



**Research**

**PANCREATIC CANCER ACTION NETWORK**

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## GRANT SNAPSHOT

### 2013 Skip Viragh – Pancreatic Cancer Action Network – AACR Inaugural Research Acceleration Network Grant

Grantees: PI: Michael Goggins, MD    Co-PI: Anil Rustgi, MD    Co-PI: Marcia Canto, MD  
Institutions: Johns Hopkins University    University of Pennsylvania    Johns Hopkins University



Research Project: *CAPS multicenter trial: Imaging and markers for pancreatic cancer screening*  
Award Period: July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2016  
Amount: \$1,000,000

## Biographical Highlights

Dr. Goggins is a Professor of Pathology, Medicine and Oncology, and an attending physician in the Division of Gastroenterology and Hepatology at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. His research is focused on the early detection of pancreatic cancer and he is Director of the Pancreatic Cancer Early Detection Laboratory at the Johns Hopkins University.

Dr. Rustgi is Chief of the Division of Gastroenterology and Director for the Center for Molecular Studies in Digestive and Liver Disease at the University of Pennsylvania, School of Medicine. He is also the Director of the Joint Center for Digestive, Liver and Pancreatic Medicine, University of Pennsylvania, School of Medicine and the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. He also serves as a member of the Scientific Advisory Board for the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network.

Dr. Canto is Professor of Medicine and Oncology at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, and the Director of Clinical Research, Division of Gastroenterology. She is a well-known expert in Gastroenterology and specifically pancreatic cancer early detection. She also serves as a member of the Medical Advisory Board for the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network.

## Project Overview

The goal of this project is to develop a screening method to detect pancreatic cancer early in individuals with an increased risk at developing the disease based on family history or genetic mutations. Pancreatic cancer arises from various types of lesions, which may eventually develop into malignant tumors. Pancreatic intraepithelial neoplasm (PanIN) is the most common lesion and cannot be seen using standard imaging techniques. Identification and removal of such lesions before they become cancerous provides patients with a reasonable chance of cure. These lesions carry various genetic mutations and the DNA of these lesions has been found in pancreatic juice (fluid in the pancreas that can be collected non-invasively). This project proposes to detect these lesions by evaluating mutations of various genes in pancreatic juice. In addition, pancreatic epithelial cells circulate in the blood and their presence is indicative of early lesions; proper detection of these cells in the blood is a promising diagnostic tool.