



## meet the physician

### Sarah Schellhorn Mougalian, MD

Associate Professor of Medicine (Medical Oncology)  
Chief Ambulatory Officer

**You have led an initiative to bring Next Day Access to patients at Smilow Cancer Hospital. How has Next Day Access impacted the delivery of patient care? How have patients responded?**

One of the most anxiety-provoking times in a patient's cancer journey is the time between diagnosis and the formulation of a treatment plan. We are committed to minimizing that anxiety by seeing patients as quickly as possible. Although all of the necessary information may not yet be available at the time of that first appointment, patients have appreciated the opportunity to meet the team, ask questions, and get a sense of what their treatment may be. Our feedback has been overwhelmingly positive.

**Your clinical practice is focused on the care of women with breast cancer. What recent advances are making the biggest impact for your patients?**

It's an exciting time in breast cancer drug development. Some of the most exciting advances in breast cancer relate to both immunotherapy, which harnesses a patient's own immune system to help fight the cancer, and more cancer-targeting therapy, where specific abnormalities in a cancer cell can be addressed by treatments that are less toxic than traditional chemotherapy. We are also using several antibody-drug conjugates, which serve to deliver potent chemotherapy directly to cancer cells and their surroundings, with less effects on normal tissue and therefore fewer side effects.

**Breast cancer treatment and care is a multidisciplinary effort; how do you collaborate with your colleagues at Smilow Cancer Hospital to create a plan for your patients?**

I rely on my colleagues in radiology and pathology to provide me with the information I need to present treatment options to my patients. I work closely with the breast surgeons and the breast radiation oncologists, as well as the reconstructive surgeons at Smilow Cancer Hospital, and many times we see patients on the same day or even at the same time during one appointment. Ultimately, we all work together to make sure that we not only treat the cancer, but also address every patient's individual goals and values.