

# Willem Staels

## Personal Details

Full name: Willem J.H.C. Staels, M.D.

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Date of birth: May 19th, 1986

Nationality: Belgian

## Career Statement

I am a highly motivated resident in pediatrics who want to pursue an international carrier in pediatric endocrinology combining clinical work and research. During my medical degree I successfully combined my studies with volunteer work, educational courses (in life support, immunology and international cooperation on developmental aid) and with two international internships. Currently I'm combining my clinical residency at the Ghent University Hospital with a PhD in the Diabetes Research Center at the Free University of Brussels. My short term career goals include a clinical specialty training in pediatric endocrinology, which I can hopefully combine with a postdoctoral fellowship in diabetes research.

## Education and Qualifications

1998-04: Secondary school: Sint-Aloysiuscollege, Ninove, Belgium

2004-11: Master in Medicine. Graduated magna cum laude. Ghent University, Belgium

2011: European Paediatric Life Support (EPLS) Provider Course. European Resuscitation Council.

2011-14: Master of Specialist Medicine, Pediatrics, Ghent University, Belgium

2014-present: PhD fellowship, Beta cell neogenesis lab, Diabetes Research Center, Brussels, Belgium (Promotor: Prof. Dr. H. Heimberg) ; clinical residency in pediatric endocrinology, University Hospital Ghent, Belgium (Head of Department: Prof. Dr. M. Cools)

## Career history

### Volunteer work:

Summer 2008: Cultural exchange project in Usa-River, Tanzania. In cooperation with Jifundishe organization and with support from the Flemish government, entailing an educational mission in a primary school (English and physical education) and a day care mission in an orphanage.

June 2013: Medical staff member at the annual national pediatric oncology camp.

<http://www.vakantiekamp.be/>

### International Internships:

2009-10: University Hospital, Cologne, Germany. Dermatology, paediatrics, gynaecology and orthopedic surgery.

2010-11: Coast Provincial General Hospital Mombasa, Kenya. Internal medicine, HIV/AIDS clinic, ophthalmology. Kilifi District Hospital & Kenya Medical Research Institute, Kilifi, Kenya. General paediatrics and paediatric high-dependency unit. <http://www.kemri-wellcome.org>

**Medical Residency:**

2011-12: General Hospital, Sint-Jan Bruges, Belgium. General pediatrics. Neonatal intensive care.  
 2012-13: University Hospital, Ghent, Belgium. Pediatric specialties ward. Pediatric acute medicine and intensive care. Pediatric hematology, oncology and stem cell transplantation.  
 2013-14: University Hospital, Ghent, Belgium. Neonatology and neonatal intensive care. Pediatric endocrinology. Pediatric specialties ward.  
 2014-present: University Hospital, Ghent, Belgium. Pediatric endocrinology.

**Management and Leadership Experience**

2012-13: Resident representative in the Programme Committee of the department of Paediatrics at Ghent University  
 22/06/2013: Master of Specialist Medicine Conclave Ghent. Session chair in the working group "Burn-out and mentoring".  
 2014-present: Guidance of bachelor and master students in Biomedical Sciences and Medicine during research internships, bachelor and master theses

**Development Courses**

2010: Belgian Development Agency - Information Cycle, training on international cooperation and North-South relations, Brussels, Belgium  
 2011: Infection Meets Immunity. Utrecht Summer School. University Medical Center Utrecht, The Netherlands.  
 2011: Global Health Short Course. Belgian Medical Students' Association, Ghent, Belgium  
 2015: 41<sup>st</sup> Erasmus Endocrinology Course, Noordwijkerhout, The Netherlands  
 2015: Introduction to RNA-seq and ChIP-seq data analysis, Cambridge, United Kingdom

**Research Experience**

In 2008 and 2009 during my medical education, I spent two years part-time on basic research in immunology under the supervision of Prof. Dr. B. Vandekerckhove and Dr. S. Van Coppennolle in the Department of Clinical Chemistry, Microbiology and Immunology of Ghent University.

2014-present: FWO PhD Fellowship, Beta cell neogenesis lab, Diabetes Research Center, Brussels, Belgium (Promotor: Prof. Dr. H. Heimberg) - <http://bene.vub.ac.be/index.htm>

**Attendance of Congress/Symposium/Course/Workshop/Contact Day/Research Training**

1. IUAP DevRepair Meeting, Rotterdam, December 8-9, 2014
2. Beta Cell Therapy FP7 Annual Meeting, Brussels, December 11-13, 2014
3. The Joint Meeting of The Islet Study Group & Beta Cell Workshop, Jerusalem, May 3-7, 2015
4. National Diabetes Excellence summit, Brussels, April 25, 2015
5. ESPE 2015 Meeting, the 54th Annual Meeting for the European Society for Paediatric Endocrinology, Barcelona, October 1-3, 2015
6. International DevRepair meeting, Leuven, November 23-24, 2015
8. Opening symposium of the Brussels Diabetes Research Pole, Brussels – February 26, 2016
9. 17th Servier-IGIS Symposium, St Jean Cap Ferrat, April 7-10, 2016
10. Affymetrix seminar, Brussels, April 4, 2016

### Poster - FIRST AUTHOR - at international congress

1. Willem Staels, Naomi Van Gassen, Yves Heremans et al. Islet blood vessels and VEGF-A signaling are dispensable for pregnancy-associated beta cell mass adaptation. Beta Cell Therapy FP7 2014 Annual Meeting, December 11-13. Brussels.
2. Willem Staels, Naomi Van Gassen, Yves Heremans et al. Islet blood vessels and VEGF-A signaling are dispensable for pregnancy-associated beta cell mass adaptation. The Joint Meeting of The Islet Study Group & Beta Cell Workshop, Jerusalem, May 3-7, 2015.
3. Willem Staels, Naomi Van Gassen, Yves Heremans et al. Islet blood vessels and VEGF-A signaling are dispensable for pregnancy-associated beta cell mass adaptation. National Diabetes Excellence summit, Brussels, April 25, 2015.
4. Willem Staels, Naomi Van Gassen, Yves Heremans et al. VEGF-A Signaling Is Redundant For Pregnancy-Associated Expansion of Beta Cells In Mouse Pancreas. International DevRepair meeting, Leuven, November 23-24, 2015.
5. Willem Staels, Naomi Van Gassen, Yves Heremans et al. VEGF-A Signaling Is Required For Islet Vascularization And Glycemic Control, But Redundant For Beta Cell Expansion In Pregnant Mice. 17th Servier-IGIS Symposium, St Jean Cap Ferrat, April 7-10, 2016

### Scientific abstracts and publications

#### FIRST AUTHOR: Published work under 1st authorship in International journal

1. **Staels W**, De Groef S, Heremans Y, Coppens V, Van Gassen N, Leuckx G, et al. Accessory cells for beta-cell transplantation. *Diabetes, obesity & metabolism* 2015. (IF 6.36)
2. **Staels W**, D'Haese J, Sercu E, De Meirleir L, Colpaert J, Cornette L. Medium-chain Acyl-CoA dehydrogenase deficiency presenting with neonatal pulmonary haemorrhage. *Matern Health Neonatol Perinatol* 2015;1:8.
3. **Staels W**, Heremans Y, Heimberg H. Reprogramming of human exocrine pancreas cells to beta cells. *Best Practice & Research Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism* 2015. (IF 4.602)
4. Van Gassen N\*, **Staels W\***, Van Overmeire E, De Groef S, Sojoodi M, Heremans Y, et al. Concise Review: Macrophages: Versatile Gatekeepers During Pancreatic beta-Cell Development, Injury, and Regeneration. *Stem cells translational medicine* 2015. (IF 5.709) \* **co-first authorship**

#### CO-AUTHOR: Published work under co-authorship in international journal

1. De Groef S, Leuckx G, Van Gassen N, **Staels W**, Cai Y, Yuchi Y, et al. Surgical Injury to the Mouse Pancreas through Ligation of the Pancreatic Duct as a Model for Endocrine and Exocrine Reprogramming and Proliferation. *Journal of visualized experiments : JoVE* 2015(102):e52765. (IF 1.325)
2. Yuchi Y, Cai Y, Legein B, De Groef S, Leuckx G, Coppens V, Van Overmeire E, **Staels W**, et al. Estrogen Receptor alpha Regulates beta-Cell Formation During Pancreas Development and Following Injury. *Diabetes* 2015;64(9):3218-28. (IF 8.3)
3. De Groef S, **Staels W**, Van Gassen N, Lemper M, Yuchi Y, Sojoodi M, et al. Sources of beta cells inside the pancreas. *Diabetologia* 2016. (IF 6.671)
4. Sojoodi M, Stradiot L, Tanaka K, Heremans Y, Leuckx G, Besson V, **Staels W**, Van de Castele M, Marazzi G, Sassoon D, Heimberg H\*, Bonfanti P\*. The zinc-finger transcription factor PW1/Peg3 restrains beta cell cycling. *Diabetologia* 2016. (IF 6.671)
5. De Groef S, Renmans D, Cai Y, Leuckx G, Roels S, **Staels W**, Gradwohl G, et al. STAT3 modulates beta cell cycling in injured mouse pancreas and protects against DNA damage. Accepted for publication in *Cell Death and Disease* (IF 5.014)

**Language skills**

Dutch: Mother tongue, excellent knowledge spoken and written

English: Excellent knowledge spoken and written

French: Excellent knowledge spoken and written

German: Good knowledge spoken and written

**Personal Interests**

Literature (fiction, non-fiction: anthropology, history, science), theatre and classical music, athletics, photography and travelling