

The VOICE of FTD

SUMMER 2019

Meet Dr. Nupur Ghoshal

Neurologist with Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, Missouri

Dr. Nupur Ghoshal specializes in treating patients with dementia, Alzheimer's disease, frontotemporal dementia, Parkinson's disease, Lewy body dementia, neurodegenerative disorders, and geriatric neurology. She also studies the mechanisms underlying neurodegenerative disorders, including tau protein and progranulin protein in frontotemporal dementia (FTD).

Dr. Ghoshal is a board-certified neurologist who works at the [Memory Diagnostic Center](#) in St. Louis, Missouri. An associate professor of neurology and psychiatry at [Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis](#), she sees patients at [Barnes Jewish Hospital](#) and is a clinical investigator for the [Knight Alzheimer's Disease Research Center \(ADRC\)](#).

Depending on the day and the week, Dr. Ghoshal wears different hats, including clinical researcher, medical educator and principal investigator. She made time to talk to us one day between making rounds in the hospital.

"It is an interesting time in the field," said Dr. Ghoshal, who speaks quickly and enthusiastically

"Our research has the potential to discover treatments and cures for frontotemporal disorders, Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease as well as other dementias and geriatric neurology issues. It all keeps me sharp in a wide variety of issues within the neurological field."

BACKGROUND

Dr. Ghoshal started working for Washington University School of Medicine 12 years ago, beginning as a fellow in 2007 and becoming an instructor in 2009. In addition to her research, Ghoshal teaches premedical and medical students and residents. She also cares for patients in both hospital and outpatient settings.

Her interest in science comes from her father, a veterinary sciences researcher who studies neuroscience. During high school, Dr. Ghoshal investigated plant pathology and bovine sciences. She became more interested in neurology and Alzheimer's disease in college and studied tau protein during graduate school.

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When she joined the faculty at Washington University, her mentors had been following families who had FTD for a couple of decades, and research in this area was accelerating. She began contacting and interacting with families affected by these devastating diseases.

“When ARTFL (Advancing Research and Treatment for Frontotemporal Lobar Degeneration) and LEFFTDS (Longitudinal Evaluation of Familial Frontotemporal Dementia Subjects) came along, I said to count me in,” Dr. Ghoshal said.

Dr. Ghoshal enjoys both research and patient care. While the [Memory Diagnostic Center](#) primarily treats Alzheimer’s patients, it also serves as a resource for learning more about FTD. Additionally, she treats patients affected by FTD in the hospital.

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR FOR TANGLES

As one of the principal investigators for the Human CNS Tau Kinetics in Tauopathies, aka [TANGLES](#), Dr. Ghoshal leads team members in recruiting, qualifying, and overseeing clinical research trial participants. She works with Dr. Randall Bateman, the Charles F. and Joanne Knight Distinguished Professor of Neurology at Washington University.

TANGLES was established to provide a better understanding of the role that tau protein has in neurodegenerative disorders. Understanding the metabolic processes of tau — how it is made, transported, and cleared in the human body — is



Dr. Nupur Ghoshal
Neurologist



important in designing future treatments and diagnostic tools to target this protein.

TANGLES is a two-year clinical trial that will involve 32 participants. Only 20 of the slots have been filled, and the study still is recruiting. It has been challenging to find eligible people, Dr. Ghoshal said.

Persons diagnosed with Progressive Supranuclear Palsy (PSP), Corticobasal Degeneration (CBD), or FTD due to MAPT mutations are eligible. Biological family members of MAPT mutation carriers also are eligible. Each participant, accompanied by a care partner, makes six visits to the study site over a four-month period.

“Commitment to studies is amazing,” she said of those participating in FTD research. So far, the TANGLES study has a 100% completion rate for those who begin the trial.

Some study participants come from as far away as New York and Canada, and family members or caregivers make the time to travel with them.

In addition to her work in St. Louis, Dr. Ghoshal also is overseeing five participants in the TANGLES

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study who are being seen at a specialty center in London. “We were able to work out the IRB (Institutional Review Board) and UK (United Kingdom) regulations,” Dr. Ghoshal explained. “London is able to bring people in quickly.”

LIFE

In her free time, Dr. Ghoshal enjoys attending Indian dance and ballet performances and visiting museums. Recently, she attended a local lecture by Jeffrey Herr, the curator of Hollyhock House, Frank Lloyd Wright’s first Los Angeles commission for an oil heiress.

She also is involved in supporting women in medicine, recently hosting a high tea for Northwestern University alumna and current students at the Drake Hotel in Chicago.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Dr. Ghoshal earned an undergraduate degree in genetics (minor in zoology, concentration in biotechnology) from Iowa State University in 1995 and a Ph.D. in cell and molecular biology at Northwestern University in 2001. In 2003, she earned a medical degree from the Feinberg School of Medicine at Northwestern University in Chicago.

Dr. Ghoshal completed an internship and residency at [Barnes Jewish Hospital](#) and a fellowship in geriatric neurology at [Washington University](#).

Over the course of her career, Dr. Ghoshal has been honored with several awards. In 2009, she received

the Alene and Meyer Kopelow Award for achievement in direct patient care and aging research and the Richard and Mildred Poletsky Award for contributions to dementia care and research. She also was recognized as one of the Top 44 providers with highest patient satisfaction by Washington University School of Medicine in 2010. In 2017, the International Association of HealthCare Professionals (IAHCP) featured Dr. Nupur Ghoshal in the premier publication of The Leading Physicians of the World.

Dr. Ghoshal has presented her work at various meetings and conferences. Throughout the course of her career, her work has been showcased at the [American Academy of Neurology](#) (AAN), the International Conference on Alzheimer’s Disease (ICAD), the [Alzheimer’s Association International Conference](#) (AAIC), the [Society for Neuroscience](#) (SFN) and the [Gerontological Society of America](#) (GSA) meetings.

In addition, she has published numerous materials on topics related to neurology. She also serves on the Medical Alumni Board at [Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine](#).

She is also a member of the [American Medical Association](#) (AMA) and the [American Academy of Neurology](#) (AAN). Recently, she was appointed to the [Residency Examination Advisory Panel](#) for the AAN.

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