



Oriana M. Damas, MD, MSCTI

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Dr. Oriana M. Damas is an Associate Professor of Medicine in the Division of Digestive Health and Liver Diseases at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine. She currently serves as the Interim Director of the Crohn's and Colitis Center and as the Director of Translational Studies for the Center. Dr. Damas earned her medical degree from the University of Miami, where she also completed her training in internal medicine and gastroenterology. During her final year of fellowship, she pursued a dedicated research track after receiving a UCB and IBD Working Group Fellowship grant to study the genetic underpinnings of inflammatory bowel disease (IBD). She was also elected Chief Fellow in recognition of her outstanding performance as a clinician and leader.

Following her training, Dr. Damas joined the University of Miami as a physician-scientist with a clinical and research focus in IBD at the Crohn's and Colitis Center. During her fellowship, she received focused training in IBD under the mentorship of Dr. Maria Abreu. As junior faculty, she began investigating the phenotype and epidemiology of Hispanic patients developing IBD, an emerging patient population she identified early in her practice in South Florida. Through her research, she has described the epidemiology of IBD in both Colombia and South Florida and was among the first to characterize the IBD phenotype of Hispanic patients living in the United States.

Her contributions also include work on IBD genetics and the identification of environmental risk factors contributing to disease development in diverse populations. As a member of the IBD Genetics Consortium, Dr. Damas helped establish that NUDT15 mutations—commonly associated with thiopurine-induced neutropenia in Asian populations—are also present in Hispanic patients and should be tested for before initiating therapy. Her work has earned her several accolades, including the DREAM Award in recognition of her contributions to the Hispanic IBD community.

Recognizing the role of environmental factors in IBD, Dr. Damas has recently focused her research on diet as a treatment strategy. She has led clinical trials aimed at improving the quality of life for patients with IBD through dietary interventions. She is

an NIH-funded investigator and currently serves as the principal investigator of a study developing an anti-inflammatory South Florida diet for patients with ulcerative colitis. This culturally tailored intervention incorporates traditional Latin foods. She also leads a clinical trial examining the impact of weight loss and weight loss medications on inflammation in Crohn's disease.

In addition to her research and clinical work, Dr. Damas is a strong advocate for women in gastroenterology and patient education. In 2024, she co-directed the AGA Southeast Women's Regional Conference and now leads the South Florida Women in GI group. She has mentored numerous women GI fellows and frequently engages in patient education in both English and Spanish. She also leads a regional conference aimed at educating local providers on the latest advances in IBD.

Dr. Damas received the Sherman Emerging Leader Prize for Excellence in Crohn's and Colitis in 2025.