WE DON'T
JUST HOPE
FOR A CURE,
WE'RE
BUILDING IT.
Diabetes
Research
Institute
FOUNDATION

ADVANCING SCIENCE TO CURE AND PREVENT DIABETES

At the Diabetes Research Institute, our challenge is complex yet our mission is quite simple: Advancing science to cure and prevent diabetes and change the lives of people with diabetes.

Improved immune therapies, enhancement of beta cell function and increased resistance of beta cells to destruction will lead us toward cure and prevention of diabetes. We celebrate every small victory along the way, recognizing that each step forward brings us closer to our ultimate goal.

PIONEERING SCIENCE AND INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGIES

Unlike other organizations, the DRI conducts its research (including tissue engineering, immune modulation, biomaterials, and regenerative medicine) under one roof. With groundbreaking scientific developments, we have accomplished numerous and significant milestones on the path to a cure:

- Combined strategies to enhance localized immune system modulation for the treatment of T1D
- Advances in islet cell transplantation and immunotherapy
- Developments in regenerative medicine including the first-ever dynamic analysis of human pancreatic regeneration in T1D
- Studies of the role of pancreatic beta cells in the development of T1D

From lab bench to life-changing results, the DRI pipeline is built on innovation, compassion, and your support.

Discovery

Pre-clinical innovations in labs and models

Early Detection & Prevention

Identifying risk before symptoms appear

Treatment & Intervention

Preventing or restoring beta-cells and insulin production

Long-term follow-up

Understanding how therapies perform over time

WORLD-CLASS, MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAM OF EXPERTS

The DRI is home to a top-tier interdisciplinary team of diabetes research experts collaborating closely with cure-focused partners across the globe. Our working partnerships with international teams enhance the breadth and depth of our research capabilities.

Collaborative Platforms

We leverage collaborative platforms with our strategic partners and diverse team of experts that enable real-time data sharing and joint problem-solving. These platforms accelerate the pace of discovery and ensure that the best ideas are quickly translated into actionable research.

From Bench to Bedside

The DRI integrates preclinical, translational, and clinical research expertise in a single ecosystem, allowing discoveries to seamlessly advance from laboratory proof-of-concept to human application. Access to specialized facilities, including clean rooms, islet isolation labs, imaging cores, and GMP manufacturing, supports end-to-end innovation.

Strategic Alliances with Industry and Academia

We form dynamic partnerships with biotech, pharma, and academic institutions to pool resources, share risk, and co-develop innovative technologies. These collaborations bring outside expertise and infrastructure into the DRI ecosystem, enabling faster and broader impact.

Centralized Coordination

Our centralized research coordination ensures that all projects are aligned with our strategic goals and timelines. Program coordinators maintain close, ongoing collaboration, ensuring integration between pediatric and adult research efforts, minimizing duplication, and maximizing the impact of shared knowledge.

Flexible Funding

The DRIF provides flexible funding mechanisms that allow researchers to pursue high risk, high reward projects without the common delays of traditional grant cycles. This nimbleness, enabled largely by the DRI's dedicated fundraising relationship with the DRIF, ensures that promising research can move forward without delay

Early Clinical Engagement

We engage with clinical partners early in the research process to ensure that our discoveries are clinically relevant and can be swiftly transitioned into clinical trials. This early engagement helps bridge the gap between laboratory research and patient care.

Outcome-Driven Research

Our research is guided by clear milestones and outcome metrics. By focusing on the most viable and tangible research results, we ensure that our efforts lead to real-world benefits for patients, such as improved treatment protocols and new therapeutic options.

Investing in the Future

We foster collaborations and nurture young scientists' careers, offering mentoring programs and young scientist incentive awards.

INTEGRATED TEAMS

By bringing together experts from such diverse fields as immunology, beta cell biology, tissue engineering, and clinical research, we facilitate seamless collaboration. This integration breaks down traditional research silos, allowing for more rapid development and testing of innovative therapies.

With the continued support of the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine, a new chapter has unfolded at the DRI with the creation of affinity groups in Immunology, Devices/Transplantation, and Beta Cell Robustness and Augmentation. By bringing together diverse minds and perspectives and by working as partners toward a common goal, we have created a dynamic environment where important breakthroughs are more likely to occur. Our affinity groups are more than just teams – they are incubators of ideas and solutions, primed to accelerate our journey toward discoveries that ultimately lead to curing and preventing T1D.

IMMUNOLOGY

AIM: Create more tolerable immune therapies for both transplantation and T1D prevention.

DEVICES/TRANSPLANT

AIM: Develop vascularized devices that function as efficient "holding tanks" for islets.

BETA CELL

AIM: Explore and optimize the latest developments in beta cell replication and function.

RAPID TRANSLATION INTO CLINICAL STUDIES

At the DRI, we are committed to swiftly translating cutting-edge discoveries into meaningful clinical applications. Our fast-track approach ensures that promising therapies are moved quickly into clinical studies.

The DRI is actively involved in a broad spectrum of research efforts aimed at curing T1D, including both preclinical studies in the laboratory and patient-centered clinical trials. These trials focus on prevention, disease modifying therapies, immune modulation, and innovative cell-based treatments. Each is a crucial step toward transforming care and improving the lives of people with diabetes.

Our clinical team plays a central role in these studies, with dedicated physicians, coordinators, nurses, regulatory experts, data analysts, and research specialists working together to ensure rigorous study conduct and compassionate patient care. This multidisciplinary team is led by experienced investigators, including Drs. Jay Skyler and Camillo Ricordi, and supported by experts in immunology, endocrinology, and transplant medicine, making the DRI a key partner in advancing cutting-edge therapies.

Curing and preventing type 1 diabetes is core to our mission. We are one of the largest and most comprehensive research centers devoted solely to cure-focused research, with a primary goal of restoring natural insulin production and regulating blood sugar levels without undesirable side effects, thus substantially reducing the burden of living with diabetes.

Our mission is personal. We were founded by parents of children with T1D in search of a cure, and many of our scientists are personally connected to this cause. Inspired by and in honor of those loved and lost, we steward all donations from our family of supporters directly toward research. Private philanthropy support is the backbone of the DRI's ability to innovate. It empowers us to pursue bold ideas, accelerate discoveries, and bridge critical gaps in the research pipeline – particularly in areas where federal funding is limited or unavailable.

Diabetes Research Institute
FOUNDATION

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