



Tabriz University of
Medical Sciences,
Tabriz, Iran

Imam Reza General Hospital Newsletter

Tabriz University of Medical Sciences

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Imam Reza General Hospital,
Tabriz University of Medical
Sciences, Tabriz, Iran

In This Issue We Read

An overview of the events of the center, the articles of the respected professors and the international educational programs



Congratulations on the arrival of the month of Ramadan and the New Year



• **Mojtaba Mohammadzadeh**
Director-In-Charge's Message
Assistant Professor of Anesthesiology and Intensive
Care Medicine
The head of Imam Reza General Hospital, Tabriz, Iran

I am grateful to God that we celebrate Ramadan and the new year while witnessing a year full of achievements in the medical, educational, and research fields at Imam Reza General hospital, Tabriz, Iran. This year, for the third consecutive time, we ranked first in research within the university and ranked fourth nationwide. In the medical field, we opened new emergency and iodine therapy departments, purchased CT scanners, and other advanced medical equipment. In education, we successfully offered 100 international educational programs and produced educational videos in English. Additionally, we hosted the first international virtual congress on the application of artificial intelligence in medical sciences, with participation from the China, United States, Australia, Singapore, and Finland. One of the most significant milestones for Imam Reza General Hospital in Tabriz was the opening of the Artificial Intelligence Laboratory. This step will enhance diagnostic, therapeutic, and preventive services while reducing treatment costs and improving service quality. I sincerely thank the professors, residents, nurses, students, and staff of Imam Reza General Hospital, Tabriz. I wish you a blessed Ramadan and a happy new year. I also hope that in the coming year, with the continued efforts of the university chancellor, Imam Reza General Hospital, Tabriz will join the World Health Organization. This international recognition will bring great pride to our hospital, university, and our country, Iran.

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Content

2



Epilepsy medication
Mojtaba Ziaee
Associate Professor of Pharmacology
Maragheh University of Medical Sciences,
Maragheh, Iran

International Educational Programs:

2



Advanced Trauma Life Support
Samad Shams Vahdati
Professor of Emergency Medicine
Tabriz University of Medical Sciences, Tabriz,
Iran

3



Thyroid Cancer
Mahsa Malekian
Assistant Professor of Internal Medicine-
Endocrinology
Tabriz University of Medical Sciences, Tabriz,
Iran

3



Infection Prevention and Control
Behruz Naghili
Professor of Infectious Disease
Tabriz University of Medical Sciences, Tabriz,
Iran

3



Ultrasound guided FNA
Vahideh Sadra
Assistant Professor of Internal Medicine-
Endocrinology
Tabriz University of Medical Sciences, Tabriz,
Iran

4



Bronchoscopy
Leila Namvar
Assistant Professor of Internal Medicine -
Pulmonary diseases
Tabriz University of Medical Sciences, Tabriz,
Iran

Scientometrics of Artificial Intelligence in Iran and a Review of the Challenges

The surge in artificial intelligence (AI) is inducing significant transformations across various sectors including economy, society, science, and security worldwide. The unique nature and rapid pace of AI advancements, along with their broad impact, set this technology apart from other emerging technologies. Consequently, numerous global governments have established national strategies and comprehensive policies to maximize the benefits of AI. Nations that promptly recognize the significance of AI are likely to secure substantial growth and development opportunities, whereas those that fail to grasp its multifaceted implications may quickly lag in the global economic and technological race. The Islamic Republic of Iran is actively participating in this international arena, leveraging its indigenous capabilities to influence the evolution and application of AI. For Iran to effectively navigate this landscape, a thorough understanding of its current standing across different AI sectors is essential. Despite being a regional leader in AI research output with a 7% global share in 2013, Iran's average growth rate for AI publications has been declining since 2019, falling behind the global average and placing it second in the region after Saudi Arabia as of 2022. According to data from the Web of Science indexing database, over the past two decades, the most contributions to AI research have come from the University of Tehran, the University of Tabriz, and the Amirkabir University of Technology. In terms of AI adoption within Iranian enterprises, there is a noticeable lag of at least seven years compared to the global average, with only about 17% of businesses currently integrating AI solutions. Initiating and expanding AI projects in Iran involves confronting numerous challenges categorized into internal and external factors. It is critical to identify these obstacles as they substantially affect the success, efficiency, and sustainability of AI initiatives. Addressing these challenges can assist policymakers in crafting more effective strategies for AI integration and utilization. Key internal challenges include the high costs associated with AI implementations, issues related to the availability or quality of data, and a shortage of skilled personnel or difficulties in hiring adequately trained new staff. On the other hand, external challenges such as insufficient governmental financial support and a lack of necessary legal frameworks specific to AI also pose significant barriers. The AI job market in Iran has seen remarkable growth, expanding from 3,000 positions in 2017 to over 30,000 by 2019. This increase underscores a growing demand for AI expertise and highlights the need for skill development within the workforce. To fully harness the potential of AI in Iran's labor market, investments in education and research are crucial, alongside support for knowledge-based companies and the establishment of suitable policies.



• **Hassan Soleimanpour**
Editorial Message
Editor in Chief
Professor of Anesthesiology and Critical Care, Subspecialty in
Intensive Care Medicine (ICM), Clinical Fellowship in EBM,
Fellowship in Trauma Critical Care and CPR
Deputy Dean for Education and Research, and Scientific
Secretary of AI congress, Imam Reza General Hospital,
Tabriz, Iran



Final Statement of the First International Virtual Congress on the Application of Artificial Intelligence in Medical Sciences

In the name of God

With the help of God, the First International Virtual Congress on the Application of Artificial Intelligence in Medical Sciences was organized by the deputy of Research and Education, Imam Reza General Hospital, Tabriz from February 1 to 2025 ,5, at the COVID Studio of Imam Reza General Hospital, Tabriz University of Medical Sciences, Iran. Around 200 university faculty members, researchers, experts, and students from universities, institutions, research centers, and executive organizations attended the event. A total of 23 oral presentations and 95 posters were presented. Scientists from China, Finland, Singapore, the United States, and Australia gave presentations at the congress.

The Statement Drafting Committee, after two meetings, reviewed and summarized the opinions and suggestions and presented the following ten key points to the participants:

First Point

The main topics discussed in the congress include Future Studies and Foresight in Artificial Intelligence, its applications in Cancer Diagnosis and Treatment, Medical Imaging, Pharmaceuticals, and Clinical Interventions. It was clearly shown that AI can play a fundamental role in transforming healthcare and medical systems.

Second Point

Studies on the future of AI indicate that in the near future, this technology can create a major transformation in simulating treatment processes and predicting diseases. Additionally, with the development of advanced machine learning and AI algorithms, the accuracy of diagnosis and treatment will significantly increase.

Third Point

In the «AI in Cancer» section, its applications in diagnosing and treating common cancers, especially women's cancers, were highlighted as key topics. This technology, using advanced algorithms, can provide faster and more accurate diagnoses, leading to more effective treatments.

Fourth Point

Regarding «AI in Medical Imaging,» the use of AI algorithms for processing and analyzing medical images is rapidly expanding. This advancement can enhance diagnostic accuracy and speed up patient treatment processes.

Fifth Point

The topic of «AI in Pharmaceuticals» was discussed, particularly in drug discovery and personalized treatment design. Using AI to simulate molecules and model drugs will play a crucial role in discovering new medications. This technology can accelerate research and reduce costs.

Sixth Point

In the «AI in Clinical Interventions» section, its application in processing clinical data and accurately analyzing patient information to improve treatment decision-making was reviewed. AI models can extract valuable information from complex medical data, such as clinical tests and medical images, thereby enhancing treatment and clinical care processes.



Seventh Point

The congress emphasized the importance of international cooperation in AI and medicine. Given the significance of this technology in improving healthcare services and enhancing patients' quality of life, collaboration and sharing experiences and achievements among different countries can accelerate progress in this field.

Eighth Point

Ethical issues and privacy protection in using medical data for AI development were among the important topics discussed. The need to establish legal and ethical guidelines for using medical data and to ensure patient privacy was emphasized.

Ninth Point

The congress stressed the importance of education and empowering the next generation of researchers and specialists in AI. Given the rapid growth of this field, universities and research centers must develop appropriate educational programs to prepare young professionals.

Tenth Point

The congress highlighted the importance of scientific research and the development of new technologies to improve public health. Recent advancements in AI in medical sciences demonstrate its high potential for transforming various medical and healthcare fields.

At the end, the organizers of the congress sincerely thank all the guests, speakers, and participants, as well as the Scientific Reference and Foresight Group of Tabriz University of Medical Sciences, the Intelligent Systems scientific society of Iran, Clinical Research Development Unit, Imam Reza General Hospital of Tabriz, the Student Research Committee of Tabriz University of Medical Sciences, Medical Philosophy and History Research Center of Tabriz University of Medical Sciences, Society of Urological Research and Education (SURE), the World Artificial Consciousness Association, and Roxan Holding, who supported us in organizing this congress.

Epilepsy medication

• Mojtaba Ziaee

Associate Professor of Pharmacology
Maragheh University of Medical Sciences, Maragheh, Iran
Email: mjziaee@gmail.com



An epilepsy medication called sulthiame has shown promise in reducing breathing problems during sleep and other symptoms of obstructive sleep apnea (OSA). This finding comes from a new study involving nearly 300 people, presented at the 2024 European Respiratory Society (ERS) Congress.

The need for new treatments

Dr. Jan Hedner, a professor of respiratory medicine at Sahlgrenska University Hospital and the University of Gothenburg in Sweden, explained that current treatments for OSA are mechanical. These include continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) machines or dental devices to keep the airway open. However, many patients struggle to stick to these treatments. For example, less than %50 of CPAP users continue after 4–3 years. This highlights the need for better medication options or a combination of mechanical and drug therapies.

Dr. Hedner stated that medications could be a viable option for treating OSA due to their ease of use and safety profile.

How Sulthiame Works

One possible cause of OSA may involve changes in an enzyme called carbonic anhydrase. Sulthiame, which blocks this enzyme, has already shown safety and effectiveness in improving OSA in a previous study.

Study Design

The goal of this study was to find the right dose of sulthiame for OSA patients. Researchers included 298 adults who could not tolerate CPAP or dental devices. We divided the participants into four groups: three groups (74 ,74, and 75 people, respectively) received sulthiame at doses of 100 mg, 200 mg, or 300 mg per day,

while one group (75 people) received a placebo. The average age of participants was %26.2 ;56 were women, and their initial apnea-hypopnea index (AHI3a), a measure of breathing disturbances during sleep, was 29 events per hour.

Key Results

• Reduction in AHI3a:

- Over 15 weeks, AHI3a decreased significantly:
 - » %17.8 reduction with 100 mg
 - » %34.8 reduction with 200 mg
 - » %39.9 reduction with 300 mg

Doses of 300–200 mg were the most effective.

• Additional Findings:

- In a follow-up analysis, the 300 mg dose improved AHI4 (a stricter measure of oxygen drops) by %47.1.
- Nighttime oxygen levels improved significantly with 200 mg and 300 mg doses.
- Daytime sleepiness, measured by the Epworth Sleepiness Scale (ESS), improved in all dose groups.

Side Effects

Reported side effects included tingling, headaches, fatigue, and nausea, mostly mild to moderate and dose-dependent. No heart-related safety issues were found. Additionally, sulthiame may lower blood pressure, potentially benefiting OSA patients, but further research is necessary to confirm this.

Study Limitations

- Small study size
- Longer studies are necessary to assess long-term effectiveness and tolerability.

Conclusion

Dr. Hedner said the results support sulthiame as a safe and effective medication for OSA and justify further research in phase 3 studies.

Potential Impact

Dr. Shamioz-Zaman, a sleep specialist, highlighted the significance of this finding, noting that no effective medication currently exists for OSA. The development of a pill to treat OSA would be a significant advancement, but further research is necessary to determine which patients would benefit most and to investigate long-term effects.

Advanced Trauma Life Support

• Samad Shams Vahdati

Professor of Emergency Medicine
Tabriz University of Medical Sciences, Tabriz, Iran
Email: sshamsv@gmail.com



1. Introduction:

In this course, we will introduce you to our Advanced Trauma Life Support, provide an overview of its content, and explain what you can expect to gain from it.

2. Course objectives:

Our course aims to manage patients with multiple traumas. This special program is a global course that teaches a systematic process of trauma care for patients with life-threatening injuries.

- The Advanced Trauma Life Support (ATLS) Provider course was developed by clinicians and educators to teach the principles of initial management of major trauma. It is an intensive, interactive course on systematically managing trauma patients through interactive discussions, skills teaching, and simulated patient management scenarios.

- ATLS is taught by clinicians who are experienced in trauma care and have completed and excelled in the Provider course to the level that they have been invited to attend the ATLS Instructor course (a special educational course to optimize their teaching skills).
- Each student will benefit from a mentor, and faculty will be present throughout the course to help with any queries. On successful completion of the course, participants will be issued with an ATLS Provider Certificate, valid for four years from the course date.

This course is designed for

- Emergency medicine specialists.
- Neurosurgeons
- General surgeons
- Orthopedists
- Residents of emergency medicine
- Residents of Neurosurgery
- Residents of general surgery
- Residents of orthopedic

(continued on next page)



(Shams Vahdati Cont.)

3. Course overview:

This course is three months long and is divided into: This program ensures participants are up to date with the latest information and prepared to:

- Primary survey
- Secondary survey
- Surgical procedures
- Neurosurgical procedures
- Orthopedic procedures
- Approach to elderly trauma patients
- Approach to pregnant trauma patients
- Approach to pediatric trauma patients
- Mass casualties
- Mass gathering injuries
- Triages

The course will include lectures, readings, case studies, and assessments. Students are expected to spend approximately 30 hours per week on coursework.

4. Key concepts:

The key concepts that will be covered in this course include:

- ATLS
- Trauma management
- Primary trauma care
- Multiple trauma management

5. Experts team:

Our teaching professors in the field are Prof. Dr. Samad Shams Vahdati (emergency medicine specialist, fellowship of neurovascular emergency), Prof. Dr. Alireza Ala (emergency medicine specialist), and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Farhad Mirzaei (surgeon), Assoc. Prof. Dr. Touraj Asvadi (general surgeon) throughout the course.

6. Next steps:

To enroll in this course, please visit our website. Please contact our support team if you have any questions or need assistance.

Thyroid Cancer

• Mahsa Malekian

Assistant Professor of Internal Medicine- Endocrinology
Tabriz University of Medical Sciences, Tabriz, Iran
Email: Dr.malekian@yahoo.com



I am Mahsa Malekian, internist and specialist in adult endocrinology and metabolism. I graduated from Tabriz University of Medical Sciences in 2020 and I am currently a member of the faculty of the Department of Internal Medicine and the Endocrinology Department. I also ranked first in the national subspecialty entrance exam and in the top %10 of the national internal medicine board exam. The program that I will present in this course is related to the diagnosis and management of thyroid cancer. Thyroid cancer is the most common endocrine neoplasm, and the clinical management of this cancer is mainly performed by endocrinologists. This cancer is discovered incidentally during an anterior neck examination or thyroid ultrasound. It requires a fine needle aspiration (FNA) for diagnosis. I am also skilled in performing thyroid ultrasound, which allows us to identify any abnormalities, including thyroid nodules, and I also specialize in performing ultrasound-guided FNA, which allows for accurate diagnosis and determines whether the nodules are benign or malignant. My -3month course includes theoretical and practical training on identifying suspicious nodules for malignancy on ultrasound, performing FNA, and managing thyroid cancer after surgery, including determining the dose of radioactive iodine and how to follow up these patients in the laboratory and ultrasound.

Infection Prevention and Control

• Behruz Naghili

Professor of Infectious Disease
Tabriz University of Medical Sciences, Tabriz, Iran
Email: naghili_b@yahoo.com



Introduction

I would like to introduce myself as a university professor. I actively train and educate medical students and infectious disease residents.

In addition to my educational role, I also serve as the head of the university's infection and tropical research center. One of the initiatives I am particularly proud of is the clinical course on «Infection prevention and control» that my colleagues and I have been offering at the university for several years. We have developed an advanced educational program for clinicians working as infection controllers within the universities.

In modern hospitals in the developed world, %10-5 of patients acquire one or more infections.

In intensive care units, HAI affects about %30 of patients, and the attributable mortality may reach %44.

The risk of healthcare-associated infections in developing countries is 2 to 20 times higher than in developed countries. I believe infection control at hospitals is significant, and proper management of safety guidelines by healthcare personnel could effectively prevent infection and, ultimately, related deaths.

Course objectives

Overall, infection prevention and control trainers play a crucial role in safeguarding the health and safety of patients, staff, and visitors in healthcare settings.

Here are some suggested course objectives for the «Infection Prevention and Control»

1. Understand the principles of infection prevention and control in healthcare settings.
2. Identify common types of healthcare-associated infections and their risk factors.
3. Describe the role of healthcare workers in preventing and controlling infections.
4. Demonstrate proper hand hygiene techniques and personal protective equipment use.
5. Implement strategies for preventing the spread of infectious diseases in healthcare settings.
6. Analyze the importance of environmental cleaning and disinfection in infection control.
7. Evaluate the impact of antibiotic resistance on infection prevention practices.
8. Develop an infection prevention plan for a specific healthcare setting.
9. Collaborate with interdisciplinary team members to promote a culture of safety and infection control.
10. Apply evidence-based practices to reduce the risk of infections in healthcare settings.

The IPC residents should be able to:

«Course goals»

1. Educating healthcare workers on best practices for preventing the spread of infections in healthcare settings.
2. Ensuring healthcare workers understand and adhere to proper hand hygiene techniques.
3. Training staff on the correct use of personal protective equipment (PPE) to prevent the transmission of infections.
4. Guiding proper cleaning and disinfection protocols to maintain a safe and hygienic environment.
5. Implementing strategies to reduce the risk of healthcare-associated infections among patients.
6. Monitoring and evaluating infection control practices to identify areas for improvement and ensure compliance with guidelines.
7. Promoting a culture of infection prevention and control throughout the hospital to protect patients and healthcare workers.

«Course overview»

This course is designed to provide healthcare professionals with the knowledge and skills necessary to prevent and control infections in various healthcare settings. Participants will learn about best practices in infection prevention, strategies for reducing the risk of infections, and ways to promote a safe and healthy environment for patients, staff, and visitors.

Course Overview:

- Introduction to infectious diseases and the importance of infection prevention
- Understanding the chain of infection and how infections spread
- Principles of infection prevention and control in healthcare settings
- Standard precautions and transmission-based precautions
- Hand hygiene practices and personal protective equipment (PPE) use
- Environmental cleaning and disinfection
- Surveillance and outbreak management
- Antibiotic stewardship and the role of vaccinations in infection prevention
- Legal and ethical considerations in infection prevention
- Strategies for promoting a culture of safety and reducing healthcare-associated infections

«Key concepts»

Some key concepts that may be covered in an «Infection Prevention and Control» course; are:

Key concepts provide a foundational understanding of infection prevention and control principles essential for healthcare professionals to protect themselves, their patients, and the community from infectious diseases.

1. Microbiology and Pathogenesis: Understanding the basics of microbiology, including the types of microorganisms that cause infections, how they spread, and how they cause disease.

2. Chain of Infection: Exploring the different links in the chain of infection (infectious agent, reservoir, portal of exit, mode of transmission, portal of entry, and susceptible host) and how breaking this chain can prevent infections.

3. Standard Precautions: Learning about standard precautions and basic infection prevention practices that apply to all patient care, regardless of suspected or confirmed infection status.

4. Transmission-Based Precautions: Understanding the different types of transmission-based precautions (contact, droplet, and airborne precautions) used to prevent the spread of specific pathogens.

5. Hand Hygiene: Emphasizing the importance of proper hand hygiene as the most effective way to prevent the spread of infections in healthcare settings.

6. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): Exploring using PPE, such as gloves, gowns, masks, and eye protection, to protect healthcare workers and patients from infectious agents.

7. Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection: Discussing the role of environmental cleaning and disinfection in preventing healthcare-associated infections and maintaining a safe healthcare environment.

8. Antibiotic Stewardship: Highlighting the importance of appropriate antibiotic use to prevent the development of antibiotic-resistant infections.

9. Surveillance and Outbreak Investigation: Understanding the principles of surveillance for healthcare-associated infections and how to investigate and control outbreaks in healthcare settings.

10. Education and Training: Recognizing the importance of ongoing education and training for healthcare workers to ensure compliance with infection prevention practices and promote a safety culture.

Expert team

Our team of experienced and highly educated professionals, including infection disease experts, epidemiologists, and related basic sciences professors, is responsible for training fellowship residents at the university.

The training is based on our educational curriculum, which I am currently organizing.

We invite you to join us.

Infection control is everybody's business.

Ultrasound guided FNA

• Vahideh Sadra

Assistant Professor of Internal Medicine- Endocrinology
Tabriz University of Medical Sciences, Tabriz, Iran
Email: Sadra.vahideh@gmail.com



I am Vahideh Sadra an endocrinologist. I have been working as an assistant professor in the Internal Medicine Department at Tabriz University of Medical Sciences and the Endocrinology Department of Imam Reza General Hospital since 2015.

In 2004, I graduated as a general physician from Azad University of Tabriz. I then began my residency in internal medicine at Tabriz University of Medical Sciences and completed it in 2012. After ranking second in the national subspecialty board exam, I was accepted as an endocrine fellow at Tabriz University of Medical Sciences. In 2015, I ranked second in the national endocrine subspecialty board exam and started working as a faculty member at Tabriz University of Medical Sciences with a service commitment. Since then, I have been actively involved in teaching, treatment, and research as an assistant professor in endocrinology and metabolism.

Additionally, in 2024, I earned a fellowship in evidence-based medicine from JBI Australia. Given the importance of accurate diagnosis and treatment of thyroid diseases, the critical role of ultrasound in evaluating thyroid nodules, and the need for precision in fine needle aspiration (FNA), I completed a thyroid ultrasound course under the supervision of radiology experts. Since 2015, I have been performing ultrasound-guided thyroid FNAs, and to date, I have conducted over 1,000 FNAs.

Course Title: Benefits of Thyroid Ultrasound and Ultrasound-Guided FNA: A Practical Approach to Diagnosing Thyroid Diseases

Course Overview:

Thyroid ultrasound and related techniques, especially ultrasound-guided fine-needle aspiration (FNA), have become essential tools for accurately diagnosing thyroid diseases in recent decades. This international course is designed for doctors and specialists in endocrinology, pathology, and (continued on next page)



(Sadra Cont.)

radiology, providing them with advanced skills and practical knowledge for diagnosing and treating thyroid diseases.

Course Objectives:

- 1. Learning the Basics of Thyroid Ultrasound:** Participants will learn the fundamental techniques of thyroid ultrasound and how to identify abnormalities and structural changes in the thyroid gland.
- 2. Mastering Ultrasound-Guided FNA:** Learn how to use ultrasound to guide the precise needle aspiration of thyroid lesions, particularly for distinguishing between benign and malignant conditions.
- 3. Interpreting Ultrasound and FNA Results:** Gain skills to analyze ultrasound images and FNA test results to diagnose thyroid conditions, including nodules and thyroid cancers.
- 4. Enhancing Clinical Skills:** Work with real clinical cases and develop practical skills for using ultrasound in decision-making for thyroid disorders.
- 5. Improving Diagnostic Accuracy:** Increase diagnostic precision and reduce errors when evaluating thyroid lesions using ultrasound and FNA techniques.

Benefits of This Course:

- **Advanced Clinical Skills:** Learn modern techniques to diagnose thyroid diseases and effectively use ultrasound and FNA.
- **Improved Diagnostic Accuracy:** Practical training will enable participants to better detect thyroid abnormalities and make more precise diagnoses.
- **Enhanced Capability for Complex Procedures:** Familiarity with advanced ultrasound-guided FNA methods helps doctors perform better in complex clinical situations.
- **Awareness of Recent Medical Advances:** Stay updated with the latest techniques and developments in diagnosing and treating thyroid diseases.

Who Should Attend:

- Medical students interested in endocrinology and pathology.
- Endocrinology residents and fellows looking to expand their

knowledge in thyroid disease diagnosis.

- Internal medicine specialists and general practitioners working with endocrine disorders.

This course will help you enhance your skills in thyroid ultrasound and FNA, significantly improving your ability to diagnose thyroid diseases.

Bronchoscopy

• Leila Namvar

Assistant Professor of Internal Medicine - Pulmonary diseases
Tabriz University of Medical Sciences, Tabriz, Iran
Email: leilanamvar3@gmail.com



Please introduce yourself and explain the course topic:

I am Leila Namvar. I am working as a pulmonologist and assistant professor at the internal medicine department at Tabriz University of Medical Science.

I graduated as a general practitioner from Tabriz University of Medical Science in 2003. Then I entered the internal medicine specialty and finished it in 2010. In 2017, I pursued a subspecialty in pulmonology.

I have an EBM fellowship from Adelaide University in Australia. I am a member of ERS (European Respiratory Society), the Iranian Respiratory Society, and the Tuberculosis and Lung Diseases Research Center. I am also head of the "Industry and University Collaboration" and "Occupational Lung Disease Center" at Tabriz University of Medical Science.

Please introduce the pulmonology department:

This department has 15 pulmonologists and is led by Prof. Khalil Ansarin. All of these faculty members are actively working as a

team, and each is an expert in the sub-branches of pulmonology. Occupational lung disease is the main focus of my work. My colleagues are experts in areas such as:

- Prof. Asnarin: Sleep disorders
- Dr. Sharifi: Medical thoracoscopy
- Dr. Nazemiyeh: ILD and interventional pulmonology, WLL, laser therapy (APC)
- Dr. Rashidi: pulmonary vascular disease
- Dr. Hejazi: Interventional Pulmonology EBUS
- Dr. Nadiri: lung sonography
- Dr. Valizade: respiratory rehabilitation

Course Topic: Bronchoscopy

Course objectives:

The course begins with an introduction to diagnostic and treatment bronchoscopy, including its indications and contraindications, patient preparation, bronchoscopy complications, procedure management, etc.

Course overview:

The duration of this course is a minimum of 3 months. The participants' demands and requests may allow for an extension of up to 6 months. In the first month of this course, there will be 2 hours of theoretical lectures every week. After the first month, there will be interactive training and hands-on activities in the bronchoscopy unit at Imam Reza Educational and Research Center.

Expert team:

Prof. Ansarin, the department head, and all 15 pulmonologists in the Department will contribute to this training.

Affiliation:

Tuberculosis and lung disease research center, Tabriz University of Medical Sciences, Tabriz, Iran

Director-In-Charge
Mojtaba Mohammadzadeh
Email: drmojtaba@yahoo.com

Editor-in-Chief
Hassan Soleimanpour
Email: soleimanpourh@tbzmed.ac.ir

Editor
Hadi Hamishehkar
Email: hamishehkar@tbzmed.ac.ir

Managing and Language Editor

Parvaneh Movahhed
Email: movahhed1994@gmail.com

Graphical Designers (A-Z)

Fatemeh Alipour Yeghaneh
Email: dryeg20485@gmail.com

Hadi Paydar
Email: hadipaydar8497@gmail.com

Parvaneh Movahhed
Email: movahhed1994@gmail.com

Editorial Boards (A-Z)

Alireza Ala
Email: ala.alireza@gmail.com

Jalal Etemadi
Email: jalaletemadi@yahoo.com

Masood Faghihdinevari
Email: dinvarim@tbzmed.ir

Reza Javad Rashid
Email: rjrashid@gmail.com

Ata Mahmoodpoor
Email: mahmoodpoora@tbzmed.ac.ir

Farid Rashidi
Email: fr2652@yahoo.com

Sarvin Sanaie
Email: Sarvin_so2000@yahoo.com

Zahra Sheikhalipour
Email: sheikhalipourz@gmail.com

Farzin Soleimanzadeh
Email: Dr_farzin_s53@yahoo.com

Mojtaba Varshouchi
Email: varshochim@tbzmed.ac.ir

Assistant Editors (A-Z)

Fatemeh Alipour Yeghaneh
Email: dryeg20485@gmail.com

Nasrin Jafari
Email: jafarin95nasrin@gmail.com

Tannaz Novin Bahador
Email: tannaznovinbahador@gmail.com

Excutive Editors (A-Z)

Azam Abdullahi
Email: abdollahiazam97@yahoo.com

Karim Akbarzadeh
Email: Karim.akbarzadeh@yahoo.com

Fatemeh Heidari
Email: fatemeh1999heidari@gmail.com

Farnaz Karimi
Email: farnaz.karimi1361@gmail.com

Jafar Leilan Doust
Email: leylandost4@gmail.com

Mehdi Mohammadi
Email: mahdi.mohammadi1360625@gmail.com

Maliheh Rashidi
Email: Maliheh.rashidi@yahoo.com

Sakineh Safarpour
Email: safarpoursakineh451@gmail.com

Guest Editors (A-Z)

Mahsa Malekian
Email: Dr.malekian@yahoo.com

Behruz Naghili
Email: naghili_b@yahoo.com

Leila Namvar
Email: leilanamvar3@gmail.com

Vahideh Sadra
Email: Sadra.vahideh@gmail.com

Samad Shams Vahdati
Email: sshamsv@gmail.com

Mojtaba Ziaee
Email: mjziaee@gmail.com

IT Consultant

Maryam Hassankhnai
Email: maryamhasankhani1360@gmail.com

Contact Us

Email: Imam_Reza_ER@tbzmed.ac.ir

Tell: +98 - 413373960

Aparat Link Address: www.aparat.com/Imamreza-HospTABRIZ

Instagram Page Address: www.instagram.com/imamreza.tbzmed

Youtube Channel Address: https://youtube.com/channel/UCIQJc2puPFSLM-Hm3GIH5A-A

Address: Deputy for research and education, Imam Reza General Hospital, Across from Central Building of Tabriz University of Medical Sciences, Golgasht Street, Tabriz, Iran.

