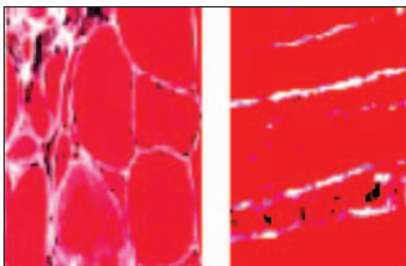


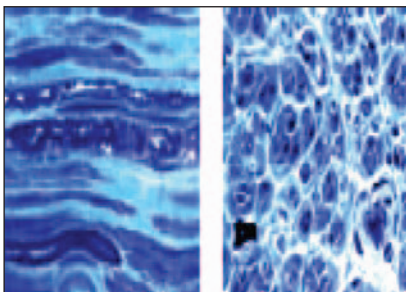
Inauguration of the First Neuromuscular Diagnostic Laboratory in the Arab world at AUBMC



*Pathologists and Neurologists
studying slides of a biopsy*



*Muscle sections cross and
longitudinal*



*Nerve sections embedded in plastic
longitudinal and cross*



*Teased nerve
fibers for
morphometry*

The Muhieddine M. Ahdab Neuromuscular Diagnostic Laboratory was inaugurated this year in the Department of Pathology & Laboratory Medicine at AUB Medical Center on May 28. This is the first specifically dedicated neuromuscular diagnostic laboratory in the Arab world. At the opening ceremony, Dr. Ghazi Zaatari, Chairman of the Department, said "This lab is the first of its kind in the Arab countries and will undoubtedly contribute to better healthcare for the people of Lebanon and the region." Dr. Zaatari continued "This laboratory is the contribution of a daughter to honor her father in a very exquisite and memorable way that shall serve fellow human beings through means that she knows best." Named after her father, businessman Muhieddine Misbah Al-Ahdab, the laboratory uses the most advanced and sophisticated tools in the study of neuromuscular pathology. Dr. Nadim Cortas, VP for medical Affairs and the Raja N. Khuri Dean of the Faculty of Medicine and Medical Center, thanked Dr. Ahdab-Barmada for her efforts in founding the laboratory. He said that the establishment of the laboratory is a "dream came true for all of us at AUB, and more importantly to people in Lebanon and the region."

Dr. Ahdab-Barmada joined AUB Medical Center in 2006 and she is the director of the Muhieddine M. Ahdab Neuromuscular Diagnostic (MMA-NMD) Laboratory. For the past three decades, she held academic appointments at the University of Pittsburgh in U.S.A., specializing in Neuropathology and the study of Neuromuscular diseases. She is certified by the American Board of Anatomic and Clinical Pathology, Neuropathology, and she is board eligible for clinical neurology.

The lab will be dedicated to the study and full diagnostic evaluation of muscle and nerve biopsies through the most advanced diagnostic protocols and equipment. Diseases such as muscular dystrophies, other genetic metabolic or mitochondrial neuromuscular diseases that show up in neonates, children or adults, inherited autonomic or motor-sensory neuropathies and motor neuron diseases, as well as a vast array of acquired myopathies and neuropathies can now be differentiated and diagnosed at the new MMA-NMD Laboratory. Such diagnostic procedures will enable specific therapeutic approaches. Diagnosed patients may be included in ongoing large-scale therapeutic research protocols currently under study in Europe and USA.

In addition to routine and frozen section processing of tissues, the laboratory offers highly specialized testing that includes a myriad of histochemical, immunohistochemical and enzyme histochemistry staining for myofibers and

mitochondria, morphometric evaluation and teased nerve preparations. Moreover, the laboratory can perform needle muscle biopsies, peripheral skin punch biopsy and forearm ischemic test for screening for metabolic myopathy.

The laboratory strongly believes in clinical consultation with referring physicians; discussions with clinicians are of utmost importance to tailor the processing of each biopsy to specifically adapted protocols for each suspected diagnosis.

This specialized lab is a welcome addition to the rich resources available at AUBMC and in Lebanon. It is a unique endeavor intended to be an effective venue in bringing together the different healthcare institutions in Lebanon and the Middle East at large, for an ongoing search toward the characterization of metabolic and genetic neurological disorders in the Arab populations. This is done with the hope that this will define these disorders better, offer opportunities for more effective treatment, and ultimately cure for some of the highly endemic neuromuscular disorders in these communities.