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## IU Simon Cancer Center joins nation's cancer centers in endorsement of HPV vaccination for cancer prevention

Jan. 27, 2016

(INDIANAPOLIS) -- In response to low national vaccination rates for the human papillomavirus (HPV), the Indiana University Melvin and Bren Simon Cancer Center has joined with the other 68 National Cancer Institute-designated cancer centers in issuing a statement calling for increased HPV vaccination for the prevention of cancer.

These institutions collectively recognize insufficient vaccination as a public health threat and call upon the nation's physicians, parents, and young adults to take advantage of this rare opportunity to prevent many types of cancer.

"We are often asked, 'When are we going to find a cure for cancer?' The truth is that the HPV vaccine is better than a cure. It can literally eliminate cervical cancer and a large subtype of head and neck cancers," Patrick Loehrer Sr., M.D., director of the [IU Simon Cancer Center](#), said.

The [NCI-designated](#) cancer centers joined in this effort in the spirit of President Barack Obama's State of the Union call for a national "moonshot" to cure cancer, a collaborative effort led by Vice President Joe Biden.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, HPV infections are responsible for approximately 27,000 new cancer diagnoses each year in the United States. Three vaccines are available that can prevent the majority of cervical, anal, and other genital cancers.

Indiana University has long been a leader in HPV research.

Darron Brown, M.D., M.P.H., professor of medicine in the Division of Infectious Diseases and professor of microbiology and immunology at the IU School of Medicine and a researcher at the IU Simon Cancer Center, began the HPV laboratory at IU in 1989. Dr. Brown was involved in the development of Gardasil and Gardasil9, two of the three FDA-approved vaccines used against infection by the human papillomavirus. He played a key role in the pre-clinical research into Gardasil, including demonstrating the effectiveness of a prototype vaccine, as well as the clinical testing of it.

Gregory Zimet, Ph.D., professor of pediatrics and clinical psychology in the Section of Adolescent Medicine at the IU School of Medicine and also a researcher at the IU Simon Cancer Center, is co-director of the Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis [Center for HPV Research](#), which is composed of more than 20 HPV researchers from IU, Purdue, and the University of Notre Dame. Those researchers collaborate to better understand HPV transmission and infection and ways to prevent it. Dr. Zimet is an international leader in behavioral science research on HPV vaccination.

Preventing HPV is also one of the goals of the IU Simon Cancer Center's [cancer prevention and control research program](#). Researchers from that program work together to reduce the incidence of HPV-related cancers.

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### NCI-designated Cancer Centers Urge HPV Vaccination for the Prevention of Cancer

Approximately 78 million people in the United States are currently infected with a human papillomavirus (HPV) according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and 14 million new infections each year. Several types of high-risk HPV are responsible for the vast majority of cervical and anal, and other genital cancers. The CDC also reports that each year in the U.S., 27,000 new cancer diagnoses are made with an HPV-related cancer, which amounts to a new case every 10 minutes. Even though most of these HPV-related cancers are preventable with early and effective vaccination, HPV vaccination rates across the U.S. remain low.

Together, as the National Cancer Institute (NCI)-designated Cancer Centers, recognize these low rates of HPV vaccination as a serious public health threat. HPV vaccination represents a rare opportunity to prevent many cases of cancer that is largely preventable. We urge leaders in cancer research and health of care, we are committed to a united front that will lead to action.

According to a 2013 CDC report, only 46 percent of girls and 23 percent of boys in the U.S. are receiving the recommended three doses of the HPV vaccine. That falls far short of the goal of 80 percent by the end of this decade, set forth by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Healthy People 2020 initiative. Furthermore, U.S. rates are significantly lower than those of countries such as Australia (73 percent), the United Kingdom (64 percent) and Brazil (59 percent), which have shown that high vaccination rates are certainly achievable.

The HPV vaccines, like all vaccines used in the U.S., passed extensive safety testing before and after being approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The vaccine has a safety profile similar to that of other vaccines approved for administration in the U.S. Importantly, the safety of HPV vaccines has been tested and approved by the World Health Organization's Global Advisory Committee on Vaccine Safety.

CDC recommends that boys and girls receive three doses of HPV vaccine at ages 11 or 12 years. The HPV vaccine series can be started as early as age 9 and should be completed before the 18th birthday. The HPV vaccine series affects the health of a person because it also recommends that young women start age 21 and young men start age 17.

The low vaccination rates are alarming given our current ability to safely and effectively care for preventing HPV-related and associated cancers. Therefore, the 68 NCI-designated cancer centers urge parents and health care providers to protect the health of our children through a number of actions:

- We encourage all parents and guardians to have their own child diagnosed complete the 3-dose HPV vaccine series before the 18th birthday, and complete the series as soon as possible in children aged 11 to 17. Parents and guardians should talk to their health care provider to learn more about HPV vaccines and their benefits.
- We encourage young men (up to age 21) and young women (up to age 26) who were not vaccinated as previously to complete the 3-dose HPV vaccine series to protect themselves against HPV.
- We encourage all health care providers to advocate for cancer prevention by making strong recommendations for individual HPV vaccination. We will continue to work hard to reduce vaccine barriers and challenges about the importance and benefits of HPV vaccination.

HPV vaccination is our best defense in stopping HPV infection to one fourth and preventing HPV-related cancers in our communities. The HPV vaccine is [CANCER PREVENTION](#). More information is available from the [CDC](#).



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Vaccination rates remain low across the nation, with under 40 percent of girls and just more than 21 percent of boys receiving the recommended three doses. Research shows there are a number of barriers to overcome to improve vaccination rates, including a lack of strong recommendations from physicians and parents not understanding that this vaccine protects against several types of cancer.

To discuss strategies for overcoming these barriers, experts from the NCI, CDC, American Cancer Society, and more than half of the NCI-designated cancer centers, including the IU Simon Cancer Center, met in a summit at MD Anderson Cancer Center last November. During the summit, cancer centers shared findings from 18 NCI-funded environmental scans, or detailed regional assessments, which sought to identify barriers to increasing immunization rates in pediatric settings across the country.

The published call to action was a major recommendation resulting from discussions at that summit, with the goal of sending a powerful message to parents, adolescents, and health care providers about the importance of HPV vaccination for cancer prevention.

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INDIANA UNIVERSITY

## IU SIMON CANCER CENTER

Indiana University Melvin and Bren Simon Cancer Center



# IUSCC news

January 2016

## News briefs

### **IU research: Current kidney cancer regimen improves when combined with another agent**

An Indiana University cancer researcher reported results of a clinical trial that showed the treatment of patients with kidney cancer may be improved with a new combination therapy.

Currently, appropriately selected patients with clear cell renal cell carcinoma, the most



Pili

common type of adult kidney cancer, have the option to be treated with high-dose interleukin-2 (HD-IL2). **Roberto Pili**, M.D., Robert Wallace Miller Professor of Oncology at the IU School of Medicine and a researcher at the IU Simon Cancer Center, reported results of a clinical trial that suggest that the histone deacetylase (HDAC) inhibitor entinostat may increase the effectiveness of HD-IL2.

Dr. Pili -- a nationally recognized expert on prostate, renal and bladder cancers -- reported this at the 2016 Genitourinary Cancers Symposium in San Francisco, which was Jan. 7-9.

The addition of entinostat led to greater shrinkage of a tumor as well as a longer duration in which the tumor remained smaller compared to historical data with IL-2 alone.

Dr. Pili and colleagues made the discovery by conducting a Phase I/II clinical trial with entinostat and high-dose interleukin-2 in patients with metastatic clear cell renal cell carcinoma.

Dr. Pili explained the importance of entinostat: "Regulatory T cells, or myeloid derived suppressive cells, act like a brake on the immune system. It's important to release the brake. By doing so, we can help immunotherapy, like high-dose interleukin-2, work better. It's like a car. If you push on the accelerator and the brake is on, the car won't go. You need to release the brake and push the accelerator. The idea was to suppress the suppressors, the T-cells, with entinostat. That helps IL-2 to do its job."

IL-2, an immunotherapy agent, is made by white blood cells and other cells in one's body. It is used to boost the immune system.

The preliminary results of this clinical trial pave the way for further studies of entinostat for use with IL-2 and other immunotherapies.

According to the National Cancer Institute, there were 61,560 estimated new cases of kidney and renal pelvis cancer in 2015 and an estimated 14,080 deaths.

Dr. Pili, also professor of medicine and of urology at the IU School of Medicine, focuses his research on developing drugs that block the response of cells keeping the body's defense system from attacking the disease. These drugs are being tested in clinical trials targeting prostate cancer and other genitourinary cancers.

The research was supported, in part, by grants R21CA137649 and UO1CA70095 from the National Cancer Institute.

In addition to Dr. Pili, research was contributed by David Quinn, MD, of the University of Southern California Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center; Hans Hammers, MD, PhD, and Michael Carducci, MD, of the Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center at Johns Hopkins University, Paul Monk, MD, and Thomas Olencki, MD, of Ohio State University; Saby George, MD, Li Shen, PhD, Dominick Lamonica, MD, Alan Hutson, PhD, and Adrienne Groman, MS, of Roswell Park Cancer Institute; Susan Perkins, PhD of IU; and Richard Piekarz, MD, PhD, of the National Cancer Institute.

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INDIANA UNIVERSITY

## IU SIMON CANCER CENTER

Indiana University Melvin and Bren Simon Cancer Center



# IUSCC news

January 2016

## News briefs

### New research program leaders announced

With the New Year comes new leadership within two research programs.



O'Neil

**Bert O'Neil, MD**, and **John Turchi, PhD**, are now acting co-leaders of the [Experimental and Developmental Therapeutics](#) (EDT) program.

Dr. O'Neil, Phase I director and director of the gastrointestinal cancer research program, is a natural fit in the EDT program because of his expertise in targeting new drugs to specific molecular targets on tumors. He specializes in both the clinical care of patients with gastrointestinal cancers and clinical trials aimed at providing new ways of treating these difficult cancers. He has a particular interest in the study of colorectal, liver, and pancreatic malignancies.



Turchi

Dr. Turchi, a biochemist, has been studying platinum-based drugs for more than 20 years. Research in Dr. Turchi's laboratory is focused on understanding how tumors respond to cisplatin treatment. He has been granted patent protection on three molecules -- potential drugs -- that can enhance the activity of cisplatin in difficult-to-treat cancers. He's currently working to move them forward to patient trials for lung and ovarian cancer.

Drs. O'Neil and Turchi succeed Daneila Matei, MD, who recently joined the faculty at the Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University as the Princess Diana Professor of Oncology, and Zhong-Yin Zhang, PhD, who is now at Purdue University as head of the Department of Medicinal Chemistry and Molecular Pharmacology.



**Reuben Kapur, PhD**, was recently appointed a co-leader of the [Hematopoiesis, Hematologic Malignancies, and Immunology](#) (HMI) program along with **Hal Broxmeyer, PhD**, and **David Roodman, MD, PhD**.

Dr. Kapur is an outstanding scientist in the area of hematologic malignancies and hematopoietic stem and progenitor cell biology. His lab focuses on understanding the

**Kapur** signaling pathways involved in regulating the growth and survival of blood stem cells and both pediatric and adult leukemia.

## IUSCC seeks students for summer program

Do you know of high school or college students interested in exploring cancer research as a career? If so, encourage them to apply for the IU Simon Cancer Center's Summer Research Program. Applications are due Feb. 26.

[full story](#)>

## Reminders

### Bioinformatics core open

The Collaborative Core for Cancer Bioinformatics (C3B) is now open for bioinformatics service and consultation to both Indiana University Melvin and Bren Simon Cancer Center (IUSCC) and Purdue University Center for Cancer Research (PUCRR) members. Supported by the Walther Cancer Foundation, C3B aims to integrate and accelerate cancer discovery, drug discovery, and precision medicine through joint bioinformatics, molecular genetics, and genomics research. Cancer investigators can submit their projects through the [C3B Website](#). C3B is a shared core facility, which is managed by two dedicated PhD bioinformaticians to serve both IU and Purdue cancer center members.

### New IU Simon Cancer Center PowerPoint template available

Are you about to put together a PowerPoint presentation in which you'll be representing the IU Simon Cancer Center? If so, we invite you to use the newest cancer center template:

[http://cancer.iu.edu/documents/IUSCC\\_PowerPoint\\_Template\\_2015.pptx](http://cancer.iu.edu/documents/IUSCC_PowerPoint_Template_2015.pptx).

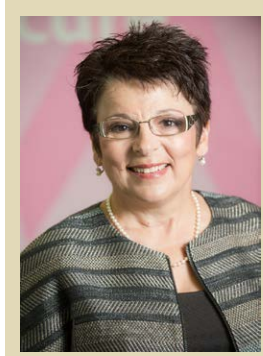
You'll find a title page and two options for subsequent pages: One page with the IU Simon Cancer Center signature (logo), and a page without the signature. This gives you the option of either using the signature on every page or using it more sparingly, either throughout the presentation, or perhaps only for the final slide.

The new template adds consistency to the IU Simon Cancer Center's overall look. The template's design takes elements from the Website ([www.cancer.iu.edu](http://www.cancer.iu.edu)), the monthly e-letter, and internal announcements.

## Cancer center members in the news

- **Rafat Abonour**, MD, has been appointed medical liaison to the International Myeloma Foundation. The foundation's president, Susie Novis Durie, said this of Dr. Abonour's appointment: "I am so pleased that Dr. Abonour is now part of our global team. Not only is Dr. Abonour a highly accomplished physician and researcher, he also embraces the IMF's core belief that knowledge is power. We are excited that Dr. Abonour will be sharing that message with patients, caregivers, and health care professionals." Dr. Abonour's annual Miles for Myeloma cycling event has raised \$3 million for multiple myeloma research at IU.
- **J.T. Zhang**, PhD, and colleagues wrote "[Effective Targeting of the Survivin Dimerization Interface with Small-Molecule Inhibitors](#)," which was published in the Jan. 15 issue of Cancer Research. It was selected by the editors as a "must read" article.
- While at the Genitourinary Cancers Symposium in San Francisco in early January, **Roberto Pili**, MD, conducted international interviews with eCancer, which is based in England, and Santor Edition, the leading online medical publisher in France.

- **Larry Cripe, MD**, wrote an [essay](#) for [Side Effects](#) about the significance of a new Medicare rule that reimburses doctors for discussions about end-of-life care with patients.



Storniolo

- Researchers continue to learn more about breast cancer thanks, in part, to the unique resources of the [Komen Tissue Bank at the IU Simon Cancer Center](#). **Anna Maria Storniolo, MD**, the bank's executive director, provided an update in this "[Inside Indiana Business](#)" piece.

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