



DALHOUSIE
UNIVERSITY

| FACULTY OF MEDICINE

INFORMED NEWSLETTER





April News

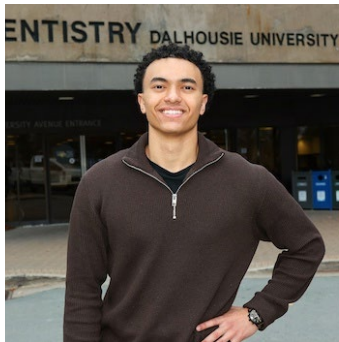
This month's issue of *REMEDY* is all about recognizing potential—whether it's in a student's spark, a research breakthrough, or a community's shared vision for a healthier future.

You'll meet Malek Mahmoud, a Dalhousie Dentistry student whose perseverance and heart are helping shape the future of care. We celebrate outstanding alumni making waves around the world, and spotlight Dal researchers leading global conversations on vaccine equity and pandemic preparedness.

You'll also find a sneak peek at our next Breakthrough Breakfast—focused on early intervention for youth mental health—and get inspired by Dalhousie's 2025 OpenThinkers as they challenge ideas and ignite change.

Thank you for being part of our journey. Your support helps turn potential into progress.

More stories like this can be found on [our website](#).



He's not a dentistry student — but you'd never know it

Malek Mahmoud spends a lot of time in the Faculty of Dentistry, but he's not a dental student. At least, not yet.

But Malek, now in his third year of a bachelor of science degree in microbiology and immunology, is confident that's what his future holds.

Two Dal Med grads honoured as Notable Alumni

Dr. Allen Eaves (MSc'67, MD'69) and Dr. Eldon R. Smith (MD'67, LLD'14) are among the most recent inductees as Dalhousie's notable alumni are recognized for leadership and impact across fields. In March 2025, ten distinguished individuals were added, including pioneers in agriculture, health, innovation, public service, and science. Their achievements continue to inspire and shape communities.

It's World Immunization Week. How prepared is Canada if vaccines are needed for a new pandemic?

With the global resurgence of many vaccine-preventable diseases, World Immunization Week (April 24-30) provides a timely opportunity for Canadians to reflect on the goal of "Immunization for All."

The World Health Organization (WHO) raises awareness each year of the importance of equitable access to lifesaving and health-protecting vaccines.



News & Updates

More exciting updates from Dalhousie's Faculty of Medicine are below. To learn more or donate, visit our [website](#).

Breakthrough Breakfast: Early Intervention for Youth Mental Health

Attendees will gain insights into how this pioneering research helps our partners improve diagnoses, treatments, and support systems for young people facing mental health challenges.

Immediately after the event, we invite you to meet Dr. Lori Wonzey, the new Sun Life Chair in Youth Mental Health, and explore our mini informational exhibition on exciting mental health research.



Girls Just Wanna Have Funding

The "Girls Just Want to Have Funding" campaign is designed to empower women researchers and amplify their contributions to the scientific community. This initiative celebrates International Women's Day by raising critical funds to support women-led and women-focused research at Dalhousie's Faculty of Medicine.

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Dalhousie researchers identify beneficial role for protein considered a “bad guy” in allergies



By Laura Eggertson

A protein found in high levels in people with allergies can also stimulate a beneficial response by helping a type of immune cells called mast cells fight viral infection, a group of Dalhousie University researchers has discovered. The finding has implications both for a class of medications doctors prescribe to fight severe asthma and for the development of future therapies for infection and cancer, says Dr. Jean Marshall, a Professor at Dalhousie's Faculty of Medicine. Dr. Marshall is a senior co-author of [the study](#) that identified the role of this protein, called Interleukin-5, or IL-5.

Mast cells reside throughout the body. They release substances that cause allergy and asthma symptoms when people are in contact with something to which they are allergic. However, they are also known for alerting the body to invading bacteria and viruses and helping it to fight infections.

In people with severe forms of allergic asthma, contact with allergens such as pollens, pet fur or house dust mites activates mast cells. This leads to the immediate release of small molecules such as histamine, which can cause airways to swell and constrict, making it difficult to breathe properly.

Viral respiratory infections, such as respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), are associated with worsening of allergic asthma and asthma deaths, Dr. Marshall and her colleagues say in their study, published in the February 28 edition of the *Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology*.

“As we learn more about how mast cells can fight the very earliest stages of infection it may provide us with opportunities to better mobilize them to fight viral infections in the airways,” Dr. Marshall says.

Dr. Marshall and her colleagues studied the interaction between the protein IL-5 and mast cells. Researchers have previously considered the protein a “bad guy” in allergic diseases because it promotes the development and recruitment of inflammatory cells, found in the lungs of asthmatic people. These cells can damage lung tissues.

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