

SHEELA MAHENDRA MD

Sheela Mahendra MD LLC
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- Professional specialization in Pediatric Gastroenterology, Pediatric Nutrition and Pediatric Obesity. Expertise in managing nutritional needs (enteral and parenteral) in medically complex patients. Expertise in esophagogastroduodenoscopies and colonoscopies with biopsies, foreign body removal in pediatric patients. Treat the following conditions: Failure to thrive/ Malnutrition, Crohn's disease, Ulcerative Colitis, Hirschsprung's Disease, Short Bowel syndrome, Celiac disease, Gastroesophageal Reflux Disorder, Disorders of the Gut-Brain Interaction, Aerodigestive disorders, Neonatal Cholestasis, Cystic Fibrosis- pancreatic insufficiency, Obesity, Metabolic dysfunction associated fatty liver disease.
- Experienced Public Speaker
- Golden Apple Award recipient for Nutrition education for Pediatric Residency Program in 2019.

Board certifications:

Pediatric Gastroenterology (2015)

General Pediatrics (2012)

Obesity Medicine (2024)

Certified Nutrition Support Physician, National Board of Physician Nutrition Specialists (2017)

Active State Medical Licenses: Illinois (2014)

Maiden Name: Sheela Raikar

EDUCATION

- Shri Parvatibai College, Goa, India (Transfer credit to BS degree) 2000-2001
- University of Missouri at Columbia, MO (Degree BS in Biological Sciences) 2001-2004
- University of Missouri at Columbia School of Medicine, MO (Degree MD) 2004-2008
- General Pediatric Residency 2008-2011
A I Dupont Hospital for Children, Wilmington, DE
Thomas Jefferson University, Philadelphia, PA
- Fellowship, Pediatric Gastroenterology. 2011 - 2014
A I DuPont Hospital for Children, Wilmington, DE

EMPLOYMENT AND PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- Endeavor Health, Pediatric Subspecialist, Chicagoland, IL- Pediatric Gastroenterology 2025
- Loyola University Medical Center, Associate Professor, Maywood, IL 2025
- University of Illinois, Chicago, Consultant- Pediatric Gastroenterology, Chicago IL 2025
- Rush Copley Medical Center, Consultant- Pediatric Gastroenterology, Aurora IL 2019 to 2025
- Rush University Medical Center, Assistant Professor, Chicago, IL 2014 to 2025
- Rush Medical Group, Associate Professor, Chicago, IL 2025

POSTER PRESENTATIONS

- Nowak, Kristen; Peterson, Sarah; Mahendra, Sheela. 'Abdominal Ultrasound to Assess for Cystic Fibrosis Hepatobiliary Involvement in a Pediatric Cystic Fibrosis Center'. NACFC 2025
- Abu El Haija, Marwa; Mitsinikos, Fotini; SankaraRaman, Senthilkumar; Mahendra, Sheela et al. "Contemporary Views and Knowledge Gaps of Pediatric Gastroenterologists' Role and Need in managing Pediatric Obesity: Results of the 2023 NASPGHAN PROGRAM SURVEY". NASPGHAN 2023
- SankaraRaman, Senthilkumar; Mitsinikos, Fotini; Abu El Haiza, Marwa, Karjoo, Sara; Mahendra, Sheela et al. "NASPGHAN SURVEY examining the 10-YEAR status of Pediatric Gastroenterologists' perception of their role in the management of Childhood Obesity - From Inception to Implementation". NASPGHAN 2023
- Polachek, Ashley, Mahendra, Sheela. 'A Case of Collagenous Gastritis.' NASPGHAN 2022 · Yoshiba, Grace; Alvarez, Cynthia; Mahendra, Sheela. "Microscopic Colitis in a child presenting with chronic watery diarrhea." NASPGHAN 2022
- Yoshiba, Grace; Mahendra, Sheela. "Scurvy in a Child with Autism Presenting with a Limp." NASPGHAN 2021 · Medernach Jonathon, Mahendra, Sheela. "Excessive Cow's Milk intake leading to severe iron deficiency anemia and high output cardiac failure." NASPGHAN 2018
- Ravanbakhsh Naseem; Mahendra, Sheela. A Curious Case of Henoch Schonlein Purpura. NASPGHAN 2018 · Kaenkumchorn, K; Raikar, S. "A Spotty Situation". A case report on infantile hemangiomas with high output cardiac failure. NASPGHAN 2017
- Raikar S, Kusch E, Molle-Rios Z. Inflammatory Colitis In an infant. CCFA Advances in Inflammatory Bowel Diseases 2013

- Raikar S, Del Rosario F, Chinnakotla S. “Total Pancreatectomy and Auto-islet Cell Transplant in a 4-Year-Old Girl with Chronic Relapsing Pancreatitis.” NASPGHAN 2013
- Raikar S, Molle-Rios Z. “Development of Hemophagocytic Lymphohistiocytosis associated with Human Granulocytic Anaplasmosis in a patient with Crohn’s disease on Infliximab.” NASPGHAN 2012
- Raikar S, Molle-Rios Z. “Mysterious Case of Chylous Ascites.” NASPGHAN 2012

PUBLICATIONS

- Scaggs FA, Aziz MS, Palmisano EL, Mahdavia M, Raikar SS, Logan LK. Raltegravir-Induced drug reaction with eosinophilia and systemic symptoms syndrome In a child. *Annals of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology*. 2016;117719-721. doi: 10.1016/j.anai.2016.09.433 PMID: 28073704
- Raikar SS, Wali P, Khan S. Recurrence of Rapunzel syndrome. *Journal of Pediatrics*, 2010; 157(2): doi:10.1016/j.jpeds.2010.OZ.019 PMID: Zossg447
- Gao G, Raikar S, Davenport B, Mutapic L, Montgomery R, Kurmin E, Bennett KL. Cross-species RNAi: Selected *Ascaris suum* dsRNAs can sterilize *Caenorhabditis elegans*. *Molecular and Biochemical Parasitology*. 2006;146124-128. doi:10.1016/j.molbiopara.2005.11.003 PMID: 16388861
- Fin P, Raikar S, Jimenez J, Conard K, Furuya K. Novel Mutation In a Patient with Cholesterol Ester Storage Disease. *Case Reports in Genetics*. 2015. Volume 2015(2015), Article ID 347342 doi: <https://doi.org/10.1155/2015/347342>

Book Chapter

- Reuter-Rice at at. *Pediatric Acute Care: A Guide for Interprofessional Practice 3rd Edition*. Wrote the Gastrointestinal Section: Fecal Transplantation in Pediatrics. *In submission, anticipate publication in Spring 2027*
- Chidekel, Aaron; Raikar, Sheela. Is environmental tobacco smoke really that bad for my patients with asthma? In: *Curbside Consultation In Pediatric Asthma*. SLACK Inc; 2012:83-88.

CLINICAL EXCELLENCE- INNOVATION IN PATIENT CARE

- Medical Director, Endeavor Health Pediatric Feeding Center (2025 - present)
Our multidisciplinary team includes a pediatric dietitian, pediatric speech-language pathologist, pediatric gastroenterologist and a pediatric nurse. Using a coordinated approach enables all disciplines to focus on the needs of both the patient and family. The team will provide an initial assessment and, in coordination with the child’s pediatrician or family medicine doctor, develop an individualized plan. Follow-up sessions are strongly encouraged to monitor a child’s progress and re-evaluate nutrition status as he or she grows
- Physician Team Member, Rush Aerodigestive Center (2018- 2025)
The Pediatric Aerodigestive Program offers advanced, multidisciplinary, family-centered care for children with complex, often interrelated airway, upper digestive, feeding and sleep disorders. Through the program, pediatric ENT, gastroenterology, pulmonology, and speech-language pathology specialists collaborate to provide a complete evaluation and coordinated treatment plan.

This clinic reduced wait times for patients and their families, allowed for a coordinated approach to care, increased patient satisfaction and improved patient outcomes.

Multiple procedures were able to be combined into one case

(esophagogastroduodenoscopy, laryngoscopy, bronchoscopy), which has resulted in reduced exposure to repeated anesthesia for patients.

Most patients treated have complex medical conditions such as tracheostomy/ventilator dependence, gastrostomy tube dependence, GERD, eosinophilic esophagitis, malnutrition, chronic cough, severe asthma among others.

- Physician Team Member, Rush Cystic Fibrosis Center (2015- 2025)
The Rush Cystic Fibrosis Center, which is accredited by the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation (CFF), includes both pediatric and adult cystic fibrosis clinics to provide Inpatient and outpatient care for patients of all ages. The center is also one of three cystic fibrosis centers in the country to receive an award for outstanding partnership from the CFF. Specialists at the Cystic Fibrosis Center at Rush diagnose, treat and manage all aspects of cystic fibrosis in children and adults. We focus on preventive care and managing symptoms and disease progression. The CF center is involved in several QI projects and has successfully improved the transition process for adolescents into adulthood. Prior to Dr. Mahendra joining the team, the CF center did not have a gastroenterologist working closely with these patients. Dr Mahendra specifically address gastrointestinal issues common in CF patients ranging from malabsorption, malnutrition, pancreatic insufficiency, gastric hyperacid secretion, distal intestinal obstructive syndrome, gastrostomy tube needs, small intestinal bacterial overgrowth, liver disease. As of Jan 2024, Dr, Mahendra has taken on the role of Associate Medical Director of the CF Center.
- Physician Team Member, Rush Rett Syndrome Center (2014- 2025)
The Rush Rett Multidisciplinary Clinic is a designated Rett Syndrome Clinical Research Center of Excellence by Rettsyndrome.org (formerly known as the International Rett Syndrome Foundation.) The Rush clinic is one of only 14 centers nationwide to earn this distinction. Rett syndrome is a
The Rush Rett Multidisciplinary Clinic meets on a monthly basis and brings together a team of adult and pediatric gastroenterologists, a rehabilitation physician, pediatric cardiologists, pediatric neurologists. Patients and their families can see up to four specialists in one day, which helps consolidate multiple aspects of care.
Dr. Mahendra addresses gastrointestinal issues common in Rett patients such as GERD, constipation, dysmotility, dysphagia, malnutrition and poor growth, gastrostomy tube needs.

CLINICAL EXCELLENCE- SAFETY AND QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

- Rush University Medical Center Home Nasogastric Tube Feeding Program (2022)
Dr. Mahendra championed the 'Rush University Medical Center Home Nasogastric Tube Feeding Program (NGTFP)' with neonatologist Dr. Patra and feeding therapist Allison Albers in the fall of 2022. This program was started at the RUCH NICU to decrease complications in infants sent home with gastrostomy tubes. There have been

several studies that suggested that infants have less complications when discharged to home with an NG vs. G-tube placement (for uncomplicated infants who are taking a substantial amount by mouth).

- **Pediatric Parenteral Nutrition Protocol (2020)**
Served as Consultant for Pediatric Nutrition service. Updated protocol for writing parenteral nutrition (PN) formulations for pediatric patients including appropriate use of TPN and when to consider enteral nutrition. This was done in conjunction with the inpatient pharmacist and dieticians. This will improve safety regarding central line placement for PN needs and PN delivery.
- **Department of Pediatrics MIS-C Clinical Guideline Development (2020)**
With increased cases of COVID-19, our Institution anticipated a need for an organized, collaborative, multi disciplinary approach to screening, identifying, and providing evidence-based treatment of MIS-C. Dr Mahendra is a member of this taskforce aiming to provide evidenced based guideline and corresponding order set with 90% + utilization for a stepwise approach to the identification, work up, and treatment of the MIS-C patient. By developing a MIS-C clinical guideline and corresponding order set, we were able to ensure good multidisciplinary communication and we streamlined the decision making around admission criteria, level of care, laboratory studies, and initiation of treatment for MIS-C.
- **Creation of Peds Malnourished Patient Module (2019)**
Partnered with inpatient hospitalists in creating a streamlined pathway to approach patients with malnutrition, assess severity of protein-calorie malnutrition and risk for refeeding syndrome. An order set was created in EPIC that is widely used by the residents while admitting such patients and when identifying malnutrition on a currently admitted patient. It is used on any patient identified as moderate-severe protein-calorie malnutrition by the inpatient dietician, and has improved screening and identification of refeeding syndrome.
- **SMOF lipid Implementation (2019)**
Dr. Mahendra served as Gastroenterology expert along with neonatologist Dr. Aloka Patel in developing a plan to implement SMOF lipid at Rush in neonatal/pediatric patients.
Although SMOF lipid is not yet FDA approved in pediatric patients, there is a multitude of data including neonatal and pediatric patients that highlight the benefits to prevent cholestasis, and many institutions have already implemented this therapy in appropriate patients. This was approved by the Pharmacy and Therapeutics Review and Implemented in July 2019.
- **Hirschsprung Associated Enterocolitis (HAEC) Management Pathway (2019)**
Dr. Mahendra collaborated with the hospitalist and surgery team in the creation of a streamlined Hirschsprung Associated Enterocolitis (HAEC) Pathway. This has improved the acute management of patients with suspected HAEC including prompt evaluation with labs, imaging, stool studies, initiation of antibiotics, rectal irrigations, and surgical and GI consultation.

TEACHING ACTIVITIES

Actively engage in teaching medical students and pediatric residents in inpatient hospital rounds.

Grand Rounds

- How to Analyze and Interpret Growth? Can we catch Pediatric Malnutrition Early? (2023). Presented at Rush Copley Medical Center, Aurora, IL
- Nonalcoholic Fatty Liver Disease (2020) Presented at Rush and Stroger Grand Rounds, Chicago, IL
- Pediatric Malnutrition (2017) Presented at Norwegian Hospital, Chicago, IL
- How to Analyze and Interpret Growth? Can we catch Pediatric Malnutrition early? (2016) Presented at combined Rush and Stroger Grand Rounds, Chicago
- Rectal Bleeding (2013) Presented at Pediatric Grand Rounds AI DuPont Hospital for Children, DE

Physician Lecturer for Pediatric Residents and Medical Students (2016 to present)

- Pediatric Nutrition 101
- Autism and Feeding Difficulties
- Celiac Disease
- Neonatal Cholestasis
- Gastrostomy tube Inservice
- Nutrition Jeopardy- Minerals and Vitamins
- Gastrointestinal manifestations in Cystic Fibrosis
- Pediatric Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease
- Food Sensitivities
- Pediatric Enteral Nutrition
- Gastroenterology Board Review
- Clinical Nutrition Topics
- Infant Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease Pediatric Resident Noon Conference
- Inflammatory Bowel Disease

Invited Speaker

- Invited Speaker & Medical Expert Panel Member, Winter Seminar: Total Parenteral Nutrition (2019) Dr Mahendra served as an expert panel member and speaker at the CASPEN (Chicago branch of American Society of Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition) Winter Seminar. Lecture- Complications of total parenteral nutrition. The audience was registered dietitians, students, and nurses from the Chicagoland region.

- Cholestasis Management in the Neonate (2017)
Lectured at the Rush Copley Neonatology department Hot Topic presentations, "Cholestasis Management in the Neonate". This was attended by neonatologists, nurses, and registered dietitians.
- Failure to Thrive (2017)
Lectured at the Rush Copley Family Medicine department weekly lecture series for faculty and residents on general approach to Failure to Thrive.
- Food Intolerances and Sensitivities (2017)
 - Rush Copley marketing group put together a community program on Food Intolerances and Sensitivities. The topic was covered from a general pediatrician perspective- Dr Muscia, pediatric gastroenterology perspective- me and a dietitian's perspective- Mary Mullen RD. The targeted audience was parents in the community.

COMMITTEES AND ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICE

International

Member, NASPGHAN Nutrition Committee (2017-2022)

The Nutrition Committee focuses on promoting education, research, quality of clinical care and advocacy in the field of clinical nutrition and nutrition science.

Dr. Mahendra has been participating in an obesity subcommittee on a project over the past 2 years meeting with NASPGHAN nutrition obesity subgroup committee members in virtual meetings 1-2 times per month. The committee completed an IRB approved survey that was distributed in Jan 2023 with subsequent analysis of data. The intention is to identify areas of improvement in education and training of physicians in pediatric obesity and identify need for resources such as access to pediatric registered dietitians.

This will hopefully lead to improved clinical care for pediatric patients with obesity. 2 posters were presented at the NASPGHAN annual conference in 2023 and manuscript writing is currently in process.

Institutional

Consultant Physician, Inpatient Dietary/Nutritional Support Program (2015 – 2025)

Physician Nutrition Specialist on Inpatient Nutritional Support team — updated Pediatric Parenteral Nutrition Protocol to decrease use of PN unless clear indications met, consultant for inpatient dietitians to improve nutritional support for hospitalized patients.

- PN and tube feeding.

Consulting physician for outpatient dietitians regarding enteral and parenteral management of patients. Departmental

Task Force Member, RUMC MIS-C Task Force (2020 – 2025)

Served on the RUMC MIS-C Task Force created during the COVID-19 pandemic. The goal was to create a clinical pathway for the evaluation and management of a child with suspected MIS-C (Multi-Inflammatory syndrome in children. Members are notified when

a suspected case is in hospital and members of the team help guide management while keeping updated on the literature.

Active Member, Clinical Competency Committee (2016 – 2025)

Resident evaluation in Fall and Spring each academic year. As a member of the CCC, I am assigned 3 pediatric residents, and the committee has meetings twice a year to discuss evaluations and milestones for each student. A letter is generated to each resident with a summary of their evaluations/feedback.

Faculty Interviewer, Pediatric House staff Recruitment Committee (2015 – 2023)

Faculty Interviewer for prospective Pediatric Residents at RushUniversity Medical Center. Interview 4-8 candidates per year.

CURRENT PROFESSIONAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIPS

North American Society of Pediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Nutrition
Obesity Medicine Association

NOT RETAINED