

## Gary S. Firestein, MD



Gary S. Firestein, MD, is director of the Clinical and Translational Research Institute and the senior associate vice chancellor for health sciences at UC San Diego. Dr. Firestein joined the faculty at UC San Diego School of Medicine as assistant professor of Medicine in 1988. Four years later, he was recruited by Gensia, Inc. to be director of immunology, where he supervised drug discovery efforts focusing on the potential role of purines in inflammation.

In 1996, he returned to UC San Diego where he served as chief of the Division of Rheumatology, Allergy and Immunology from 1998 until 2010. In 2008, he became the dean of Translational Medicine. In 2010, he became associate vice chancellor of translational medicine and director of the newly established ACTRI, which is funded in part through the NIH Clinical and Translational Science Awards (CTSA) Program. In 2020, the ACTRI was awarded its third consecutive successful NCATS CTSA U54 Award under Dr. Firestein's leadership, with an additional \$55 M over the next 5 years dedicated to the advancement of clinical and translational science. In 2020, he was named senior associate vice chancellor for health sciences.

He is the co-founder of Ignyta, Inc., a biotech company that went public in 2015 and was acquired by Roche in 2018. Its lead drug entrectinib was approved by the US Food and Drug Administration for certain cancers. He is the co-creator of the University of California CTSA consortium called UC BRAID and served as its chairperson from 2013-2015. During his career, Dr. Firestein has served as the principal investigator on grants totaling more than \$150 million in research funding, including numerous NIH and commercial-sponsored research grants and clinical trials.

Dr. Firestein's research interest focuses on the pathogenesis and treatment of rheumatoid arthritis. He was among the first to map the cytokine profile of RA and demonstrate the dominance of macrophage and fibroblast products. These studies played a pivotal role in the development of highly effective anti-TNF and other anti-cytokine therapies for RA.

More recently, his research has included studies to evaluate immune dysfunction in individuals at risk for developing rheumatoid arthritis. His Google Scholar H index is 99 with over 40,000 citations. Dr. Firestein has received the Caro-Nachman Prize for Rheumatology, the Arthritis Foundation Lee C. Howley Sr Prize for Arthritis Research, the American College of Rheumatology (ACR) Distinguished Investigator Award, and the Jane Wyman Humanitarian

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Award. He has been elected to the American Society for Clinical Investigation and the Association of American Physicians, and holds a Doctor of Science (hc) from University of Glasgow, awarded in 2019.

Dr. Firestein has served as editor and then the editor-in-chief of Firestein and Kelley's *Textbook of Rheumatology* from the 7th through 11th editions. He has written over 350 articles and book chapters, and is past deputy editor of *Arthritis & Rheumatism*. Dr. Firestein is past chairperson of the FDA Arthritis Advisory Committee and has served on the Board of Directors of the American College of Rheumatology (ACR), ACR Research and Education Foundation, as chairperson of the ACR Committee on Journal Publications, on the ACR Committee on Research, on the Arthritis Foundation Research Committee, on the Board of Directors for the Veteran's Medical Research Foundation, and on the NIH National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS) Advisory Council.