

Clinical Research

Department of Orthopedics



Sports Medicine & Connective Tissue Research

Headed by **Felix Savoie** with research support provided by **Wendell Heard**, the Orthopedics department at Tulane is focused on basic and clinical research concerning connective tissue injury and Sports Medicine. Unusual for an Orthopedics program (but typical of Tulane), this department conducts their research using methods ranging from cells to humans.

This is possible thanks to their highly productive collaborations with basic scientists from across different departments. **Bruce Bunnell** (stem cell biology), **Zongbing You** (doublecortin and connective tissue repair), and **Kristen Miller** (Biomedical engineering and tendon restoration) all conduct basic science research that complements the department's own clinical and patient-centered research efforts.

Clinical Outcomes, Biologics & Tissue Repair

The department focuses its research on three main areas. The first major area are clinical outcomes-based research projects. These investigators are looking at novel and unique approaches to a variety of problems. Notable examples include a new type of brace for dislocated shoulders, a specific type of patch for use in rotator cuff repair, and the use of portals in elbow surgeries.

The department is also heavily invested in biologics research, investigating the use of platelet-rich plasma in tear repair following throwing injuries (a specialty of **Felix Savoie**), applications for adipose-derived stem cells in arthritis treatment (in collaboration with **Bruce Bunnell**), and the role of the doublecortin molecule in knee injury resolution (a project conducted with **Zongbing You** and currently supported by the Department of Defense).

Clinical Outcomes, Biologics ... (continued)

Lastly, the department is collaborating with **Kristen Miller** in Biomedical Engineering to improve tendon repair and restoration following injury. All of these research areas are influenced by the specific strengths of the department within the context of Tulane.

While only approximately 1 out of 10 sports medicine and orthopedic patients in the New Orleans area utilize Tulane, about half of all throwing injuries in the city are seen by Tulane doctors. This niche area means that Tulane has access to a robust specialized patient injury population.

Additionally, Tulane Orthopedics is interested in comorbidities and complications enriched in the New Orleans area, including obesity, access to care, and HIV+ patient populations.

Tulane is also one of only three institutions in the country that focuses on women's injuries in sports medicine. These unique research areas and focuses make Tulane Orthopedics an attractive potential partner for clinical and basic research.

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