

Colorado Pain Society 6th Annual Chronic Pain Conference 2023

MEET THE SPEAKERS



KEYNOTE SPEAKER Yoni K. Ashar, PhD is an assistant professor at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus. He completed his doctorate in clinical psychology and neuroscience at the University of Colorado Boulder and an NIH-funded postdoctoral fellowship at Weill Cornell Medicine. Yoni's research uses functional MRI brain imaging, natural language processing, and other clinical and computational tools to understand how mind and brain processes influence health, especially chronic pain. A main research focus is investigating a new class of psychological and neuroscience-based treatments aiming for recovery from chronic pain.



J. Scott Bainbridge, MD founded The Denver Spine & Pain Institute (DenverPainInstitute.com), formerly Denver Back Pain Specialists, in 2012. His practice reflects his belief that the best pain care includes taking the time to listen to the needs of his patients, making the correct diagnosis, and choosing the right treatment options based on mutual physician-patient decision making. Treatment may include physical therapy, diet and supplement recommendations, massage, home symptom management and exercise consulting, pain psychology, medication management, or the use of advanced interventional procedures. He is active in spine and pain research and can offer inclusion in these research trials to those interested patients who may qualify.

Dr. Bainbridge received his medical degree from Northeastern Ohio Universities College of Medicine, graduating as an officer of the Alpha Omega Alpha Honors Medical Society. He completed his residency in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center, where he served as Co-Chief Resident. Dr. Bainbridge is double board-certified through the American Board of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (1992) and American Board of Pain Medicine (2010). He is a senior spinal injection procedure instructor and has served on the Board of Directors as the Research Committee Chair and Treasurer for the International Pain & Spine Intervention Society. He has been a board examiner for the American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation. Dr. Bainbridge is actively involved in carrying out clinical research, sits on the BOD of the Colorado Pain Society and is a member of the Colorado Medical Society Committee on Prescription Drug Abuse. He actively advocates for pain patients and advances educational opportunities for pain medicine providers of all specialties.

Dr. Bainbridge is thankful to have worked with, and learned from, many talented colleagues and staff over his career, including the good fortune of working with the “Founding Fathers” and other incredible mentors at the Spine Intervention Society. He identifies with the quote of Hippocrates: “Wherever the art of medicine is loved, there also is love of humanity.” Scott enjoys time with his family, biking, Tai Chi, and the simple joys of life.



Joshua Blum, MD is a board-certified internist and addiction medicine physician at Denver Health and Hospital Authority in Denver, CO, where he serves as the director of outpatient substance use disorder treatment. As an institutional quality officer, he leads initiatives on pain and opioid management and chairs Denver Health's pharmacy and therapeutics committee. He is the immediate past president of the Colorado chapter the American Society of Addiction Medicine, and co-chair of the Provider Education Workgroup at the Colorado Consortium for Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention. He also serves on the boards of the Colorado Pain Society and the Harm Reduction Action Center. Dr. Blum attended Dartmouth College and the University of Southern California School of Medicine before completing his medicine residency at the University of Colorado.



Jonathan Clapp, MD is Triple Board Certified: Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation, Addiction Medicine & Pain Medicine. Dr. Clapp grew up in a coastal town in Massachusetts and received his medical degree from Rosalind Franklin University in Illinois. He completed his residency in Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation and was chief resident at Rush University Medical Center in Chicago. He is triple board certified in PM&R, Pain Medicine and Addiction Medicine and has been practicing pain medicine in the Denver area since 2009. He is currently Past-President of the Colorado Pain Society, Chairman of the Colorado Medical Society's Substance Use Disorder Committee and is a member of the Colorado Consortium for Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention's Provider Education subcommittee. Dr. Clapp is proud to have helped influence recent legislation regarding opioids and pain in Colorado by working closely with the Colorado Medical Society and state legislators at the Capitol. His efforts helped secure national recognition from the American

Medical Association and a partnership with their lobbying group, Manatt Health, to further Colorado Medical Society's efforts for rational pain & opioid legislation. He has published numerous articles about the opioid crisis and evidence-based pain medicine and co-authored the Colorado Pain Society's "Position on Opioids". Most recently, he contributed to the language and passage of Colorado Law, HB21-1276: "Prevention of Substance Use Disorder" to address the lack of commercial insurance coverage for safer and non-opioid pain treatments for patients struggling with pain. He has also shown his dedication to teaching and reversing the opioid crisis by travelling to rural providers in Colorado to teach about non-opioid pain management through the Colorado Consortium for Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention.

Dr. Clapp's primary clinical focus is on safe and evidence-based inpatient care for patients struggling with addiction and pain. He developed an educational program for nurses at Porter Adventist Hospital that, after 1 year, resulted in their Pain HCAHPS going from the 52nd to the 86th national percentile and inpatient opioid overdoses dropping from 15 to 8 hospital-wide and zero overdose events in the following 12 months on the units where his 1-hour lecture was mandatory for all nurses. Dr. Clapp enjoys and embraces his role as a public servant and is passionate about improving the lives of people that struggle with pain and addiction through education, advocacy as well as evidence-based, safer and more effective treatments.

He is happily married to his wife, Brandy and has two young children, Ben and Saige, with whom he enjoys all the fulfillment and fun they provide!



Kenneth Finn, MD has been practicing Pain Medicine in Colorado Springs since 1994. He is Board Certified in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (1995), Pain Medicine (1998), and Pain Management (2000). He is President (2022) of the American Board of Pain Medicine and has served on their Exam Council for 20 years. He served on the Colorado Governor's Task Force on Amendment 64, which legalized marijuana for recreational use, Consumer Safety and Social Issues Work Group (2012) and serve 4 years on Colorado's Medical Marijuana Scientific Advisory Council (2014-18). He was an invited speaker to the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs in Vienna, March 2023. He has testified to the Canadian Senate on their marijuana bill (2018) as well as New York General Assembly, and

speaks internationally on the health impacts of marijuana, including being an invited speaker to the Mayo Clinic, Jacksonville, the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, UCLA VA Medical Center, and the Texas Medical Society, among many others. He is editor of [Cannabis in Medicine: An Evidence-Based Approach](#) (2020) and currently the Co-Vice President (2021) of the International Academy on the Science and Impacts of Cannabis (<https://iasic1.org>).



Rachael Rzasa Lynn, MD is an Associate Professor in the University of Colorado Department of Anesthesiology, where she practices pain medicine at University of Colorado Hospital. A rare Colorado native, she acquired her medical education and training through the University of Colorado School of Medicine, including fellowship training in Pain Medicine. Her research interests include opioid pharmacology and the use of cannabis products for the treatment of chronic pain, and she has been awarded grant funding from the Colorado Department of Public Health and the Environment to conduct a randomized controlled trial evaluating the impact of

long-term cannabis use on pain and opioid use in patients taking opioids for chronic pain. In her free time, she can be found with her husband and three children enjoying the wonderful outdoor opportunities that Colorado has to offer.



Eric Shoemaker, DO is board certified in physical medicine and rehabilitation, sports medicine, and pain medicine. After graduating medical school with highest honors where he received the Welch scholars grant and was on the chancellor's list or the dean's list each academic semester, he was inducted into Psi Sigma Alpha national honor society. He placed 96th on national boards and went on to complete residency at the University of Colorado followed by fellowship in interventional spine and sports medicine at Washington University in St. Louis. Dr. Shoemaker has a special interest in the biomechanical factors that drive common pain and musculoskeletal presentations. He is a Colorado native and loves spending time with his wife and two girls. He enjoys Krav Maga, wood working, and spending time outdoors.



Robert J. Valuck, PhD, RPh, FNAP is a Professor in the Departments of Clinical Pharmacy, Epidemiology, and Family Medicine at the University of Colorado (CU) Schools of Pharmacy, Public Health, and Medicine at the Anschutz Medical Campus in Aurora. Dr. Valuck is also the Director of the Center for Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention at CU, which houses the state's opioid task force (the Colorado Consortium for Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention). The Consortium has evolved over the past 10 years to include a dozen work groups, with over 750 members across the state, focusing on key areas relating to education, prevention, intervention, treatment, and recovery. The Consortium has gained recognition as a model for the development of collaborative, coordinated responses to the opioid overdose epidemic in the United States.



Brent Van Dorsten, PhD is a licensed clinical psychologist who specializes in health and pain psychology and behavioral medicine assessment and treatment at the Colorado Center for Behavioral Medicine. At the CCBM, Dr. Van Dorsten provides cognitive-behavioral assessments and treatments to a diverse patient population referred by physician specialists in Anesthesiology Pain Medicine, Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Orthopedic Spine, Primary Care, Surgery, Occupational Medicine, and Neurology, among others. This clinical service includes assessment, psychological and neuropsychological testing, and CBT treatment for pain and functional limitations, physical injury and delayed recovery in worker's compensation, assisting physicians in the management of patients on long-term opioids, mild traumatic brain injury and concussion, and pre-surgical behavioral assessments for patients considered for spine surgeries and implantable spinal cord stimulation.

Prior to opening the Colorado Center for Behavioral Medicine in 2012, Dr. Van Dorsten was an Associate Professor at the University of Colorado School of Medicine in the Departments of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Orthopedics Spine Center, and Anesthesiology Pain Medicine for over 23 years. He is certified with a variety of national credentialing services including the National Register of Health Service Providers in Psychology and is a Life Fellow of both the Society of Behavioral Medicine and the American College of Forensic Examiners. He currently holds or has recently held Executive Board/committee positions with the American Psychological Association, the Society of Behavioral Medicine, Association of Psychologists in Academic Health Centers, and the American Board of Psychology Specialties. Dr. Van Dorsten is the immediate past president of the Colorado Pain Society. Dr. Van Dorsten was the founder and Director of the Behavioral Medicine Fellowship Program in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation and Anesthesiology Pain and is a former Co-Director of the Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy/Complex Regional Pain Syndrome Program. He is broadly experienced in forensic psychology as it relates to personal injury litigation and delayed recovery and has been admitted in both state and federal courts as an expert witness in pain and rehabilitation psychology, and psychosocial and behavioral factors affecting recovery from personal injury. Dr. Van Dorsten has published numbers of articles and book chapters on pain, diabetes, and traumatic medical injury, and his book *Forensic Psychology: From Classroom to Courtroom* is popular in the forensic psychology and forensic medicine arenas.

Dr. Van Dorsten is an experienced research investigator on several clinical pain investigations and is currently a behavioral investigator on a multi-year, multi-center PQORI grant with Stanford University to investigate the efficacy of cognitive-behavioral treatment in improving function of patients with pain who voluntarily wish to decrease or discontinue intake of opioid pain medications. Previously, Dr. Van Dorsten served as the Chair of the Behavioral Investigator core for a National Institutes of Health multi-year, multi-center investigation involving intensive lifestyle interventions in adults with overweight/obesity, Type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease. Dr. Van Dorsten has presented dozens of national/international presentations regarding the application of behavioral sciences in medicine and rehabilitation, behavioral pain management, patient selection for invasive medical procedures, psychometric testing of medical patients, managing patients on long-term opioid medications, implementing behavioral care in medical services, factors affecting delayed recovery and return to work, traumatic medical injury, chronic illness, and forensic psychology.



Ajay Vellore, MD, MS is a double board-certified anesthesiologist and interventional pain management physician, originally hailing from the Washington D.C. metro area. His areas of interest include advanced interventional spine care as well as neurostimulation for all types of neuropathies and nerve injuries. He also has rich experience with Complex Regional Pain Syndrome (CRPS), having presented on the subject in Grand Rounds during his last year of residency at Mayo Clinic. Dr. Vellore has two main principles when it comes to caring for patients: taking a holistic approach, and also aiming to restore functionality for patients, whether that may be as complex as getting back into elite sports and fitness, or as straightforward as being able to walk longer distances. Either way, he prides himself on first

understanding the needs and goals of his patients, and working to tailor a treatment program in response, as opposed to vice versa. He is very pleased to be afforded the privilege of speaking this weekend in an area of significant interest to him.



David A. Wong, M.D., M.Sc., F.R.C.S.(C) is Past President of the North American Spine Society (NASS). He is an orthopedic spine surgeon with Colorado Spine Partners.

Dr. Wong's orthopedic residency and spine fellowship were at the University of Toronto, Canada. The spine fellowship was with Dr. Ian Macnab, well known for his conceptual thinking and classification of spinal stenosis and spondylolisthesis.

Dr. Wong has had an interest in Spinal Microsurgery and minimally invasive surgery for many years. Dr. John McCulloch, also a Macnab Fellow, and an early pioneer in microsurgery (co-author of the classic textbook *Principles of Spinal Microsurgery*), was a practice partner and mentor. Dr. Wong has served as course director for microsurgical and minimally invasive spine surgery courses for the North American Spine Society (NASS), American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS) and American Association of Neurosurgeons (AANS)

Along with another Macnab Fellow, Dr. Ensor Transfeldt, Dr. Wong published the updated and revised 4th Edition of the classic book of spine pathophysiology and treatment “Macnab’s Backache”.

Dr. Wong is past chairman of the NASS Patient Safety Committee and the AAOS Patient Safety Committee. He represented the AAOS and NASS at the Joint Commission on the Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) Summit on development of the Universal Protocol for avoiding wrong patient, wrong procedure and wrong site surgery. Dr. Wong was one of the United States advisors to the United Nations World Health Organization (WHO) work group for development of the WHO Surgical Patient Safety Checklist.

The National Association of Spine Surgeons is the 501C3 Washington lobbying organization for spine providers (NASS-C3). Dr. Wong has served as the chairman of that organization and continues to serve on the NASS Advocacy Council. The NASS Annual Meeting Symposium “Medicare for All: Could it work in the USA?” presented by Dr. Wong, Dr. John Finkenberg (another NASS President) and Dr. Phil Schneider (NASS Advocacy Council Chairman) was the highest ever rated symposium at a NASS Annual Meeting.

Dr. Wong was the Course Director for the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons course “Options & Opportunities in Consolidating Markets: Orthopedic Mergers & Buyouts”. He is also a member of Health Technology Assessment International, a group of government and private health directors, Health Technology Assessment organizations, health economists and physicians.

Relevant Bibliography

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