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Dr. Perlman received his Ph.D. in Biophysics from M.I.T., Cambridge, Massachusetts and his M.D. from the University of Miami, Miami, Florida. He was trained in Pediatrics and Pediatric Infectious Diseases at Boston Children's Hospital, Boston, Massachusetts. His current research efforts are focused on coronavirus pathogenesis, including virus-induced demyelination and the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and COVID-19.

His laboratory has developed several novel animal models useful for studying pathogenesis and evaluating vaccines and anti-viral therapies. His studies are directed at understanding why aged patients and mice developed more severe disease than younger individuals after infection with SARS-CoV or SARS-CoV-2 and also on why there is a male predominance in patients with more severe disease after infection with SARS-CoV, MERS-CoV or SARS-CoV-2. He and his colleagues demonstrated that transduction of mice with an adenovirus expressing the human receptor for MERS-CoV, DPP4, rendered them sensitive to infection, providing the first rodent model useful for studying MERS. Similar approaches have been used to develop several mouse models for COVID-19. Among other topics, his research is now focusing on the loss of sense of smell (anosmia) and taste (ageusia) observed in patients with COVID-19.