



American Healthcare Professionals and Friends for Medicine in Israel

2001 Beacon Street, Suite 210, Boston, MA 02135

Scans don't lie.

So says Dr. Shai Shrot, an APF 2016-2017 Clinical Fellow in Pediatric Radiology at John Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore.

"I'm a very practical person," says the 38-year-old Ra'anana (near Tel Aviv) resident. "I find radiology very interesting in the sense that there are no lies, you see what there is on the film, on the scan; it's very 'demonstrative.' In imaging, it's boom! This is what it says.

"In other professions you have history and symptoms and that's important here too. But I find it very challenging to get that information and then look at the study (And sometimes it's a very subtle finding.) and then build a diagnosis.

"Imaging gives you more ways to monitor and treat patients. Imaging not only shows you how a normal nervous system works, it also shows you how pathology looks.

"And over the past 20 or 30 years the complexities of imaging have been continually increasing. Technology is so much a part of my profession, I just love it.

"Radiology is less stressful than other disciplines and I appreciate that as well."

Shrot arrived in the U.S. in 2015 to complete a one-year fellowship in diagnostic neuroradiology at Georgetown University Medical Center in Washington, D.C. He also did part of his training at Children's National Medical Center in D.C.

Now he intends to meld those experiences with a year in pediatric radiology, hoping for a career in pediatric neuroradiology. "I just love pediatrics. I love the environment and the colleagues seem, for

some reason, to be nicer than those in other specialties."

At Hopkins Shrot will also train in pediatric neuroradiology.

Neuroradiology is a subspecialty of radiology focusing on the diagnosis and characterization of abnormalities of the central and peripheral nervous system, spine and head and neck using neuroimaging techniques.

Primary imaging modalities include computed tomography (CT) and magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) as well as ultrasound, fluoroscopy (a type of medical imaging that shows a continuous X-ray image on a monitor, much like an X-ray "movie") and angiography (X-rays of blood vessels using a contrast agent). Plain radiography is used on a limited basis.

These scans allow neuroradiologists to diagnose strokes, tumors, genetic conditions, aneurysms, Alzheimer's disease and many other causes of neurological dysfunction, including trauma from injury.

Shrot chose his profession in high school. "When I thought about my future I looked for a profession that had meaning and had an impact on others' lives and I saw the unlimited potential of medicine.

"I'm sure there is no other profession in which you can have so much academics, meaningful clinical work and interaction with people. There is so much meaning in what you're doing – so much reason to go to work every day."

The Netanya native attended medical school at Sackler Faculty of Medicine, Tel Aviv University. He completed his internship at Rabin Medical Center in Petah-Tikva (just east of Tel Aviv) and then served six years in the IDF Medical Corps. Assignments

included the paratrooper brigade and the combat engineering corps. After IDF he went to Chaim Sheba Medical Center in Ramat Gan (Tel Aviv district) to begin his diagnostic radiology residency. Chaim Sheba is the largest hospital in Israel. It also has the largest imaging department in the country.

Part-way through he returned to the IDF for two more years. And after completing his second term of military service he finished his residency at Chaim Sheba “I didn’t really know what kind of doctor I wanted to be until toward the end of my first military service. But I’m a very practical person. I’d already done a lot of research in neuroscience and in the neurotoxicity of various agents while in the military. And I’d been very interested in neuroradiology from the very beginning of my medical career. So I thought this was a good area to go into.

“At the same time I was interested in pediatrics too, hence my two fellowships and my intention to focus on pediatric neuroradiology.”

Shrot is also interested in the growing fields of fetal and neonatal imaging, both body and brain. “This is a rapidly developing discipline and not many doctors, aside from obstetricians doing fetal ultrasounds, are handling this in Israel.”

After completion of his APF Fellowship Shrot will return to Chaim Sheba as an attending physician in the neuroradiology unit, with a sub-specialty in pediatric radiology.

The Shrot family, including Dad, has five members. They are: wife Shira, 35, an industrial engineer; sons Ariel, 10 and Yair, 4 and daughter Noam, 7.

Home here is a spacious house with a large yard on a quiet street good for biking and scootering. It’s quite unlike their apartment in a busy city back in Israel. “Everything here is large – houses and roads - - and backyards are full of all sorts of animals: deer, rabbits, squirrels and more.”

The family has traveled to Virginia, Washington, D.C., New York City and around Maryland. They

hope for a big trip to Florida. “And I just love having Sundays off!”

Shrot is the only pediatric radiology fellow in his Hopkins department. He works nine hours a day, is on call once a week and every fourth weekend.

He reads 25 to 50 scans a day, including MRIs, CTs, ultrasounds and fluoroscopies. Most of the actual scanning is done by technologists. Some is done by doctors and Shrot does that as well. He gets feedback from attending physicians and participates in teaching and interdisciplinary conferences.

Was it necessary to leave Israel for this training? Yes.

“Not only are there no neuroradiology fellowship programs in Israel, I simply can’t get the training I can get at Hopkins, in pediatric radiology in particular.

“The machines are state-of-the-art in Israel and the volume may be similar (I’m not sure) because Chaim Sheba is such a large hospital. But here I see more complicated cases and a greater diversity of people and cases. People come from all over the U.S. and the world.

“Also, at Hopkins there are some specialized disease centers, a brain tumor center for example, that attract people from everywhere with many rare and unusual conditions.”

Shrot particularly appreciates the superstars in the field with whom he’s working. “You can read their books and hear their lectures, but here you have the opportunity to train with them.

“It’s like role models you can actually work with, the world-renowned people that you aspire to be when you are more advanced.”

What does he hope to take back to Israel with him?

“I am planning to use the skills I’ve gained in the U.S. to make our excellent clinical imaging service at Chaim Sheba even better,” he said. “I intend to continue research and education collaborations

with my mentors here and to use the most advanced techniques, such as we use here, in Israel.

Shrot has presented research abroad several times. He has published 10 articles, with more in the pipeline and is expecting some from his time in the U.S.

He is also doing some research at Hopkins on neonates with brain damage and on others with brain damage from recreational drugs.

When Shrot was in Israel he taught medical students. When he returns he will continue to teach. "Teaching is very valuable to you as a physician and to the department. It keeps everyone up-to-date and very sharp. Also, I enjoy working with students."

People don't think much about the personality of a radiologist and their "people skills." But it's an area to which Shrot gives a lot of time and attention.

"While we have less direct interaction with patients I find it very important, in the limited time we have, to take the time to very carefully explain what the study is about and what's going to be done.

Pregnant women, for example, are usually very anxious. It's always important to answer all questions thoroughly in a manner that will try to minimize anxiety.

"Parents, for example, are also very anxious. I want to make it easier for them and all family members and caregivers.

"It may only be five or 10 minutes before a study but it can really help if the time is used well."

American Physicians Fellowship for Medicine in Israel

P: 617-232-5382 • F: 617-739-2616 • info@apfmed.org • www.apfmed.org