



# ***NEWS RELEASE***

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**CONTACT:** Kelly Coffey, Media and Public Relations Manager  
Office: (860) 610-5701; [kcoffey@connecticutchildrens.org](mailto:kcoffey@connecticutchildrens.org)

## **CONNECTICUT CHILDREN'S MEDICAL CENTER AWARDED \$10.5 MILLION GRANT FROM NIH FOR FIRST OF KIND STUDY**

**HARTFORD, Conn.** – Connecticut Children's Medical Center has been awarded a \$10.5 million dollar grant from the National Institutes of Health for a 5-year study of the effects of standardized therapy for children with ulcerative colitis. Despite the increasing incidence of this disease, there has never been a large scale study to determine how children respond to therapy.

The study team, headed by Jeffrey Hyams, MD, Director of the Division of Digestive Diseases, Hepatology and Nutrition at Connecticut Children's and Professor of Pediatrics at UConn, and Lee "Ted" Denson from Cincinnati Children's Hospital and Medical Center, has enlisted 25 leading pediatric institutions throughout the United States and Canada to participate in the study. Enrollment, which will focus on children between 4 and 17 years of age who are newly diagnosed with ulcerative colitis, is expected to begin this July. Participants will be followed for up to 5 years to monitor disease status. The University of North Carolina Clinical Studies Coordinating Center will serve as the data coordinating center.

"This study will be the first of its kind in pediatric inflammatory bowel disease that will allow us to develop a better understanding of why there is such variability in the response of children treated with standard therapies," explained Dr. Hyams. "By studying genetic, immunologic, and

microbiologic aspects of the disease at diagnosis and through its course we hope to be able to design more successful therapies for children with ulcerative colitis.”

The grant is the first and largest multi-center pediatric clinical study that Connecticut Children’s has received from the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases of the National Institutes of Health. “This is a remarkable accomplishment for Dr. Hyams and a major achievement for Connecticut Children’s,” said Dr. Dr. Paul Dworkin, Physician in Chief at Connecticut Children's and Chair of Pediatrics at the UConn School of Medicine.

The Center for Pediatric Inflammatory Bowel Diseases at Connecticut Children’s Medical Center is the largest of its kind between Boston and New York, currently caring for almost 600 children with either ulcerative colitis or Crohns disease. The Center has pioneered the use of emerging therapies in children with these disorders and engages in basic research investigating the effects of disease and therapy on bone health and growth as well as helping to clarify the mechanisms by which these diseases occur. The Center is also the home of the Pediatric Inflammatory Bowel Disease Collaborative Research Group Registry which is studying the natural history of newly diagnosed disease since 2002 in over 1800 children at 30 leading pediatric centers in North America.

#### ***About Connecticut Children’s Medical Center***

Connecticut Children’s Medical Center, the region’s only academic medical center dedicated exclusively to the care of children, is committed to improving children’s physical and emotional health through family-centered care, research, education and advocacy. Named one of America’s Best Children's Hospitals by U.S. News and World Report, Connecticut Children's offers a full range of quality pediatric services at its hospitals in Hartford and Waterbury, NICUs in Hartford and Farmington, Specialty Care Centers in Farmington, Glastonbury, Hartford and Shelton and 13 other practice locations. For more information, visit [www.connecticutchildrens.org](http://www.connecticutchildrens.org) and connect on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/connecticutchildrens](https://www.facebook.com/connecticutchildrens).

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