



COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY  
MEDICAL CENTER

Michael J. Muschel, MD FACC

Columbia University College of Physicians & Surgeons  
Practice Limited to Cardiovascular Disease

ColumbiaDoctors of the Hudson Valley  
222 Route 59 - Suite 302  
Suffern, New York 10901  
Phone: (845) 368-0100  
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May 8, 2020

Dear Mr. Yurowitz,

I a.m. writing in response to your request for assessment concerning the risks to Michael Schlisser with respect to the current COVID -19 epidemic. I understand Mr. Schlisser is currently in present in Federal prison.

By way of background, I am a cardiologist at ColumbiaDoctors of the Hudson Valley, a large cardiology and medical practice based in Rockland County, NY; and I have engaged in cardiology practice for the past 33 years. A copy of my CV is attached

Michael Schlisser (born 09/02/1959) was my patient from July 2017 through December 2017. I saw and treated him after he had suffered a severe acute proximal aortic dissection, an acute life threatening illness which is a profound medical and surgical emergency, and for which he underwent emergency surgery comprising "hemiarch replacement of the aorta with circulatory arrest". This was a complex and high-risk surgical procedure which was quite successful in his case, and from which he recovered remarkably uneventfully. Over the ensuing months, his course was quite satisfactory and uncomplicated, and genetic testing failed to reveal any of the genetic abnormalities that often underlie this condition. In the follow up care of Mr. Schlisser, however, certain findings however did emerge that could connote a vulnerability to cardiac morbidity and overall higher cardiovascular risk.

First, Mr. Schlisser's body measurements were compatible with mild to moderate obesity, his BMI variably in the 32—33 range. Secondly, while he had no stated history of hypertension, the findings of left ventricular hypertrophy at the time of surgery suggested that he might indeed have occult or undiagnosed hypertension, which would provide a credible basis for his otherwise unexplained predilection to acute to aortic dissection. The physicians at Westchester Medical Center (where he had the surgery) in fact chose to put him on two blood pressure medications based on this presumption.



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We are now in the midst of the COVID pandemic and the prison populations, like other large dormitory-like populations (e.g. Nursing homes) have been identified as being at high risk, based on their living conditions. This includes they were continued and close contact with staff members or exposed sometimes on a daily basis to those on the outside of the non-present world. I would point out that were Mr. Schlisser to contract the COVID infection, his risk for more severe and complicated illness would be increased based on this aforementioned history of obesity and presumed hypertension. Both of these are well established as risk factors for severe COVID disease, which lessen the likelihood of uneventful recovery.

This risk could be mitigated if he were to be removed from the prison setting for a period of time, and be confined instead to a safer and less populous environment, to decrease his likelihood of his contracting the disease.

Given the epidemiologic uncertainty as to how the COVID-19 pandemic will play out over the coming months, with the timing of a vaccine highly uncertain, I would expect that reducing this risk would necessitate more than several weeks of off-site transfer to a safer environment, with further decisions to depend on the course of the pandemic in the months ahead.

Please feel free to contact me for any specific questions.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "mm/MD". The signature is written in a cursive, somewhat stylized font.

Michael Muschel MD. FACC

Assistant Professor of Clinical Medicine  
Columbia University

**Michael J. Muschel, M.D., F.A.C.C.**  
**Curriculum Vitae**

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Suffern, New York 10901  
(845) 368 - 0100

*Home Address:* 208 Grandview Avenue  
Monsey, New York 10952

*Date of Birth:* April 26, 1955

*Family Status:* Married, 4 children

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**EMPLOYEMENT:**

Attending Physician  
ColumbiaDoctors of the Hudson Valley  
222 Route 59 - Suite 302  
Suffern, NY 10901  
April 2011 - present

Attending Physician  
Hudson Heart Associates, P.C.  
222 Route 59 - Suite 302  
Suffern, NY 10901  
June 1999 - March 2011

Attending Physician  
Ramapo Cardiology, P.C.  
56 S. Main Street  
Spring Valley, New York 10977  
July 1, 1987 - May 31, 1999

**FACULTY APPOINTMENTS:**

Assistant Professor of Clinical Medicine  
Columbia University Medical Center  
April 1, 2011- Present

**EDUCATION:**

Yeshiva College, New York, New York, B.A. (Summa Cum Laude), 5/1977

Columbia University College of Physicians & Surgeons, New York, New York, M.D.  
(with honors), 5/1981

**TRAINING:**

Intern in Medicine, Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center  
New York, New York, 7/1/81 - 6/30/82

Junior Assistant Resident in Medicine, Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center  
New York, New York, 7/2/82 - 6/30/83

Senior Assistant Resident in Medicine, Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center  
New York, New York, 7/1/83 - 6/30/84

Fellow, Clinical Cardiology, Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center  
New York, New York 7/1/84 - 6/30/86

Fellow, Nuclear and Non-Invasive Cardiology and Faculty Appointment  
Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center, New York, New York, 7/1/86 - 6/30/87

**HONORS:**

Samuel & Emily Granet Lemler Award for Excellence in Premedical Sciences, Yeshiva  
University, 1977

New York State Regents Scholarship for the Study of Medicine, 1977 - 1981

Julia Fee Summer Fellowship, National Arthritis Foundation, 1980

Alpha Omega Alpha, College of Physicians & Surgeons, Columbia University, 1981

Robert Loeb Award for Excellence in Clinical Medicine, College of Physicians & Surgeons, Columbia University, 1981

**CERTIFICATIONS:**

Diplomate, National Board of Medical Examiners, 1982

Diplomate, American Board of Internal Medicine, 9/12/84

Diplomate, American Board of Internal Medicine, Subspecialty Cardiovascular Disease, 11/14/87

Diplomate, American Board of Internal Medicine, Special Qualifications in Critical Care Medicine, 1989

New York State License No: 151329 - August 20, 1982

DEA No: BM0576061

**APPOINTMENTS:**

Attending Physician, Hudson Heart Associates (formerly Ramapo Cardiology Associates)

Suffern, New York – 7/87 - Present

Director, Cardiology Division, Department of Medicine, Good Samaritan Hospital  
Suffern, New York, 1997 - 1999

Department of Medicine, Division of Cardiology, Good Samaritan Hospital  
Suffern, New York, 7/87 - Present

Assistant Professor, Clinical Medicine, Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center  
New York, New York - 7/92 – Present

Assistant Attending Physician, The Presbyterian Hospital  
New York, New York - 7/92 - Present

Department of Cardiology, Horton Hospital,  
Middletown, New York - 1993 - Present

Department of Medicine, Arden Hill Hospital,  
Goshen, New York - 1995 - Present

**PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS:**

- American College of Cardiology
- American Heart Association
- American College of Physicians
- American Medical Association
- Rockland County Medical Society

**PUBLICATIONS:**

- (1) *"Rest & Exercise Myocardial Perfusion Scans & Clearance Rates of SQ30217, A New Technetium-99m Perfusion Imaging Agent."* Lynne L. Johnson, M.D., David W. Seldin, M.D., Michael J. Muschel, M.D., David K. Blood, M.D., Paul J. Cannon, M.D. *Journal of the American College of Cardiology*, 9:138A, 1987
- (2) *"Localization of Myocardial Perfusion Defects on Planar SQ30217 Scans -Comparison with TL-201 Scans and Coronary Anatomy."* David W. Seldin, M.D., Lynne L. Johnson, M.D., Kevin Smith, J. Zielonic, Michael J. Muschel, M.D., David K. Blood, M.D., Paul J. Cannon, M.D. *Journal of Nuclear Medicine*, 28:663, 1987
- (3) *"Myocardial Imaging & Clearance Rates During Exercise & Rest using SQ30217 A New Technetium-99m Perfusion Imaging Agent."* David W. Seldin, M.D., Lynne L. Johnson, M.D., Michael J. Muschel, M.D., Kevin Smith, David K. Blood, M.D., Paul J. Cannon, M.D. Submitted for Publication.

- (4) *"Comparison of Planar SQ30217 & Thallium-201 Myocardial Imaging with Coronary Anatomy."* Lynne L. Johnson, M.D., David W. Seldin, M.D., Michael J. Muschel, M.D., Kevin Smith, David K. Blood, M.D., Paul J. Cannon, M.D. *Circulation*, 76-IV:217, 1987
  
- (5) *"Myocardial Perfusion Imaging: with Technetium-99m SQ30217: Comparison with Thallium-201 and Coronary Anatomy."* David W. Seldin, M.D., Lynne L. Johnson, M.D., David K. Blood, M.D., Michael J. Muschel, M.D., et al. *Journal of Nuclear Medicine*, 30:3, 1989