



Dear students,

As always, I begin with a heartfelt prayer for the safe return of our hostages—for without them, we cannot look to the future. I also pray for the healing of our wounded, both in body and soul, and for comfort to the bereaved families enduring the deepest sorrow.

Last week, at the White Coat Ceremony for the students in the three-year medical track, we marked the transition from pre-clinical studies to clinical training in hospitals and community clinics. This is a defining moment, where you, as students, begin to be seen by patients as part of the medical team. I have no doubt that you will cherish this trust and serve as a source of confidence and support—with humility, compassion, camaraderie, and professionalism. This is the beginning of a long and meaningful journey, and you are now part of an inspiring community devoted to improving health and well-being. This community will support you but will also challenge you.



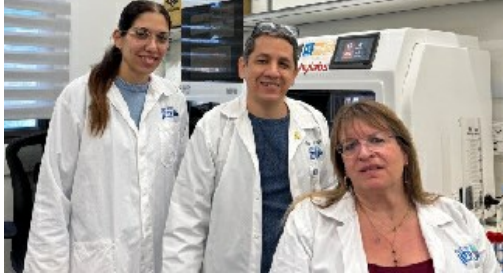
But you have already proven your ability to rise to challenges. While some choose in these difficult times to seek refuge elsewhere until the storm passes, you have returned—from Georgia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Jordan, Lithuania, Italy, Romania, Croatia, Russia. Now, of all times, you have returned to complete your medical studies here, in the Galilee. Some of you are even making tremendous contributions to the national effort. We are immensely proud of you; may you go from strength to strength

The reality in our country presents many challenges, but it is important to recognize that the way we choose to act, and the meaning we find in our work, can provide us with stability, inner strength, and a sense of purpose. Dear students, clad in your white coats, engaged in medical research and health professions—hold firmly to our mission and stay focused on long-term goals to build a better future for the residents of the Galilee and for all of humanity. Take a look at this newsletter—we are undoubtedly on the right path.

Wishing a blessed and peaceful Ramadan to our Muslim friends as the holy month begins.

Yours sincerely,
Prof. Orly Avni
Dean of the Azrieli Faculty of Medicine

What's New at the Faculty



For the First Time in Israel: Biobank Integrating Biological Samples and Bacteria Linked to a Database

This week, the Tzafon Medical Center received notification that it has won a grant from the Israel Innovation Authority to establish The Tzafon Data and Bio-Bank in partnership with the Azrieli Faculty of Medicine. This will not only be the first biobank in northern Israel but also a unique facility that will incorporate bacterial samples in addition to biological specimens.
[Read more →](#)



Dr. Sivan Spitzer Wins Prestigious EU-IHI Grant

Dr. Sivan Spitzer has achieved an extraordinary milestone, securing Bar-Ilan University's first-ever prestigious EU-IHI grant from the European Union. The grant, is aimed at developing an innovative platform to improve medication adherence among patients with cardio-metabolic conditions such as diabetes, obesity, and hypertension.
[Read more →](#)



Art in Times of War Exhibition Arrives at Azrieli Faculty of Medicine

Following the events of October 7, Bar-Ilan University's Resilience Center, together with the university's library system, initiated the exhibition "Soul Material: Art in Times of War." The exhibition, which was displayed for several months at the Bar-Ilan (Central) Library, featured powerful, moving, and thought-provoking works created by faculty members and students. Prof. Keren Agay-Shay sought to bring this experience to the North, allowing us to engage with these works as well.
[Read more →](#)



Bootcamp for Prof. Meital Gal-Tanamy!

Prof. Meital Gal-Tanamy, a pioneering researcher in virology and vaccines, has been selected to participate in a prestigious training program organized by BIRAD, the commercialization company of Bar-Ilan University, in collaboration with the Arieli Group investment firm.
[Read more →](#)



Faculty of Medicine Stands Out at Bar-Ilan Open Day

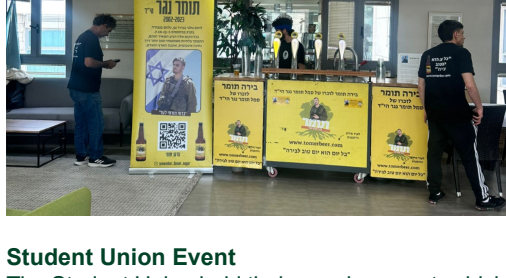
The Faculty of Medicine participated in the Bar-Ilan University Open Day on February 14, 2025. Representatives from the academic staff, administrative staff (Sharon Mines, Hadas Hasidim, Dr. Alissa Burstein, Noam David Reshelbach), and current students (Shelly Chen and Tamar Cohen) met with potential students at the Ramat Gan campus. The Dean, Prof. Orly Avni, and researchers Dr. Moran Yadid, Dr. Ron Orbach, and Dr. Liron Rosenkrantz gave lectures, "Research and Medicine in the Galilee."

Conferences and Visits



Roadburg Foundation Visit

On February 20, 2025, we were honored to host the Roadburg Foundation management. The purpose of the visit was to report on the ROM Galil 2 program, which was launched thanks to Foundation funding, and to become acquainted with the students who were accepted to the program. The Foundation also received an overview from the university's Prof. Aryeh Zaban, and the Dean, Prof. Orly Avni, about the academic breakthroughs that have occurred at the Faculty despite the challenging past year, and the vision for the future.



Student Union Event

The Student Union held their opening event, which was unfortunately postponed due to the war in the north. As part of the event, students received gifts, some of which were purchased from businesses in the north as part of our commitment and support for the north's return to routine. A beer stand was also placed, in memory of Tomer Nagar, a Golani fighter who fell on October 7th.

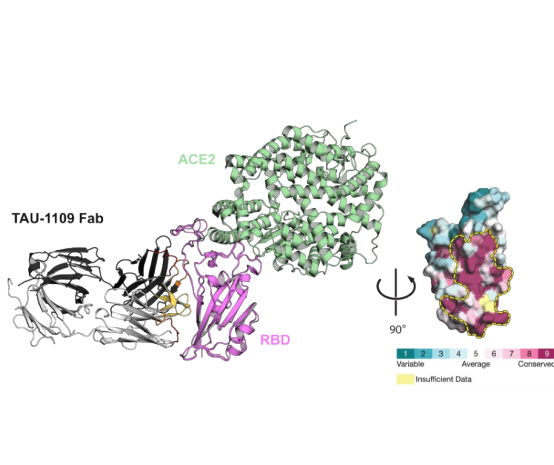
Spotlight on Research

Seeing the Invisible

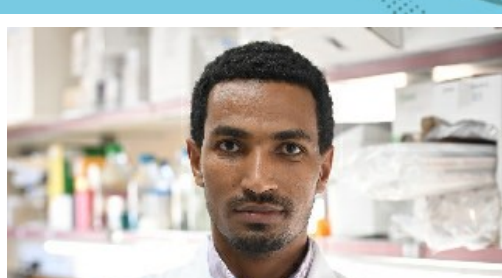
Prof. Moshe Dessau is a leading researcher in the structural biology of infectious diseases, focusing on the mechanisms of viral entry into host cells, immune evasion, and viral evolution—all at atomic resolution. Using advanced techniques such as X-ray crystallography, cryo-EM, and high-resolution molecular imaging, he uncovers the strategies viruses employ to recognize, bind, and penetrate host cells. His groundbreaking research provides critical insights for the design of novel antiviral drugs and vaccines, integrating biochemistry, biophysics, and protein engineering.

One of his major discoveries is the determination of the atomic structure of viral proteins essential for infection, enabling a deep understanding of virus-host immune interactions. Recently, his lab determined the atomic structure of a novel antibody that effectively neutralizes SARS-CoV-2 across all its variants. This structure provided a detailed molecular understanding of the neutralization mechanism, paving the way for the development of innovative therapeutics against the virus.

In his lab, innovation drives every experiment—each resolved structure brings us one step closer to deciphering the complexity of the molecular world and developing biotechnological strategies to combat future pandemics.



Awards



Congratulations to the student **Mulate Zrihun** upon winning Teva's BiInnovation Fellowship & Mentorship Program scholarship.

Promotions and Appointments



Congratulations to **Dr. Lidia Izakson** upon her appointment as clinical senior teacher



Congratulations to **Prof. Wisam Sbeit** upon his promotion to clinical associate professor

Press Exposure

ynet.co.il: מהמילואים לקמפוס: במקום להשלים שעות שניה - דירגתי מטריאות" (נטליה סליג) ←

doctorsonly.co.il: תואר פרופסור חבר קליני למנהל מכן הגסטרו של המרכז הרפואי לגליל (פרופ' יוסאם סבית) ←

כאן ד: הסיבות לכך ששיעורי החיסון של החברה הערבית גבוהים מאילו בחברה היהודית (ד"ר ג'ומאנה עיסא חזאד) ←

זהר הצפון: כבוד: הפרופסור שמפעיל קליניקה בכרמיאל (פרופ נימר עאסי) ←

סוכה הצפון: מאגר ביובק המשלב דגימות ביולוגיות וחידקים המקושרות למסד נתונים ←

חדש בגליל: מדעיים לעובדי העירייה במלחמת חרבות ברזל ←

דיעות הגליל: ראש העיר טוף הגליל ביקר בניית בדיקות המעקב של ספרת הסוכרת בגליל ←

מנט הנריה הגלילי המערבי: פרופ' מאיה וולף ←

Upcoming Events

12.3.2025 - Inaugural Conference, Center for Genetic disorders and Cancer כנס השקת המרכז לחקר גנטיקה ומחלות ממאירות

31.3.2025 - Teddy Bear Hospital בית חולים לדובים

[To the full Events list →](#)



Get a glimpse of the recent Azrieli faculty and researcher academic publications, updated weekly, [here](#).

