Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

David R. Jones, Chief of the Thoracic Surgery Service, and Charles M. Rudin, Chief of the Thoracic Oncology Service

---

Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center (MSKCC) has announced the appointment of David R. Jones as Chief of the Thoracic Service in the Department of Surgery, and Charles M. Rudin as Chief of the Thoracic Oncology Service, Division of Solid Tumor Oncology, in the Department of Medicine.

“Drs. Jones and Rudin are internationally recognized leaders in their respective fields,” said Memorial Hospital Physician-in-Chief José Baselga. “They will collaborate to lead a multidisciplinary program combining modern genomic characterization of thoracic cancers, the latest innovations in minimally invasive surgery, and advances in medical therapy to ensure that our patients receive the very best in cancer care. Their expertise as clinicians and their strong record of accomplishments in clinical and translational research, make them ideal leaders of MSKCC’s Thoracic Service and Thoracic Oncology Service.”

David R. Jones

A thoracic surgeon, David R. Jones comes to MSKCC from the University of Virginia where he was Vice

Chair of Surgery and Chief of Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery. A pioneer in lung cancer metastasis biology, and biomarker development, he was the first to identify the loss of the metastasis suppressor gene *BRMS-1* in lung cancer, and the first to use the COXEN biomarker predictor to determine the sensitivity of non-small cell lung cancer to molecularly-targeted therapies. He has also led investigations of clinical biomarkers to predict local and distant recurrence of lung and esophageal cancer . He has completed several phase I clinical trials including the use of novel agents given to early-stage lung cancer patients before surgery and he is now identifying biomarker "signatures" that best predict responses to this therapy.

"We are extremely fortunate to have Dr. Jones join the staff of MSKCC," said Peter T. Scardino, Chair of the Department of Surgery. "He is an expert in lung cancer and other thoracic malignancies as well as an accomplished surgeon. Dr. Jones established a busy and successful practice at UVA while leading an innovative research program characterizing important biological alterations in lung cancer that may lead to new treatments for this disease. He is certainly one of the finest thoracic surgeons in the nation and we are delighted that we have attracted him to our institution."

Dr. Jones is a permanent member of the NIH/NCI Tumor Progression and Metastasis Study Section and an active participant in the NCI's Cancer Genome Atlas Project. He has authored more than 160 peer-reviewed papers, including landmark publications in *Molecular and Cellular Biology*, *Oncogene*, *Cancer Research*, and the *Journal of Thoracic Oncology*.

Back to top ^

Charles Rudin

Charles Rudin, formerly Director of Lung Cancer Therapeutics and Associate Director for Clinical Research at the Johns Hopkins Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center, is a medical oncologist and a translational researcher. He is a leader in the study of lung cancer, other thoracic malignancies, and developmental therapy for advanced solid tumors.

"Dr. Rudin's work has been at the forefront of new methods to treat lung cancer and other cancers arising in the chest," said George J. Bosl, Chair of the Department of Medicine. "More broadly, he has also been a leader in new drug development and his research at Johns Hopkins has brought promising new cancer treatments to patients with lung and other cancers."

Dr. Rudin has conducted novel preclinical studies using patient-derived tumor tissue for preclinical drug testing of new therapies in lung cancer. In addition, he has led the most comprehensive analysis of the genomic alterations in small cell lung cancer.

His research has also included the study of epigenetic targeting, hedgehog signaling, and oncolytic viruses in the management of lung cancer, and this work has been influential in the study of other malignancies. Dr. Rudin has led seminal studies of hedgehog pathway inhibitors against advanced basal cell carcinoma , a rare type of skin cancer , and medulloblastoma, a brain cancer most commonly seen in children.

Back to top ^

Memorial Sloan Kettering on Leading Edge in Treatment

“Drs. Jones and Rudin will work with their colleagues to build upon and extend the already extraordinary achievements of the Thoracic Service and the Thoracic Oncology Service,” said Dr. Baselga.

Memorial Sloan Kettering has been in the vanguard in both the surgical and medical treatment of lung cancers and other thoracic malignancies.

MSKCC was one of the first centers to test the tumors of patients for genetic mutations now known to be closely linked to specific types of non-small cell lung cancer. Genetic testing of tumors is done routinely as part of the Lung Cancer Mutation Project, which began at MSKCC in 2009, and the Squamous Cell Mutation Analysis Project, which began at MSKCC in 2011. Today, MSKCC tests for more than 90 genetic mutations known to occur in lung cancers.

Doctors at Memorial Sloan Kettering were also among the first to demonstrate that giving chemotherapy before surgery can improve cure rates in patients with non-small cell lung cancer that has spread to the lymph nodes. This approach has doubled the cure rate in patients with stage III non-small cell lung cancer, and has cured some patients with certain forms of lung cancer who would not have been cured by surgery alone.

MSKCC thoracic surgeons perform more than 1,200 operations for lung cancer each year, with one of the nation’s lowest rates of complications following surgery. MSKCC surgeons have been pioneers in the use of the most advanced surgical approaches, including video-assisted thoracic surgery (VATS), a minimally invasive technique for lung and esophageal cancer that leads to faster recovery after surgery than other, more traditional approaches. Members of MSKCC’s Thoracic Service are also performing robot-assisted VATS lung removal, as well as developing the use of robot-assisted surgery for esophageal cancer and cancers of the middle chest, such as thymomas, which sit atop the lining of the heart.

In addition, MSKCC surgeons have been leaders in establishing the surgical approaches used to treat mesothelioma , a rare cancer of the tissue that lines the body’s internal organs. Seventy-five percent of such cases affect the sac that protects the lungs, called the pleura. MSKCC surgeons have led numerous

clinical studies and have treated more than 1,000 patients for malignant pleural mesothelioma at Memorial Sloan Kettering.

MSKCC's medical oncologists also care for a large number of patients with pleural mesothelioma and conduct many clinical trials testing new drugs and novel approaches. They have led a national study assessing the role of chemotherapy before surgery and radiation for patients with early-stage disease, are exploring the use of immunotherapies, and are currently leading an international phase III study of a new oral drug called voirinostat for patients who have previously received treatment with chemotherapy.

Dr. Rudin succeeds Mark G. Kris who has served as Chief of the Thoracic Oncology Service since 1990. Dr. Kris has been appointed Lead Physician, MSKCC-IBM/Watson Collaboration, and Associate Director for Clinical Research, MSKCC Lung Cancer Center.

Dr. Jones succeeds Valerie W. Rusch who has served as Chief of the Thoracic Service since 2000. Dr. Rusch will continue her clinical practice and research activities at Memorial Sloan Kettering as Vice Chair of Clinical Research in the Department of Surgery.

Back to top