

Melvyn T. Korobkin
COLLEGIATE PROFESSORSHIP IN RADIOLOGY



Dr. Korobkin:

From Auspicious Beginnings to Illustrious Career

Upon graduating from the Yale School of Medicine in 1967, Dr. Korobkin went to UC-San Francisco for radiology residency and in 1972 joined their faculty. The following year, UCSF became one of the first medical centers in the nation to install a body CT scanner, and Dr. Korobkin was heading up this revolutionary new area of radiology. Thus began a 40-year-long career dedicated to exploring and demonstrating the possibilities of CT in diagnosing abdominal disease.

Excitement and enthusiasm marked these early days, and they come to life again when Dr. Korobkin recounts his wonder at being able to visualize the adrenal glands for the very first time or describes the intellectual energy this new technology inspired. Collaborating with other radiologists, he and his team developed many of the first protocols for body CT imaging. He was one of the founding members of the Society of Uroradiology in 1974 and the Society of Computed Body Tomography in 1976. Through these societies, Dr. Korobkin helped bring together academic radiologists from around the country who were committed to uroradiology and CT to promote and share research, mentor nascent academic radiologists, and offer postgraduate courses to both community and academic radiologists.

Dr. Korobkin was by now one of the foremost authorities in abdominal radiology. He then spent six years as Head of Body CT at Duke University and another five years in practice at Sinai Hospital of Detroit/Wayne State Medical School. In 1989, he joined U-M's Department of Radiology as director of the Abdominal Division, and made it his home for the next 23 years. In an atmosphere he describes as friendly and highly stimulating—the right fit for his commitment to research, teaching, and collaboration—he went on to do some of his most important work. Radiology Chair Dr. N. Reed Dunnick sums up Dr. Korobkin's most significant breakthrough: "Recognizing the frequency with which adrenal nodules are found on abdominal CT scans, Dr. Korobkin focused his research on finding a way to non-invasively distinguish the most common etiology, a benign adenoma, from more ominous lesions. The technique he and his colleagues developed has become the standard of care for evaluating these nodules."

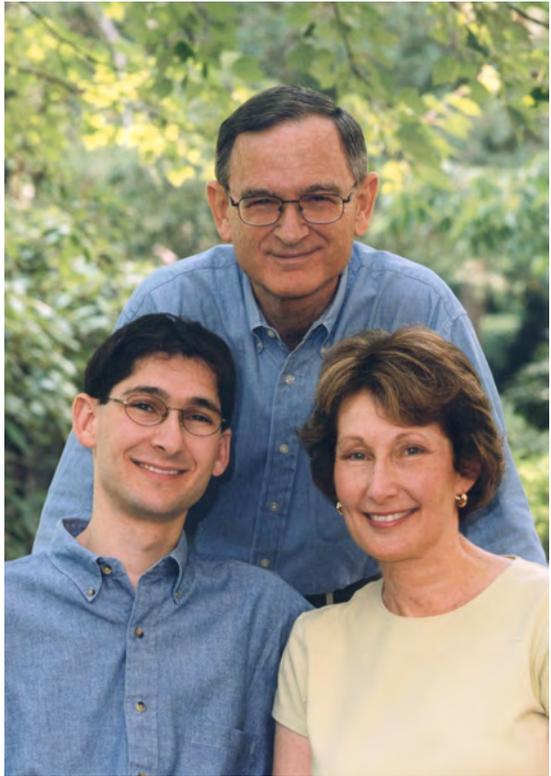
"One of my most rewarding collaborations at the U-M has involved my work with the Adrenal Tumor Board. It has become one of the most active boards in the US... bringing together surgeons, oncologists, radiologists, and pathologists on a weekly basis."

Dr. Korobkin and his team were able to show that those adrenal lesions that were of sufficiently low density on noncontrast CT scans were benign.

Further observing that CT contrast medium washes out of adrenal masses at different rates, Dr. Korobkin and his colleagues investigated this difference over several years to develop a quantitative method that accurately and consistently distinguishes higher density benign from malignant adrenal masses. The benefit to patients is considerable: Prior to this new method, patients required either a needle biopsy or a series of CT scans over several months. Now, patients with benign adrenal masses are spared an invasive biopsy and its inherent risks and the radiation exposure from follow-up scans.

These are but some of Dr. Korobkin's contributions to radiology, medicine and scholarship, and in 2008 the Society of Abdominal Radiology honored him with their first Lifetime Achievement Award.

"I have relished the opportunity to mentor and encourage up-and-coming academic radiologists in learning and perfecting research techniques, writing scientific papers, and developing lectures."



Dr. Korobkin with son Daniel and wife Linda.

Reflections on Dr. Korobkin's Career

"Mel undoubtedly is a great radiologist and investigator, but mostly I see him as a great human being. He sincerely helped younger radiologists develop and improve their clinical and academic skills. Mel personally supported and encouraged me as a young faculty, always providing honest and constructive criticism with respect and kindness."

Hero Hussain, M.D.

Associate Professor

Division of Abdominal Radiology/MRI

"When Dr. Korobkin came to the Department as a Professor of Radiology, he was a renowned genitourinary radiologist with expertise in adrenal imaging. As this was also an area of my research interest, I was concerned that he would take over this research. But my concerns were unfounded, as Dr. Korobkin graciously involved me in his research projects and I did so in return, and together we did some of the initial work on CT washout features of adrenal masses, which became one of the standard methods by which adrenal masses are characterized today."

Isaac Francis, M.D.

Professor

Division of Abdominal Radiology

Co-Director, Tumor Imaging Core

Associate Chair for Research

"Mel Korobkin, M.D. epitomizes the tripartite mission of teaching, research and patient care of the University of Michigan Health System. While his pioneering work on adrenal-specific imaging protocols has become the gold standard for the evaluation of adrenal masses, his commitment to patient-centered care and service excellence really set the stage for the creation of the first Tumor Board dedicated to adrenal and endocrine-related tumors at the University of Michigan."

Gary D. Hammer, M.D., Ph.D.

Professor

Millie Schembechler Professor of Adrenal Cancer

Director, Endocrine Oncology Program

Director, Center for Organogenesis

Departments of Internal Medicine, Molecular & Integrative Physiology

and Cell & Developmental Biology

"Dr. Korobkin's analytical approach and careful attention to detail in the investigation of the clinical problems faced by abdominal imagers has advanced the field of uro-radiology."

N. Reed Dunnick, M.D.

Fred Jenner Hodges Professor

Chair of Radiology

A Deep Respect for Research, Teaching, and Collaboration

The Melvyn T. Korobkin Collegiate Professorship in Radiology seeks to do two very important things. One is to honor Dr. Korobkin's contributions to medicine, to the Department of Radiology, and to his many students and colleagues. The other is to ensure that the excellence Dr. Korobkin exemplifies continues to thrive in the Department.

Dr. Korobkin is highly regarded by colleagues, former trainees, and students. His passion for CT and its promise in abdominal medicine—brought to fruition through rigorous research—is matched by the generosity and joy he has brought to mentoring young faculty, training residents, and collaborating daily with the outstanding radiologists and medical faculty at U-M. His serving on the editorial boards of the major radiology journals since 1980 and his nearly 300 publications demonstrates his dedication to the acquisition and dissemination of knowledge.

It is this kind of vitality and excellence that makes the University of Michigan one of the most esteemed in the nation, able to attract and retain talent of the highest caliber. It is also what the community served by U-M's Health System has come to expect and from which it benefits.

Please consider contributing to The Melvyn T. Korobkin Collegiate Professorship in Radiology. The generosity of alumni, faculty, colleagues, family, friends, and the community the University serves helps to ensure that the excellence exemplified by Dr. Korobkin continues to distinguish the University and the Department of Radiology.

To learn how you can contribute, please contact Alisha Faciane at affenty@umich.edu or at 734.232.6402.

**Department of Radiology
Development and Alumni Relations
1121 Cardiovascular Center
1500 E. Medical Center Drive
Ann Arbor, MI 48109-5873
734.232.6402**

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