



Valerie P. Castle, M.D.

Ravitz Foundation Professor and Chair, Department of Pediatrics and Communicable Diseases

Professor of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology

Discovering Treatments for Childhood Cancers

Valerie P. Castle MD is Chair of the Department of Pediatrics and Communicable Diseases. Prior to becoming chair, Dr. Castle served as Associate Provost for Academic and Faculty Affairs at the University of Michigan. Dr. Castle received her bachelor's degree from McGill University in Montreal and her medical degree from McMaster University in Hamilton Ontario. Following residency training in pediatrics Dr. Castle next completed fellowship training in pediatric hematology-oncology at the University of Michigan. Dr. Castle joined the faculty at Michigan in 1990.

Dr. Castle's research work has focused on the pediatric solid tumor neuroblastoma. She is specifically interested in determining how neuroblastoma tumors develop and why they are able to escape killing by chemotherapy. Her laboratory has been funded by the National Cancer Institute and several foundations. Dr. Castle has received numerous awards and honors. She was elected as a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science for her research discovery into the chemotherapy signaling pathways that control neuroblastoma survival. Dr. Castle was awarded an American Society Hematology Scholar Award and was named a Centennial Fellow of the Medical Research Council of Canada.

Dr. Castle is also an expert on the clinical management of neuroblastoma. She serves on a number of medical, research and children-related boards and committees, including the Advisory Panel on Research of the Association of American Medical Colleges, the Scientific Board of Advisors St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, the E. Mead Johnson Award selection committee for the Pediatric Academic Societies and the Executive Committee of the Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs. Dr. Castle has been recognized in the Guide to America's Top Pediatricians and "Best Doctors in America".

Dr. Castle leads the UM Neuroblastoma Research Group, it is comprised of highly accomplished basic and clinical investigators all focused on finding new therapies to better treat neuroblastoma. Anthony Opipari MD PhD co-directs the group's basic laboratory studies. He received his undergraduate degree from Wayne State University and medical and PhD degrees from the University of Michigan. An accomplished molecular biologist, he coordinates the laboratories work focused on defining molecular pathways that can be exploited for therapeutic targeting. Roland Kwok PhD, a neuroscientist is a leading investigator in the study of protein modification by acetylation. He received his BS from Chu Hai College in Hong Kong, a MSC in Neurochemistry from the University of Saskatchewan and PhD in Neuroscience from the University of Pittsburgh. Chitra Subramanian PhD is a biochemist. She completed her BS and PhD degree in Biochemistry at the University of Madras. Finally, the group also includes two accomplished clinician-investigators Gregory Yanik MD and Rajen Mody MD both of whom develop and conduct clinical trials in neuroblastoma.