

# MOMENTS

IN MEDICINE AT MICHIGAN

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“Israel has a very high incidence of breast cancer, especially among young women. If we can give them the best radiation treatment available we can cure them, we can give them long life. But Israel has only six hospitals with radiation facilities and only about 14 physicians who dedicate their time to radiation oncology. People have to wait a lot of time for their radiation, not only due to the shortage of radiation oncologists, but also the shortage of trained technicians. Even when we have the equipment, we don’t have enough manpower to implement new techniques.

“My mentor in Israel, a radiation oncologist, helped Dean Lichter start the Israeli Fellowship Program here at Michigan. Since I’ve been here, I see how different things can be. I see that I can make a difference in the lives of so many women. I’m being trained by the best, the people who set the bar for breast radiation therapy in the U.S. My mentor here, Lori Pierce, is an amazing woman. I’m staying another year beyond my fellowship to do research on genetic breast cancer.

“I’m lucky and grateful to learn at Michigan. Books are not enough; you have to see and experience radiation oncology. Now I can bring it home to the residents in Israel. That’s what I want to do with my life — bring the knowledge back — and dedicate my career to saving patients with breast cancer. I know I can make a difference.”

*Interview by Whitley Hill  
Photograph by J. Adrian Wylie*



*Merav BenDavid, M.D., from Tel-Aviv, Israel, is the fifth fellow to complete the U-M Israeli Fellowship Program, established in 1997 to help train Israeli physicians in the techniques and practices of radiation oncology.*