Adam M. Sonabend, MD

The Department of Neurosurgery is pleased to announce that Dr. Adam Sonabend will be joining the faculty as Assistant Professor of Neurosurgery this summer. He is currently an Assistant Professor of Neurosurgery at New York Presbyterian Hospital Columbia University Medical Center, and Director of the Translational Brain Tumor Laboratory at the Columbia University Herbert Irving Comprehensive Cancer Center.

Dr. Sonabend received his medical degree from the Faculty of Medicine, Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico (UNAM). A native of Mexico City, he graduated at the top of his class and was awarded the Gabino Barreda Medal from UNAM. Following his graduation, he worked in translational brain tumor research at the University of Chicago. He subsequently completed his neurosurgical training at New York Presbyterian Hospital Columbia University Medical Center. In addition to his general neurosurgical training, he gained extensive training in neurosurgical oncology with Dr. Jeffrey Bruce, and glioma biology with Dr. Peter Canoll.
Dr. Sonabend’s primary clinical focus is on the surgical management of tumors of the brain and skull base, including brain metastasis from other cancers, intraventricular tumors, gliomas such as oligodendrogliomas, ependymomas, astrocytomas and glioblastomas, CNS lymphoma, meningiomas, and craniopharyngiomas among other tumors. He is also interested in trigeminal neuralgia and its surgical management. As a surgeon, he integrates techniques such as laser ablation, radiosurgery, convection-enhanced delivery, stereotaxic navigation, fluorescent microscopy, microsurgery, as well as awake and asleep brain mapping techniques with electrophysiology to achieve safe and effective resections.

Dr. Sonabend began his career at Columbia in 2015, when he first joined the department upon completion of his residency. His scholarly contributions have led to over 50 peer-reviewed articles, book chapters, and national and international presentations. He is recipient of the Society of Neurological Surgeons Research Award (2009), the Neurosurgery Research and Education Fellowship Award (2012), and the Diversity Recruitment Award by the Office of the Senior Provost at Columbia University (2015). In 2016, he was one of 16 physician-scientists, and the only neurosurgeon in the United States, to receive the prestigious, 5-year NIH Director’s Early Independence Award (DP5) valued at over $2 million dollars.

Dr. Sonabend’s research lab focuses on topoisomerase II-mediated transcriptional regulation in gliomas, and personalized use of TOP2-targeting chemotherapy to treat malignant brain cancer. He is also investigating how the immune system shapes the genome of malignant gliomas, and its implications for immunotherapy for this disease. He has participated in the design and execution of several clinical trials and has been a temporary member of the Clinical Neuroimmunology and Brain Tumors (CNBT) study section at the NIH since 2016.

Dr. Sonabend is fluent in Spanish and will see patients at Northwestern Memorial Hospital beginning August 1, 2017.