The double-edged sword:
How uncontrolled inflammation leads to autoimmune disease

Prof. Marcos Garcia-Ojeda

School of Natural Sciences, University of California, Merced
Email: mgarcia-ojeda@ucmerced.edu

Abstract: The main purpose of the immune system is to defend us from bacterial and viral infections. When working as designed, the immune system uses inflammation to destroy the invaders without overtly harming us. Often, however, the body loses control of the inflammatory response, causing damage to the body’s tissues even when germs are not threatening us. This uncontrolled response is responsible for autoimmune diseases, where the immune system now attacks the body and harms it. Autoimmune diseases like Asthma, Rheumatoid Arthritis and multiple sclerosis all display uncontrolled inflammation. In this talk, Dr. García-Ojeda will share current knowledge about inflammation and its relationship to autoimmune disease, and the efforts researchers are undergoing to better understand how the immune system uses inflammation to fight disease.

Biography: Dr. Marcos E. García-Ojeda joined UC Merced in 2006. He earned his Ph.D. in Immunology from Stanford University and continued his training at the Pasteur Institute in Paris in Stem Cell Biology. His research interests include how immune cells develop from blood stem cells, as well as how bone marrow transplantation could be used to fight cancer and HIV infection.