



## Canadian Association of General Surgeons Post-Graduate Course: General Surgery Essentials

**Chair:** Dr. Carolyn Nessim, CAGS Education Committee



Dr. Carolyn Nessim is a Surgical Oncologist at the Ottawa Hospital and Associate Professor of Surgery at the University of Ottawa. She is the Program Director for the Complex Surgical Oncology Fellowship Program at the University of Ottawa. She completed her general surgery residency and master's in biomedical sciences at the University of Montreal and did her Surgical Oncology Fellowships at the University of Toronto and the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre in Melbourne, Australia. Her clinical practice focuses on the treatment of patients with Melanoma, Soft Tissue Sarcoma/GIST, and Gastric cancer. She is a Clinician Investigator at the Ottawa Hospital Research Institute (OHRI). She leads many collaborative research projects nationally and internationally in melanoma and soft tissue sarcoma. She is the Regional Chair of the Melanoma and Gastric Cancer Communities of Practice for Eastern Ontario and on the Cancer Care Ontario Skin Cancer Advisory Board as well the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) Melanoma Measures Panel. She is the Chair of the Research Evaluation Committee of the Trans-Atlantic Australasian Retroperitoneal Sarcoma Working Group (TARPSWG) and a member of the Society of Surgical Oncology (SSO) Sarcoma Disease site group. She is a section editor for Sarcoma for Annals of Surgical Oncology and a topic editor for Current Oncology. She is the CPD Chair and member of the Board and Executive of the Canadian Association of General Surgeons (CAGS) and is also the Chair of the Surgery and Surveillance working group of the NCIC-Canadian Cancer Trials Group (CCTG). She sits on the Executive of the Canadian Society of Surgical Oncology (CSSO) and the Canadian Gastric Cancer Association (CaGCA). She has more than 60 peer-reviewed publications and book chapters and is the local PI for multi-international randomized clinical trials like the MELMART-2 and STRASS 2 trials at The Ottawa Hospital.

**Chair:** Dr. Caitlin Champion, CAGS Vice-Chair, Education Committee



Dr. Cait Champion (she/her) is a rural General Surgeon in Parry Sound ON and Assistant Professor at NOSM University. She obtained her MD at the University of Toronto and General Surgery training at the University of Ottawa. She believes in the value of collaboration and purpose-built training and education opportunities to support high quality surgical care access across rural Canada.

**Target Audience:** Practicing surgeons looking for a broad-based up to date CME experience.

### Learning Objectives:

- 1) Discuss complex decision making in common general surgery cases
- 2) Describe surgical approaches to common general surgery cases

### SPEAKERS:

*"I would like to thank our speakers for taking the time away from family and friends to dedicate their time to come present and share knowledge and experience with our members with the goal to continue improving quality care across Canada."  
Carolyn Nessim*

**Kimberly A Bertens, MD MPH**  
**Section Head- Hepatobiliary Surgery**  
**Assistant Professor of Surgery**  
**Senior Investigator- Ottawa**  
**Hospital Research Institute**  
**The Ottawa Hospital**



Dr. Bertens completed medical school and General Surgery residency the University of Western Ontario. She then went on to complete a fellowship in Hepatobiliary surgery at Virginia Mason Medical Centre in Seattle, Washington. In addition, Dr. Bertens has completed a Masters of Public Health with a focus in quantitative methods at the Harvard School of Public Health. Her research interests include the interface between sociodemographic factors and access to surgical care, and clinical trials in HPB oncology.

**Agenda:**

**8:00-8:30am:** Breakfast and Welcoming Remarks (Dr. Carolyn Nessim & Dr. Caitlin Champion)

**8:30-8:50am:** Rectal Prolapse

**Chair:** Dr. Aman Pooni (Michael Garron Hospital, Toronto East Health Network, ON)

**Case presenter:** Resident

**Panelists:** Dr. Marianne Gagnon (CHUM, Montreal, Qc), Dr. Julio Faria (McGill, Montreal, Qc), Dr. Natalie Wong-Chong (South Lake, ON), Dr. Anthony De Buck (Mont Sinai, Toronto, ON)

**8:50-9:20: Update Speaker:** Dr. Marianne Gagnon or Dr. Julio Faria

**9:20-9:30:** Q & A

*Learning Objectives:*

By the end of the session the learner will be able to:

- 1) Classify rectal prolapse based on their clinical characteristics
- 2) Describe the approach of management of rectal prolapse in the acute care setting vs. the elective setting
- 3) Describe the surgical options for rectal prolapse repair

**9:30-9:50: Necrotizing Pancreatitis**

**Chair:** Dr. Jillian Vallis

**Case presenter:** Resident



**Panelists:** Dr. Vanessa Falk (Memorial University, St-John's, NFD), Dr. Mike Driedger (University of Calgary, Calgary, AB), Dr. Eve Simoneau (CHUM, Montreal, Qc)

**9:50-10:20: Update Speaker:** Dr. Mike Driedger (University of Calgary, Calgary, AB)

**10:20-10:30am:** Q+A

*Learning Objectives:*

By the end of the session the learner will be able to:

- 1) Discuss the initial approach to necrotizing pancreatitis.
- 2) Describe the imaging findings of necrotizing pancreatitis
- 3) Discuss if there are any surgical approaches to managing necrotizing pancreatitis

**10:30-10:50: BREAK**

**10:50-11:10 am: Upper GI: Acid Reflux**

**Chair:** Dr. Amy Neville (University of Ottawa, Ottawa, ON)

**Case presenter:** Resident

**Panelists:** Dr. Sumanta Dutta (Groves Memorial Hospital, Fergus, ON), Dr. Sonny S. Dhalla (University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, MB), Dr. Boris Zevin (Queen's University, Kingston, ON)

**11:10-11:40 am: Update Speaker:** Dr. Sonny S. Dhalla (University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, MB)

**11:40-11:50 am:** Q+A

*Learning Objectives:*

By the end of the session the learner will be able to:

1. Discuss the best work-up of Reflux
2. Discuss the indications for surgery in patients with GERD
3. Discuss the different operative approaches to Reflux surgery

**11:50am-12:30pm: LUNCH**

**12:30-12:50pm: Complex Bilateral Breast Cancer**

**Chair:** Dr. Muriel Brackstone (Western University, London, ON)



**Case presenter:** Dr. Wanda Marini (University of Toronto)

**Panelists:** Dr. Lakho Sandhu (Sacramento, CA), Dr. Julie Tousignant (Chicoutimi, Qc), Dr. Stephanie Wong (McGill, Montreal, Qc)

**12:50-1:20pm: Update Speaker:** Dr. Stephanie Wong (McGill, Montreal, Qc)

**1:20-1:30pm:** Q + A

*Learning Objectives:*

By the end of the session the learner will be able to:

- 1) Describe the evaluation and initial work-up of a patient with bilateral breast cancer
- 2) Describe a multidisciplinary approach to bilateral breast cancer
- 3) Explain indications for different surgical approaches in bilateral breast cancer

**1:30-1:50: Acute Care: Cirrhotic Hernia**

**Chair:** Dr. Zuhaib Mir

**Case presenter:** Resident

**Panelists:** Dr. Mark Walsh (Dalhousie, Halifax, NS), Dr. Kim Bertens (University of Ottawa, Ottawa, ON), Dr. ACS Surgeon Alberta

**1:50-2:20: Update Speaker:** Dr. Kim Bertens (University of Ottawa, Ottawa, ON)

**2:20-2:30pm:** Q + A

*Learning Objectives:*

By the end of this session the learner will be able to:

- 1) Describe the approach and special surgical and medical considerations in cirrhotic patients needing emergency surgery
- 2) Discuss the controversies with regards to mesh in cirrhotic hernia repair
- 3) Discuss medical management of portal hypertension prior to hernia repair in a cirrhotic patient

**2:30-2:50pm: BREAK**

**2:50-3:10pm: Trauma: Damage control abdomen**

**Chair:** Dr. Caitlin Champion

**Case presenter:** Resident



**Panelists:** Dr. Paola Fata (McGill, Montreal, Qc), Dr. Pat McCrae (Charlottetown, PEI), Dr. Alex Poole (Yukon, NW Territories), Dr. Tim Rice (McMaster, Hamilton, ON), Dr. Ana Igric (Barrie, ON)

**3:10-3:40pm: Update Speaker:** Dr. Paola Fata (McGill, Montreal, Qc)

**3:40pm-3:50pm:** Q + A

*Learning Objectives*

By the end of this session the learner will be able to:

- 1) Identify and describe indications for a damage control approach to surgical patients in the acute care and trauma setting
- 2) Apply damage control principles to surgical patients in the acute care and trauma setting
- 3) Evaluate and facilitate appropriate definitive care of surgical patients when a damage control approach is utilised

**3:50-4:00pm:** Closing remarks (Dr. Carolyn Nessim and Dr. Caitlin Champion)

**Date:** Wednesday, September 17, 2025

**Location:** Fairmont the Queen Elizabeth, 900 René-Lévesque Blvd W, Montreal, Quebec H3B 4A5

**Time:** 08:00 -16:00

**Cost:**

- \$450; Member
- \$500; Non-Member
- \$300; Resident and Fellow Member
- \$350; Residents and Fellow Non-Member
- \$250; Respiratory Therapists, Nurses, Retirees, Medical Students

**Register Open Soon**