



"Fulfilling the Promise" is a special AAMC initiative highlighting the collaboration between the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and academic medicine. For more than 60 years, this powerful partnership has pioneered many of medicine's most remarkable advances and helped Americans live longer and healthier lives. If you missed the recent Fulfilling the Promise Capitol Hill briefings on Combating Alzheimer's Disease and the Human Genome and Cancer, you can view the Webcasts at www.aamc.org/research/ftp/briefings.htm.

As research engines of the U.S. health system, the nation's medical schools and teaching hospitals are awarded more than half of the NIH extramural grants to scientists across the country. Below are just a few examples. For more information on NIH-supported research advances by medical schools and teaching hospitals in your state, go to www.aamc.org/innovations.

Pioneering NIH-funded research under way at U.S. medical schools and teaching hospitals:

New imaging agent for Alzheimer's

A team of researchers at the **University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine** have discovered a new tool to help diagnose Alzheimer's disease. Dubbed Pittsburgh Compound B (PIB), the compound, through positron emission tomography (PET), enables physicians to peer into the brains of people with Alzheimer's and view the telltale plaque deposits believed to be at the root of the disease. Previously, the presence of these deposits could be confirmed only during an autopsy. PIB will enable researchers to define the exact role plaque plays in the development of Alzheimer's, and may some day help identify those at risk of the disease before any symptoms occur. For information:

<http://newsbureau.upmc.com/WPIC/CompoundBStudy2004.htm>

Eliminating stroke-causing blood clots

Doctors on the stroke team at the **University of Texas Medical School at Houston** have developed a new tool that can target stroke-causing blood clots and eliminate them. A hand-held extracranial ultrasound device uses sound waves to find blood clots and delivers a heavy dose of the clot-busting drug tPA to remove the obstruction. In a study of 126 patients with an average age of 70, 38 percent who received the ultrasound had complete clearance of clots within two hours, and more than 70 percent had a complete or partial clearance. For information:

<http://distinctions.uthouston.edu/archive/2004/April/ultrasound.html>

Arthritis treatment may cause virus

Rheumatoid arthritis or polymyositis patients treated with methotrexate have a higher, though rare, likelihood of developing cancer because of a reactivated virus, according to researchers at the **University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill**. Methotrexate, which is a drug capable of blocking the metabolism of cells, may promote the development or reactivation of Epstein-Barr virus (EBV) in patients with rheumatoid arthritis or polymyositis. Scientists also discovered that methotrexate patients have a higher level of EBV in their blood than patients given other immunosuppressive regimens, including corticosteroids, leflunomide or etanercept. For information:

www.unc.edu/news/archives/nov04/arthritis11704.html

New risk with hormone therapy

Scientists at **Wayne State University School of Medicine** have found that menopausal hormone therapy consisting of oral estrogen plus progestin or estrogen alone increases the risk of urinary incontinence in postmenopausal women. A study of approximately 28,000 women showed hormone therapy enhanced the likelihood of stress incontinence caused

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For more information
www.aamc.org/ftp

Watch for information
about the next
Hill briefing in:
February 2006

PREVIOUS BRIEFINGS

Combating Alzheimer's and Other Diseases Affecting the Elderly

Richard Hodes, M.D., National Institute on Aging, NIH
Steven T. DeKosky, M.D., Alzheimer's Disease Research Center, University of Pittsburgh

The Human Genome & Cancer

Francis Collins, M.D., Ph.D., National Human Genome Research Institute, NIH
Victor Velculescu, M.D., Ph.D., Johns Hopkins

The Partnership between NIH and Academic Medicine

Elias Zerhouni, M.D., NIH
Jordan J. Cohen, M.D., AAMC

[View the Webcasts >>](#)

See how the NIH budget supports medical research

www.aamc.org/ftp/nih.htm

MEDICAL FIRSTS

Search for medical research contributions made by academic institutions in your state or district. Go to:
www.aamc.org/innovations

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Patty Green
Associate Vice President, Communications

by pressure on the bladder, urge incontinence and mixed urinary incontinence. For information:

www.med.wayne.edu/news_media/2005/hendrix_study.asp

Improving chemotherapy for skin cancer

Researchers at **The Ohio State University College of Medicine** have discovered a method that could improve the effectiveness of chemotherapy used to treat skin cancer. During a three-week test with groups of mice, scientists found that adding celecoxib, a non-steroidal, anti-inflammatory drug, to the current topical treatment reduces the number of tumors developed from UV-light exposure. According to the results, celecoxib makes the current treatment, 5-flourouracil, 70 percent more effective. For information:

<http://medicine.osu.edu/news/article.cfm?ID=1704>

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ABOUT THE AAMC

The Association of American Medical Colleges is a nonprofit association representing all 125 accredited U.S. and 17 accredited Canadian medical schools; nearly 400 major teaching hospitals and health systems, including 68 Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers; and 94 academic and scientific societies. Through these institutions and organizations, the AAMC represents 109,000 faculty members, 67,000 medical students, and 104,000 resident physicians.

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