

Photos by Jon Gilbert Fox



TURNING

RICHARD ROTHSTEIN, MD

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“I’M FASCINATED BY THE LOOK OF WOODGRAIN, the way it feels in your hand, and even the way it smells. Shaping a piece of a tree trunk into a functional or artistic item is exciting—there is something remarkable about creating a useful object from a block of wood,” says Richard Rothstein, MD.



Bowls are his specialty. To create them, Rothstein saws a roughly hewn slice of wood from a felled tree and then cuts a bowl blank from the slice. Turning the wood on a lathe, he first shapes the outside then hollows out the inside. While the process requires precision, it is ultimately a sensory experience—after sanding, bowls are hand rubbed with fragrant toasted walnut oil to achieve a beautiful softly glowing patina.

Rothstein began bowl turning a few years ago as a means of artistic expression at the suggestion of his artist-wife

and became enthralled with everything about the art form. As a self-described novice enthused about learning new skills and refining his work, he says, “I see myself doing woodturning for the rest of my life.”

Richard Rothstein, MD, is the Joseph M. Huber Professor of Medicine, chair of the Department of Medicine, and the Senior Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs at the Geisel School of Medicine.