

KAISER-PERMANENTE TEACHING AWARD FOR PRE-CLINICAL EDUCATION

Roger J. Grekin, M.D.

Professor of Internal Medicine

Associate Chief of Staff for Research and Development, VA Medical Center, Ann Arbor



"Often, the most difficult task is deciding what not to teach," Roger J. Grekin says. "The amount of potentially relevant information seems almost infinite; our job is to identify a core body of knowledge." Over the course of a 32-year career, Dr. Grekin has imparted that core body of knowledge – and dynamically engaged his students while doing so.

Dr. Grekin is widely appreciated as a highly caring and competent physician and well-loved teacher who is eminently approachable for students at any level. Regarded as a superb lecturer, Dr. Grekin's insightful, well-organized and cogent discussions on topics in endocrinology set the standard for excellence. As one physician notes, "His lectures have been an inspiration for generations of students."

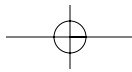
Dr. Grekin also is widely regarded as the ultimate bedside clinician who trained legions of medical students on the wards and in the Endocrinology and Metabolism clinics at the University of Michigan and Veterans Administration Hospital of Ann Arbor. As one faculty member notes, "Dr. Grekin has done a wonderful job shepherding the VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System's research program for many years."

While Dr. Grekin's clinical interests are endocrine hypertension, electrolyte disorders, calcium disorders, metabolic bone disease and disorders of water metabolism, he has conducted research in the areas of aldosterone, atrial natriuretic factor, mineralocorticoid obesity-related hypertension, fatty acids, sympathetic nervous system and vascular remodeling.

In experimental animal studies, Dr. Grekin has shown that the infusion of fatty acids into the hepatic portal vein increased arterial blood pressure – an observation suggesting that high blood pressure associated with abdominal obesity might be due to increased production of fatty acids by abdominal fat cells.

Dr. Grekin's group is now examining the relationship between blood pressure and the production of fatty acid by abdominal fat cells, and they have found that individuals with higher abdominal fatty acid production also have increased renal nerve activity, which is an important regulator of blood pressure. These results suggest that abdominal fatty acid production may contribute to the development of obesity-related hypertension.

The U-M Department of Internal Medicine has recognized Dr. Grekin's contributions with an award for outstanding service to the department and a lifetime achievement award. A colleague says, "Dr. Grekin is a highly trusted colleague, cheerful under the most difficult circumstances."



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In 1999, he received the Lee Weatherbee Memorial Award, the VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System's highest individual honor. The award recognizes one staff member who demonstrates integrity, a sense of humor and compassion – "an individual who treats each and every person with friendship, dignity and care."

Dr. Grekin joined the University of Michigan Medical School faculty in 1974 as an assistant professor of Internal Medicine, became associate professor in 1981 and professor in 1986. Among his many career distinctions, Dr. Grekin was chief of the Endocrinology section of the VA Ann Arbor Medical Center from 1974 until 2000, and associate chair of Internal Medicine for Faculty Affairs from 1996 until 2000. Since 1989, he has been associate chief of staff for Research and Development at the VA Medical Center in Ann Arbor, and component director of the U-M Medical School second-year curriculum since 1998.

Dr. Grekin is a fellow of the American Heart Association's Council of High Blood Pressure Research.

Dr. Grekin says, "I enjoy family, running, biking, theater, music and travel. If I'm not exhausted, I like to read nonfiction. I'm a crossword puzzle addict.

"I'm grateful to Steve Fajans, John Marshal, Doug Greene, Peter Arvan, Ron Bishop, John Sheagren, David Humes, Rich Moseley, Lloyd Jacobs, Dan Hinshaw, Eric Young, Bill Kelley, Tachi Yamada, Marc Lippman and Wayne Davis for the support they've provided. I'd particularly like to thank Arno Kumagai for allowing an old guy to stay involved and Joe Fantone, whose insight, intelligence and balance allow all of us in the education enterprise to get the job done.

"I'd like to thank my parents, Zivia and Jack Grekin, my mother-in-law, Ruth Zitomer, and my children, Joe, Josh and Emily, for their abiding love and support; they give meaning to my life. Linda, my confidant, moral advisor, educational consultant, sartorial arbiter and love of my life, has made it all worthwhile. I count myself as incredibly lucky to be able to work as a physician, and doubly so for the opportunity to participate in the teaching of our extraordinary students."

