Photoblog:
Hope through Hematology Innovation

Dr. Jennifer Jones

Dr. Jennifer Jones' path to medicine began with a lifelong interest in science and the human body. Early experiences learning about anatomy and physiology helped shape her curiosity and future career.

During her medical training, she saw how meaningful the relationship between patients and providers could be. Those connections led her to hematology, a field focused on diagnosing and treating blood disorders. She was drawn to the field because it requires careful diagnosis and gives physicians the chance to provide patients with answers.

After completing fellowships in Classical Hematology at Johns Hopkins and Transfusion Medicine at the University of Pittsburgh, Dr. Jones joined the University of Michigan Departments of Pathology and Internal Medicine. Her clinical work centers on patients with inherited blood disorders who need regular blood transfusions, especially those with sickle cell disease (SCD) and thalassemia. Her research focuses on creating transfusion plans tailored to each patient. These plans aim to improve outcomes while reducing risks, such as iron overload or immune reactions to donated blood.

Dr. Jones recalls her first encounter with a patient living with SCD. He was a young boy experiencing severe pain. That moment helped inspire her commitment to improving care for people living with the disease. Although treatment has improved, options remain limited. Dr. Jones notes that only three FDA-approved medications are available for SCD, and they do not work for every patient. Pain management is one of the most difficult parts of her work. Some pain medicines can cause side effects, and patients may also face stigma related to opioid use.

Even with these challenges, Dr. Jones finds hope in the resilience of patients and their families. She also believes strongly in patient advocacy. She encourages patients to communicate clearly with their care teams and to have plans in place for times when symptoms suddenly worsen.

To manage the emotional demands of her work, Dr. Jones relies on support from her professional network, friends, and family. Outside of work, she makes time for hobbies such as running and reading.

Looking ahead, Dr. Jones is hopeful about new medicines, gene therapy, and the efforts of the National Alliance of Sickle Cell Centers to standardize care nationwide. Her work reflects a commitment to better treatments, stronger patient support, and lasting hope for people living with blood disorders.