



Jack R. Wands, M.D., was Chief of the Division of Gastroenterology at the Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University and at Lifespan from 1999-2023. Jack was a giant in the field of Hepatology and among the most prolific investigators in the history of our medical school.

Jack received his undergraduate degree from Washington State University and his M.D. from the University of Washington. His Internal Medicine training and Chief Residency occurred at Baltimore City Hospital and The Johns Hopkins Hospital, followed by Clinical and Research Fellowships in Gastroenterology at the Massachusetts General Hospital. He then joined the faculty at Massachusetts General and Harvard Medical School, rose to the rank of Associate Professor of Medicine and served as Director of the Molecular Hepatology Laboratory from 1988 until 1998. He then came to Providence as the Director of the Division of Gastroenterology and Liver Research Center, and the Jeffrey and Kimberly Greenberg – Artemis and Martha Joukowsky Professor in Gastroenterology and Professor of Medical Science at the Alpert Medical School of Brown University. His tenure as Chief of Gastroenterology was marked by substantial growth in the Division, renovation of the Rhode Island Hospital endoscopy suite, expansion of Interventional Gastroenterology at Lifespan, and opening of the Brown Medicine Endoscopy Suite in East Providence.

As Chief of the Division of Gastroenterology, Jack's leadership was marked by generosity and warmth toward all his faculty and a strong emphasis on providing the highest quality of Gastroenterology services to all patients, regardless of their resources. He was also a dedicated and talented mentor, committed to the superior education of students, postdoctoral research trainees, and clinical fellows. He was particularly proud of the extraordinary successes of his trainees, many of whom achieved high-level academic appointments at major institutions across the United States and in numerous countries around the world.

Jack's most significant mark, however, was made in the field of liver research. His dominant scholarly accomplishments included improving our understanding of the molecular pathogenesis of chronic Hepatitis B and C, and dissecting pivotal intracellular signaling networks that govern the progression of alcohol-related liver disease to either cirrhosis or liver cancer. Those efforts led to pioneering research and the discovery of tumor-associated molecules that drive the invasive and metastatic spread of liver cancer cells. Importantly, the lessons learned were found highly relevant to many other malignancies, holding promise for novel diagnostic and therapeutic strategies for tumors that still

lack effective treatments.

By any metric, Jack, was a pre-eminent physician-scientist and giant in his field. For over 50 years, he successfully secured continuous competitive research funding from the NIH and biotechnology/biopharmaceutical industries. He published over 500 peer-reviewed biomedical articles and delivered literally hundreds of keynote national and international lectures. His H-index of 113 corresponds to a rarefied level of productivity and scholarship achieved by only the most influential scientists. (An H-index of 40 is considered outstanding).

Throughout his career, Jack was passionate about translating his important laboratory research discoveries to advance liver cancer diagnostics and therapeutics in human patients. To that end, he was an inventor on 228 U.S. and international patents, the products of which continue to be investigated for non-invasive diagnosis and treatment of various malignancies, but particularly liver cancer. The impact of his work will be felt for decades to come.

Above all, Jack R. Wands, M.D. was a generous and magnanimous colleague who always treated coworkers with dignity and respect. His equanimity through all the challenges of his quarter-century at Brown was deeply admired by those who worked closely with him.