About Ochsner

Alton Ochsner Medical Foundation CEO Receives Top Honors by American College of Physicians

Frank A. Riddick, Jr., MD, CEO of the Alton Ochsner Medical Foundation, was recently inducted as a Master of the American College of Physicians. Dr. Riddick was one of only 44 physicians nationwide selected for Mastership in 2001.

Dr. Riddick also currently serves as Vice-Chairman of the Ethics Committee of the American Medical Association. Masters of the American College of Physician are a small group of highly distinguished physicians who have exhibited pre-eminence in medical practice or research, held positions of high honor, or made significant contributions to medical science or the art of medicine.

Dr. Riddick's service on various medical councils, including the American Board of Internal Medicine Liaison Committee on Medical Education and the AMA's prestigious Council of Medical Education, have helped set the standards for medical education in this country. He is recognized for his excellence in Internal Medicine and Endocrinology.

Steroid-Free Liver Transplantation Shown to Decrease Incidence of Organ Rejection and Diabetes

In the largest study ever to evaluate steroid-free liver transplant therapy, James D. Eason, MD, of the Ochsner Multi-Organ Transplant Center, found that rabbit anti-thymocyte globulin (rabbit ATG, Thymoglobulin α) may decrease the incidence of organ rejection, diabetes, and hepatitis C in liver transplant recipients. Results of the study were presented by Dr. Eason at Transplant 2001, the annual meeting of the American Society of Transplantation and American Society of Transplant Surgeons.

In the United States, rabbit ATG is currently used in conjunction with steroids in the treatment of acute organ rejection episodes in transplant recipients. However, steroids have been associated with increased infections, post-transplant diabetes, and recurrent hepatitis following liver transplantation. Historically, steroids have been considered a key component of liver transplant treatment despite their associated adverse side effects.

In the study of 71 adult patients who had undergone a liver transplant, half received rabbit ATG, while the other half received steroid therapy. All participants also received a combination maintenance regimen of tacrolimus and mycophenolate mofetil (MMF). Patients treated without steroids had lower incidences of post-transplant diabetes and recurrent hepatitis C compared with steroid-treated patients. Additionally, patients treated with rabbit ATG alone experienced a lower incidence and severity of rejection.