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For Immediate Release

OVERLOOK HOSPITAL'S SAAD HABBA, MD TO BE FEATURED ON DISCOVERY HEALTH CHANNEL ABOUT AN UNKNOWN, YET COMMON BOWEL SYNDROME

**MONDAY, AUGUST 20TH, 10PM, HABBA SYNDROME EXPLAINED
ON DISCOVERY HEALTH CHANNEL'S "MYSTERY DIAGNOSIS" SHOW**

Summit, NJ, August 20, 2007 – Millions of chronic diarrhea (CD) patients may be unknowingly afflicted with a syndrome similar to irritable bowel syndrome (IBS). The condition referred to as the Habba Syndrome, named after its founder, Saad Habba, MD of Atlantic Health's Overlook Hospital in Summit, New Jersey, arises from a relationship between gallbladder dysfunction and chronic diarrhea.

The Habba Syndrome will be featured on the Discovery Health channel's show, "Mystery Diagnosis" on Monday, August 20th at 10pm. One of Dr. Habba's patients, a Maplewood, New Jersey resident, will be the subject of the story.

Patients with varying degrees of CD (four to 10 bowel movements daily for at least three months) who consistently failed to improve on several traditional therapies, including antispasmodic drugs and lactose-free diets, were involved in Habba's original research, published in 2000 in the *American Journal of Gastroenterology*. Dr. Habba's patients routinely experience quality-of-life issues ranging from social embarrassment to debilitation.

"This is an important clinical syndrome for all physicians who encounter CD patients to be aware of, because it is easily treatable and its early recognition may prevent many unnecessary diagnostic investigations," said Dr. Habba.

The Habba Syndrome confirms that millions of Americans afflicted with CD may be suffering from an undiagnosed gallbladder dysfunction. Dr. Habba observed that his patients presented CD symptoms that mimicked those found in some individuals who have had their gallbladders removed. In particular, they experienced CD only after meals and rarely at night unless they ate a heavy, late-night meal.

After conducting a series of diagnostic tests and therapeutic trials, Dr. Habba was able to rule out the possibility of IBS and other intestinal disorders. Specifically, he was able to confirm his theory of CD caused by a dysfunctional gallbladder, demonstrated by specific tests indicating abnormal contractions

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of the gallbladder. The patients were prescribed low doses of cholestyramine, a cholesterol-lowering drug often used by gastroenterologists to treat CD resulting from gallbladder removal. Each patient in the study experienced almost immediate relief from his or her chronic diarrhea following this treatment.

“Since the publication of my first independent study, I’ve received hundreds of calls from patients around the country with various accounts of CD treatment failure,” said Dr. Habba. “I can’t help but believe that the gallbladder dysfunction demonstrated in my study may be a widespread condition, possibly affecting thousands of people across the country. Chronic diarrhea results from a variety of causes and all possibilities should be explored before making a treatment decision.”

The Habba Syndrome has the potential to provide a large number of patients with a more focused approach to their condition.

Irritable Bowel Syndrome is an intestinal condition experienced by an estimated 35 million people in the U.S. and is a common cause of CD. Patients with the Habba Syndrome rarely experience the localized pain associated with IBS. In addition, these patients respond to bile acid binding agents (such as cholestyramine) rather than the antispasmodic drugs that typically control the intestinal contractions associated with IBS.

Many patients who are diagnosed with irritable bowel syndrome actually have the Habba Syndrome.

Patients with the Habba Syndrome do not usually get better with standard IBS therapy such as a high fiber diet, antispasmodics or anti-diarrheal agents. In fact, many IBS patients that get post-prandial diarrhea (diarrhea after eating) turn out to have the Habba Syndrome and have failed the standard therapy for IBS, including the use of antidepressants and anti-anxiety drugs.

Characteristics of Irritable Bowel Syndrome versus Habba Syndrome

Irritable Bowel Syndrome	Habba Syndrome
Associated with abdominal pain/cramps	No abdominal pain
Altered bowel habits (constipation/diarrhea)	Always post-prandial diarrhea
No change with fasting	Improves with fasting
Normal gallbladder function	Poor gallbladder function
Good response to antispasmodics	Poor response to antispasmodics
Unpredictable response to bile acid resins	Excellent response to bile acid resins

Dr. Saad Habba has devoted the past 30 years to gastroenterology. He is a member of the gastroenterology department at Atlantic Health’s Overlook Hospital and has extensive national and international experience in teaching, lecturing and conducting research. Prior to joining Overlook Hospital, Dr. Habba served as the director of gastrointestinal endoscopy at University of Medicine and (more)

Dentistry of New Jersey—New Jersey Medical School, Newark, where he received the Distinguished Achievement Award. He received his medical degree from the Royal College of Surgeons in Dublin, Ireland, and completed his residency and fellowship in gastroenterology at St. Laurence's Hospital in Dublin and at UMDNJ. He is extensively published in several domestic and international peer-reviewed journals and has co-authored a chapter in *Conn's Current Therapy*, a textbook of medicine. He has the distinction of holding the U.S. patent for proprietary methodology on regeneration of the liver. Dr. Habba is on the "2007 'America's Top Physicians'" list by the Consumers Research Council of America.

Patients interested in inquiring about the Habba Syndrome may call Dr. Habba's office at 908-273-3434 or the Atlantic Health Physician Referral line at 800-247-9580. General information about the Habba Syndrome is available at www.habbasyndrome.com.

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Part of Atlantic Health, atlanticealth.org, Overlook Hospital is a 504-bed not-for-profit community teaching hospital located in Summit, NJ with more than 1,200 attending physicians. Overlook provides adult and pediatric emergency care, with specialties in emergency cardiac angioplasty and stroke response. Overlook's Neuroscience Institute is the State's leader in stroke and brain tumor treatments as the sole provider of the revolutionary Merci® Retriever and CyberKnife®. Overlook Hospital has a designated comprehensive stroke center, a bariatric surgery center of excellence, a minimally invasive surgery program, and comprehensive cancer center and digestive center. Other areas of expertise include a concussion center, epilepsy center, and brain tumor center. The hospital offers state-of-the-art maternity and baby services, with private, customized care and a Neonatal Intensive Care Unit staffed with the largest pediatric surgery group in New Jersey. Overlook Hospital is accredited by The Joint Commission. Atlantic Health is the primary academic and clinical affiliate in New Jersey of Mount Sinai School of Medicine and The Mount Sinai Hospital.