

Joseph A. Bellanti, MD, an Allergist and Immunologist

Get to know Allergist and Immunologist Dr. Joseph A. Bellanti, who serves patients in Washington, D.C.



New York City, Jan 29, 2020 ([IssueWire.com](http://www.IssueWire.com)) - Dr. Bellanti is a board-certified allergist / immunologist who serves as the Director of the International Center for Interdisciplinary Studies of Immunology (ICISI) at Georgetown University Medical Center and as a Professor of Pediatrics and Microbiology-Immunology, (Emeritus) at Georgetown University School of Medicine in Washington, D.C.

A native of Buffalo, Dr. Bellanti earned his medical degree from the Jacobs School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, University at Buffalo in 1958. Following completion of a residency at the Children's Hospital of Buffalo in 1961, he was accepted into a National Institutes of Health-supported postdoctoral fellowship in a developmental immunology training program at the University of Florida in 1961 under the direction of Richard T. Smith, MD, a pioneering pediatric immunologist and disciple of Robert A. Good, MD (1961-62). He later continued his postdoctoral studies as a Research Virologist at Walter Reed Army Institute of Research in Washington, D.C. (1962-65), where among his many research contributions with his colleagues was the seminal description of secretory IgA antiviral principle of respiratory secretions. In 1963, he joined the faculty of Georgetown University School of Medicine as an Assistant Professor of Pediatrics and Microbiology, where he rose to his current position of Professor of Pediatrics and Microbiology-Immunology in 1970.

Soon after arriving at Georgetown, Dr. Bellanti realized that his goal of generating new knowledge in immunology and translating it to clinical use would require adopting a multidisciplinary translational approach to immunology that would involve a horizontal matrix including both basic and clinical investigators, allied health professionals, statisticians, health educators, and the public. Accordingly, in 1975, he established and became the Director of the International Center for Interdisciplinary Studies of Immunology at Georgetown University Medical Center and later Director of the Division of Allergy-Immunology, Department of Pediatrics and the Division of Virology and Immunology in the Department of Laboratory Medicine of Georgetown University Hospital.

With a passion for his field and an unwavering commitment to his specialty, the doctor has focused a major investigative effort on antimicrobial research, evaluation of new vaccine strategies, and developmental immunology. Together with other investigators, he has studied antibody and phagocytic cell function in the newborn human and in experimental model systems. He and his colleagues described the antiviral activity of the secretory IgA system in respiratory secretions and later cellular responses to viral infections following immunization or natural infection. A major collaborative effort with Mexican colleagues was directed to the study of protective immune responses to measles vaccine administration via the nasal route, a technique originally pioneered by Dr. Albert B. Sabin, one of Dr. Bellanti's scientific teachers and collaborators.

Drawing upon his ground-breaking experience as an established clinical investigator in the field of translational research in immunology, Dr. Bellanti's academic career has been nurtured by his previous research that has focused on the immunopathogenesis of infectious diseases and allergic and autoimmune disorders. His experience as a GUMC clinical investigator was established by a track record of successfully directing major R01, Center and Program Project awards, as well as training grants. In addition to teaching medical students and residents, he directed a postgraduate training program in developmental immunology from 1968-1996 and a clinical residency program in allergy and immunology from 1978 -1992 from which over 270 graduates received training.

The most recent phase of Dr. Bellanti's research has been directed to studies exploring the role of epigenetic mechanisms in the control of gene expression related to Treg function, an important governing mechanism of immune system function. Together with active collaboration with basic science

colleagues, he continues making scientific contributions in critical areas of DNA methylation as a controlling mechanism of gene expression which are finding clinical application in the allergic diseases, the autoimmune disorders and cancer.

Dr, Bellanti's leadership role is exemplified by the many professional and scientific positions on which he has served. These include the American Board of Allergy and Immunology, a conjoint board of the American Board of Internal Medicine and the American Board of Pediatrics, from 1975 to 1980. He also served as the Board's president from 1979 to 1980. He is past-President of the Society for Pediatric Research (1980), InterAsma (1987-90), the American College of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology (ACAAI, 1991-92), and the Association of Medical Laboratory Immunologists (AMLI, 1992-93). His editorial positions include Editor-in-Chief of Pediatric Research from 1975 -1983, Editor-in-Chief of Annals of Allergy from 1982-1990, and Editor-in-Chief Allergy, Asthma Proceedings from 2004 until present.

Frequently, Dr. Bellanti lectures abroad in Europe and South America, sometimes in fluent Spanish or Italian. He is the recipient of numerous honors and awards, including the E. Mead Johnson Award for Excellence in Pediatric Research (1970); the Outstanding Educators of America Award of the William Peck Society (1972), the Humanitarian Award from the American College of Allergy and Immunology for "excellence and service and teaching of clinical immunology" in 1974; and the Distinguished Fellow Award in 1981. In 1998, he received the Distinguished Medical Alumnus Award from the State University of Buffalo. He is also the recipient of three honorary degrees: Honoris causa degrees from the University of Palermo (1992) and Georgetown University (2002), and the CEA Universidad San Pablo, Madrid, Spain (2015).

Among his many accolades, Dr. Bellanti has published more than 500 scientific articles and abstracts, as well as numerous textbook chapters. His widely acclaimed textbooks in immunology include the fourth edition, "Immunology IV: Clinical Applications in Health and Disease", which was published in English in 2012 and in Spanish in 2016. In addition to the printed version, both are available online with creative illustrations, animations, and interactive Q&As in every chapter and both are available on the following hyperlink: <https://www.immunologycenter.org/en/special-pricing>

The field of allergy and immunology involves the management of disorders related to the immune system. These conditions range from the very common to the very rare, spanning all ages and encompassing various organ systems. An allergist and immunologist is a physician specially trained to diagnose, treat, and manage allergies, asthma, and immunologic disorders, including primary immunodeficiency.

Learn More about Dr. Joseph A. Bellanti:

Through his findatopdoc profile, <https://www.findatopdoc.com/doctor/3176814-Joseph-Bellanti-Doctor> or through Georgetown University Medical Center, <https://microbiology.georgetown.edu/bellanti/>

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