



# CLINICAL HIGHLIGHTS

## 16<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CMHC PUSHING BOUNDARIES IN CARDIOMETABOLIC HEALTH: Challenges and Controversies



On October 14-17, 2021, leaders in the cardiometabolic health movement gathered at Gaylord National Resort in National Harbor, MD, for the 16th Annual Cardiometabolic Health Congress. Below are some highlights from each of the four conference days:

### THURSDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2021

#### **A Wolf in Sheep's Clothing: Actionable Cardiometabolic Rare Diseases You Might Miss**

This special one-day preconference explored several rare diseases in the cardiometabolic domain; including lipid, cardiovascular, obesity, and diabetes disorders. These conditions often overlap with common cardiometabolic diseases, making the diagnosis, referral, and treatment difficult. These topics were discussed extensively during the summit, chaired by [Christie M. Ballantyne, MD](#). During these talks, rare lipid disorders such as familial chylomicronemia and familial hypercholesterolemia were discussed by [Rebecca J Brown, MD, MHS](#) and [Robert S. Rosenson, MD](#).

Different rare cardiovascular disorders such as transthyretin amyloid cardiomyopathy (ATTR-CM), Fabry disease, and pulmonary arterial hypertension (PAH) were reviewed by [John L. Jefferies, MD](#), and [Sonja Bartolome MD](#), respectively. Dr. Akinboboye stressed the significance of the timely diagnosis of ATTR-CM; he said, "this is often hidden in plain sight, and you've got to think of it to diagnose it!" Dr. Bartolome highlighted the importance of regular testing for PAH to achieve optimal patient management.

Rare disorders in diabetes were explored by [Kathleen Dungan, MD](#), [Rochelle Naylor, MD](#), [Irl B. Hirsch, MD](#). Dr. Dungan shared her clinical insights regarding latent autoimmune diabetes in adults and said that "management should be guided by c-peptide and glucose control." Dr. Naylor, who provided an overview about maturity-onset diabetes of the young, said "it is about time to employ precision medicine which can help people with diabetes have longer, healthier lives." Each session was followed by a panel discussion, with case presentations from faculty and active audience participation.

Rare obesity disorders were discussed by [Robert H. Eckel, MD](#), [Joan C. Han, MD](#), and [Clair A. Francomano, MD](#). They reviewed screening, diagnosis and treatment of monogenic disorders of obesity, including leptin pathway defects and Alström syndrome.

The primetime symposium, "Prevention and Treatment of Influenza in High-Risk Patients with Cardiometabolic Comorbidities: Interpreting the Evidence to Decrease the Risk of Complications," with [Gregory A. Poland, MD](#), [Ruth M. Carrico, PhD](#), and [Cameron R. Wolfe, MBBS](#), discussed the significance of identifying flu symptoms and rapidly treating it to optimize outcomes in these patients. In addition, advances in antiviral agents, including agents that are efficacious for the treatment of influenza in these high-risk patients have recently become available, and were discussed along with challenging patient cases in this symposium.



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FRIDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2021

### KEYNOTE

The keynote address was delivered by [Sandeep Jauhar, MD](#), a renowned cardiologist and *New York Times* bestselling author. During his talk “The Emotional Heart,” Dr. Jauhar shared his unique perspective on how patients’ emotions and psychological wellbeing can influence heart disease and cardiometabolic risk, how to understand these connections better, and how to account for them when individualizing therapy. This topic is relevant, especially during the current environment where the detrimental health effects of the COVID-19 pandemic are well established, and much of society is experiencing increased stress and emotional burden. Dr. Jauhar explained the significance of empathy and illustrated that treating our hearts optimally requires treating our minds, too.

### SESSION I: OBESITY & LIFESTYLE

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC), more than 39% of adults are either overweight or obese; over 18 million people in the U.S. have severe obesity, which increases the risk for type 2 diabetes, dyslipidemia, cardiovascular disease (CVD), and hypertension. Obesity has become an epidemic, and its prevalence is increasing at an alarming rate not only in the U.S., but worldwide. During this session, chaired by [Robert H. Eckel, MD](#), the faculty took an in-depth look at obesity prevention and management through discussion of comprehensive approaches including nutritional and lifestyle modifications, and obesity pharmacotherapy. [Michele L. Look, MD](#), introduced the term “preobesity” and stressed that it is time to address preobesity as a crucial cardiometabolic risk factor. This was followed with interesting views regarding our various nutritional approaches to improve cardiometabolic health from our reputed faculty [Kim A. Williams, Sr., MD](#), [Stephen R. Devries, MD](#), and [Kevin D. Hall, PhD](#).

The increasing rates of obesity and diabetes across the U.S. are causing more clinicians to encounter patients with both diagnosed and undiagnosed nonalcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD) and nonalcoholic steatohepatitis (NASH). To that end, [Christos S. Mantzoros, MD, DSc, PhD](#), shared his insights regarding challenges and advancement in this field. Then, the following speakers teamed up to emphasize that physical activity is a significant pillar of the foundation of all weight-loss strategies: [James O. Hill, PhD](#), [Katrina L. Piercy, PhD, RD](#), and [Holly R. Wyatt, MD](#). This was followed by a stimulating panel discussion with diverse patient cases and perspectives.

The primetime symposium, “Challenges and Advances in Long-Term Obesity Management: Interpreting and Applying the Evidence to Patient Care” explored the role of motivational interviewing as well as pharmacotherapy to manage long-term obesity. During this symposium, [Harold E. Bays, MD](#), [Karli Burridge, PA-C, MMS](#), and [Louis J. Aronne, MD](#), highlighted the need for treating obesity as a disease, and reviewed the need for behavioral interventions and obesity pharmacotherapy - including latest interventions to achieve a comprehensive management of patients with obesity.

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SATURDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2021

### SESSION II: DYSLIPIDEMIA/ATHEROSCLEROSIS/THROMBOSIS

The evolving agents for dyslipidemia, the role of inflammation in cardiovascular (CV) disease, and CV risk assessment were a significant focus of this session, led by CMHC chair [Christie Ballantyne, MD](#), and [Paul M. Ridker, MD, MPH](#), professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School, discussed the critical role of inflammation in the development, progression, and prognosis of atherosclerosis. Our other esteemed faculty, [Pamela B. Morris, MD](#), explored the management strategies clinicians can undertake for primary and secondary prevention to optimize patient outcomes. She emphasized on the gravity of risk discussion and the active involvement of patients during clinical decision-making.

The next speaker, [Matthew J. Budoff, MD](#), discussed the crucial role of imaging atherosclerosis in adequate diagnosis and optimal treatment of the patients. With the progress in the dyslipidemia treatment regimen, next, our chair Dr. Ballantyne overviewed new and emerging agents for treating dyslipidemia, including recently approved agents and the latest breakthrough therapies he mentioned as “glimpse through the future” involved CRISPER-CAS9 pathways and gene editing. The following compelling presentation by [Karol E. Watson, MD, PhD](#), focused on the role of treating patients with high triglycerides. These talks set the stage and led to the panel discussion, which was joined by [Robert H. Eckel, MD](#), who discussed several challenging cases and generated many questions from the audience.

### SESSION III: DIABETES

In recent years there has been a significant evolution in diabetes treatment, as highlighted by several session talks. Kicking off the session, [Vanita R. Aroda, MD](#), introduced us to the concept of the healthy lifespan and mentioned that “alarming gaps exist in the contemporary use of evidence-based therapies and latest data provide a call to action.” Our next speaker [Grazia Aleppo, MD](#), discussed various controversies about A1C, CGM, and time in range, and how their increased use can optimize treatment and improve the outcomes in patients with type 2 diabetes.

Next, [Rodica Pop-Busui MD, PhD](#), enlightened the audience by focusing on one of the microvascular complications of diabetes - neuropathy. Our next speaker, [Bernard Zinman, OC, MDCM](#), highlighted that CVD and CVD risk should also be discussed and managed in patients with type 1 diabetes. The session ended with an extensive discussion between all the faculty that included intriguing case presentations. The faculty discussed the “novel paradigm for HFpEF, where comorbidities drive myocardial dysfunction through inflammation.”

The primetime symposium “Reducing Cardiovascular Risk with GLP-1 Ras in Patients with Type 2 Diabetes: Evolving Concepts and Paradigm Shifts,” Dr. Aroda, [Richard E. Pratley, MD](#), and [Darren McGuire, MD](#), discussed that how the management of patients with type 2 diabetes remains challenging, and how despite significant advancements and the vast treatment options the majority of patients do not achieve optimal glycemic control. During these talks, with help of unique and challenging cases, faculty discussed the efficacy and safety of newer antihyperglycemic agents, including GLP-1 RAs, that are not adequately utilized in real-world practice.



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SUNDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2021

### SESSION IV: HYPERTENSION/ KIDNEY

[Rajiv Agarwal, MD](#), kick-started this session - which was chaired by [George L. Bakris, MD](#). - by enlightened our hybrid audience with upcoming and emerging therapies for managing uncontrolled hypertension. Dr. Agarwal educated participants on “the adequate way to measure blood pressure in the office,” while Dr. Bakris shared his insights regarding resistant hypertension. Cases and discussions followed.

In the second half of the session, [Alanna A. Morris, MD](#), emphasized that “there is a need of a new way to define heart failure.” She also accentuated that “we are now recognizing a new, universal definition of heart failure” while discussing the evolving spectrum of heart failure. Following this talk, [Janet B. McGill, MD](#), steered our attention to the updates in chronic kidney disease (CKD) progression, including recent cardio-renal outcomes with SGLT2 inhibitors and finerenone. Next, [Jay L. Koyner, MD](#), summarized the robust methods for differential diagnosis of acute kidney injury. These sessions were followed by a panel discussion-focusing on challenging cases of patients with hypertension, CKD, and various comorbidities.

During the primetime symposium “Challenges and Advances in Diabetic Kidney Disease: Tackling the Drivers of CKD Progression in T2DM,” Drs. Agarwal and Bakris, along with [Bertram Pitt, MD](#), discussed the underlying pathophysiology of diabetic kidney disease (DKD), how to identify patients at-risk for DKD progression, and the emerging role of nonsteroidal mineralocorticoid receptor antagonists (MRAs) in DKD treatment.

For expert interviews with key faculty regarding these sessions please visit CMHC’s [Faculty Spotlight](#). View the entire agenda, course faculty, and other event details [here](#).