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THE ORDINARY FRUIT FLY IS A PESKY LITTLE CRITTER, best known for its fondness for rotting fruit, as anyone who has ever kept over-ripe bananas on the kitchen counter knows all too well. But for Dr. Ruth Lehmann, an eminent research scientist at the Skirball Institute of Biomolecular Medicine and Director of the new Helen L. & Martin S. Kimmel Center for Stem Cell Biology, the fruit fly is a superstar. This animal holds the key to understanding an essential process in developmental biology—the emergence, formation, and migration of germ cells. In our cover story, “Germ Cells Are Forever,” we describe Dr. Lehmann’s elegant work with these cells.

In “Teaming Up to Combat Melanoma,” we report how seven physicians and researchers from diverse disciplines have pooled their resources—and the institutional expertise acquired by NYU over decades—to speed up their race to find a cure for the deadliest of skin cancers: melanoma. It’s a fascinating example of the still-emerging discipline of translational medicine.

For our story about trauma care at Bellevue, “Trauma: When Minutes Count,” we spent many a night in the hospital’s legendary Emergency Department, observing and talking with the doctors and nurses who make up the trauma team, the specialists from various departments who are called in, and the surgeons and residents who form the newly created Division of Trauma & Critical Care.

In Class Notes (*see page 47*) we bid farewell to our esteemed Medical and Science Editor, Richard I. Levin, M.D. ('74), who has left NYU after more than 30 years of service to become Dean of the School of Medicine at McGill University in Montreal, Canada. His wisdom and support have enriched this magazine in countless ways, and we’ll miss him.

You may notice some differences in the appearance of NYU PHYSICIAN. We’ve recast the design for a bolder look. We hope you enjoy this issue of the magazine.

— *The Editors*