

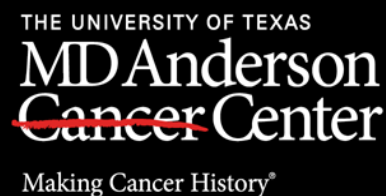
## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

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**Carlos A. Torres-Cabala, M.D.**  
Professor, Pathology, Dermatology and  
Translational Molecular Pathology  
Section Chief, Dermatopathology

The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center  
Houston, TX



## An unrivaled place to learn

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Even after completing extensive clinical and research training in pathology, it didn't take much to convince Carlos A. Torres-Cabala, M.D., to apply for MD Anderson's Dermatopathology Fellowship. He knew the experience he'd gain during the program would be invaluable for his career.

"MD Anderson is one of the most prestigious institutions worldwide in cancer care. Pathology at MD Anderson is unparalleled in terms of the types and complexity of cases, and the pathology department is one of the largest in the world," says Torres-Cabala, who had already earned his Doctor of Medicine and pharmacy degrees in Peru, completed clinical residencies in anatomic and clinical pathology and pursued a postdoctoral research fellowship in molecular pathology before making his way to MD Anderson in 2007.

During his fellowship, Torres-Cabala encountered a large volume of rare and complex dermatopathology cases, allowing him to refine his expertise under the guidance of world-renowned faculty.

"As a fellow at MD Anderson, I was surprised by how often I encountered melanocytic and hematolymphoid diseases of the skin, which are often very challenging to diagnose," says Torres-Cabala. "These cases were unusually frequent during my training at MD Anderson because patients around the world would come here seeking accurate diagnoses and state-of-the-art treatments."

Upon completing his year-long fellowship in 2008, Torres-Cabala joined MD Anderson's Department of Anatomical Pathology, which is in the Division of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine, as an assistant professor and was promoted to professor in 2019.

Today, Torres-Cabala sees numerous cases of cutaneous neoplasms, including rare and aggressive cutaneous lymphomas and melanocytic tumors. He also serves as the section chief of dermatopathology and leads his own research in primary cutaneous



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lymphomas and lymphoproliferative disorders, melanoma, benign and borderline melanocytic lesions, and cutaneous carcinomas, among other conditions.

“I started my research on these conditions since my subspecialty within pathology is dermatopathology, and diagnosing these diseases may be particularly challenging,” says Torres-Cabala. “My hope is that this research will contribute to our understanding of these diseases and their mechanisms of progression and will help discover new therapies.”

Torres-Cabala has been invited to speak at many national and international pathology, dermatology and oncology meetings and has organized courses and sessions for the United States and Canadian Academy of Pathology, the International Academy of Pathology, the American Society of Dermatopathology and the International Society of Dermatopathology, among others. He was also the inaugural recipient of the MD Anderson Division of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine Faculty Recognition Award for Excellence in Patient Care in 2020.

“MD Anderson has given me the training and expertise needed to excel in my clinical, research, teaching and administrative endeavors, including the opportunity to be exposed to a variety of cutaneous neoplasms and ancillary methods that is hardly matched by other academic institutions. I feel that I am in a unique position to lead a highly specialized section that serves patients and clinicians with complex dermatological oncological conditions,” says Torres-Cabala. “Thanks to the MD Anderson training, preparation and daily practice, I am regarded as an international expert in my field.”

The transition from MD Anderson fellow to faculty member also has provided Torres-Cabala with a unique perspective and the opportunity to use his own experience as a fellow to help current and prospective fellows in their journeys.

“Being a fellow here has given me empathy and an understanding of the way fellows feel, and it has helped me to facilitate their training, not only in purely academic areas but also in their professional and personal growth,” says Torres-Cabala.

Torres-Cabala shares his advice with current and prospective fellows, encouraging them to take advantage of training at MD Anderson.



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“MD Anderson is an unrivaled place to learn tumor biology, diagnosis and treatment. I think that training at MD Anderson is a privilege because of the unique environment where cutting-edge research is combined with the best clinical care in the world,” says Torres-Cabala. “Take advantage of the excellent resources both in basic sciences and clinical medicine that MD Anderson offers and focus on your area of interest. MD Anderson is the right place to become an expert in any oncologic disease.”

During his free time, you can find Torres-Cabala reading, going on walks, birdwatching and traveling.

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