapeutics.

Dr. Smith is internationally recognized for pioneering technologies that enable the isolation and characterization of naturally occurring human monoclonal antibodies. His laboratory has developed one of the world's largest collections of allergen-specific human IgE monoclonal antibodies, creating powerful tools for investigating the immune mechanisms underlying food allergy, parasitic diseases, and allergic inflammation. His work has expanded opportunities to study human IgE responses with a level of precision that was previously unattainable.

Through his research, Dr. Smith has contributed to advancing the understanding of alpha-gal syndrome (AGS), including investigations of alpha-gal-specific IgE responses and their role in allergic disease. His expertise in antibody biology, immunology, and translational research provides valuable insight into the mechanisms of sensitization and supports the development of next-generation diagnostics and therapeutic strategies for AGS.



Cosby Stone Jr., MD, MPH
Vanderbilt University

Dr. Stone is Assistant Professor of Medicine in the Division of Allergy, Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine at Vanderbilt University Medical Center. He is a physician-scientist specializing in drug allergy, immediate hypersensitivity reactions, and alpha-gal syndrome (AGS), with a research program dedicated to improving the diagnosis and management of complex allergic diseases.

Dr. Stone's research investigates allergic reactions to medications, biologic therapies, food allergens, and inactive pharmaceutical ingredients, with particular emphasis on alpha-gal allergy and medication-associated hypersensitivity. Supported by funding from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, and the Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center, his work seeks to improve diagnostic accuracy and identify safer treatment approaches for patients at risk of severe allergic reactions.

In addition to his research, Dr. Stone provides specialized clinical care for patients with complex allergic disorders and contributes to national efforts to improve understanding of medication allergies and alpha-gal syndrome. His expertise at the intersection of food allergy, drug hypersensitivity, and clinical immunology offers an important perspective for advancing patient-centered care and evidence-based management of AGS.



Sam Telford III, ScD **Tufts University**

Dr. Telford is Professor in the Department of Infectious Disease and Global Health at Tufts University's Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine. An epidemiologist and expert in vector-borne disease, Dr. Telford has studied ticks for more than three decades, with research spanning tick biology, wildlife hosts, disease ecology, and public health interventions.

Dr. Telford's research examines the ecological conditions that shape tick populations and human exposure to tick-borne threats. His work has contributed to understanding the ecology and transmission of Lyme disease, babesiosis, ehrlichiosis, and other tick-associated diseases, as well as the development and evaluation of strategies to reduce human risk. He has also studied the geographic expansion and ecology of the Lone Star tick (*Amblyomma americanum*), the species most closely associated with alpha-gal syndrome (AGS) in the United States.

Dr. Telford currently mentors research on AGS at Tufts, bringing decades of field ecology and epidemiology experience to emerging questions about the condition. His work helps connect questions about ticks, wildlife hosts, habitats, and changing tick distributions with practical strategies for reducing human-tick encounters. This perspective is particularly relevant as AGS stakeholders consider what evidence is needed to move prevention beyond individual tick avoidance toward effective community- and population-level interventions.

Over his career, Dr. Telford has contributed to research on approaches to controlling tick populations and tick-transmitted disease, including the role of wildlife management and other environmental interventions. He earned his BA from Johns Hopkins University, his MS from the Harvard School of Public Health, and his Doctor of Science (ScD) from the Harvard School of Public Health.



Jeffrey Wilson, MD, PhD **University of Virginia**

Dr. Wilson is Associate Professor of Medicine in the Division of Allergy and Immunology at the University of Virginia and a nationally recognized clinician-scientist specializing in alpha-gal syndrome (AGS) and food allergy. His research integrates clinical investigation with laboratory science to better understand the epidemiology, immunology, and long-term consequences of allergic diseases.

Dr. Wilson has played a leading role in defining the natural history and regional epidemiology of AGS through Department of Defense and National Institutes of Health-supported research. His investigations have examined risk factors for alpha-gal sensitization, patterns of disease development following tick exposure, and the relationship between alpha-gal-specific IgE and cardiovascular disease. He has also contributed to important studies utilizing the Department of Defense Serum Repository and large population cohorts to advance understanding of AGS and its broader health implications.

Through his collaborative research and clinical leadership, Dr. Wilson continues to shape scientific understanding of alpha-gal syndrome and its impact on patients. His expertise in translational allergy research, epidemiology, and clinical care provides an important perspective for advancing research priorities, improving patient outcomes, and informing future national strategies for AGS.



Notes

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FARE (Food Allergy Research & Education) is the leading nonprofit organization working on behalf of more than 33 million people in the U.S. living with food allergy, a serious disease of the immune system that can cause anaphylaxis, a potentially life-threatening allergic reaction. FARE works to advance evidence-based prevention as a public health priority, expand options for the diagnosis, management and treatment of food allergy, and accelerate research toward a cure. Through research, education, advocacy and collaboration, FARE is driving progress to improve the health and quality of life for people managing food allergy.

To learn more, visit **FoodAllergy.org**.



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