



To School of Medicine faculty and staff and JHM leadership

Dear Colleagues,

We are pleased to announce that Michael Caterina has been named director of the Department of Biological Chemistry for the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. He is currently serving as interim director, and has done an outstanding job in that role.

Michael is an innovative researcher who studies the molecular underpinnings of certain kinds of pain. He currently serves as the Solomon H. Snyder Professor of Neurosurgery and is also a professor in the departments of biological chemistry and neuroscience. In addition, he is director of the Neurosurgery Pain Research Institute and a member of the Center for Sensory Biology.

Michael's work is focused on a group of ion channel proteins in the transient receptor potential vanilloid (TRPV) family; he discovered the first mammalian member of this family as a postdoctoral fellow. These channels play a key role in the sensation of warm and hot temperature, as well as other stimuli. By examining these channels, he has helped to define how pain sensation is mediated by both neuronal and non-neuronal cells — work that could lead to innovative ways to reduce both neuropathic and inflammatory pain. Michael is an internationally recognized expert in his field, as evidenced by both his strong history of extramural funding and frequent invitations to speak at national and international conferences.

Michael is not only an outstanding researcher, he is a skilled educator, leader and administrator. He has expanded the scope of research in the Neurosurgery Pain Research Institute to examine the basis of pain in a variety of illnesses, including cerebral palsy, trigeminal neuralgia and peripheral nerve sheath tumors.

Michael is something of a Hopkins lifer, earning both his medical degree and a doctorate in biochemistry, cellular and molecular biology here. He spent four years as a postdoctoral fellow at the University of California San Francisco, where he made the sentinel discovery of TRPV1, the capsaicin receptor. He then returned to Johns Hopkins as an assistant professor.

We appreciate the work of the search committee, co-chaired by James Berger and Geraldine Seydoux, for its diligence throughout the process.

Michael's extensive background in biological chemistry and other areas of research, as well as his innovative leadership and commitment to foster those around him, will serve him well in his new role. Please join us in congratulating him on this well-deserved appointment.

Sincerely,

Paul B. Rothman, M.D.
Dean of the Medical Faculty
CEO, Johns Hopkins Medicine

Landon S. King, M.D.
Executive Vice Dean
School of Medicine