

Paul Martini Prize 2007 awarded

Individualized HIV and cancer therapies thanks to new biomarkers and genetic diagnostics

Wiesbaden, April 16, 2007 (PMS). Today, Prof. Dr. med. Christian Strassburg of the Hanover Medical School and Prof. Dr. Roland Schüle of the University of Freiburg were honored with the Paul Martini Prize for their work. Based on their research, the treatment of patients with HIV and intestinal or prostate cancer can be planned better in the future and dangerous side effects can be avoided. The award celebration took place during the annual meeting of the German Society for Internal Medicine (DGIM) in Wiesbaden. The Paul Martini Prize is awarded every year by the Paul Martini Foundation, Berlin, for outstanding achievements in clinical-therapeutic pharmaceutical research and is worth EUR 25,000.

Prof. Dr. med. Christian Strassburg works at the Department of Gastroenterology and Hepatology of the Hanover Medical School. He was awarded the prize, because he and his team discovered why certain cancer and HIV drugs cause severe side effects such as jaundice in some patients. This is due to inherited mutations in certain enzymes that cause the metabolic transformation of certain active ingredients from pharmaceuticals as well as old hemoglobin. In the future, physicians will be able to use genetic testing to ensure that their patients do not have the mutations causing the side effects before prescribing the drugs in question. If the patients do have the mutations, physicians can directly plan an alternative therapy that is better tolerated by these patients – an important contribution to individualized medicine.

Prof. Dr. Roland Schüle is the director of the Center for Clinical Research at the University of Freiburg. Together with colleagues from the university clinic in Bonn, he discovered which molecules are telltale of the aggressiveness of prostate cancer. It depends on this aggressiveness how cancer patients should best be treated. Previously, such an assessment could only be performed by experienced pathologists with the help of microscopic observations of the prostate tissue architecture – an elaborate and frequently inexact procedure. In addition, Schüle's research provided information as to which molecules of the cancer cells are promising targets for future novel pharmaceuticals.

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Your contact:

Dr. Rolf Hömke
Pressereferent
Telefon 030 20604-204
Telefax 030 20604-209
E-Mail:
rolf.hoemke@paul-
martini-stiftung.de

Hausvogteiplatz 13
10117 Berlin
www.paul-martini-
stiftung.de

Press-Release



The Paul Martini Foundation

This Berlin-based non-profit foundation supports the advancement of pharmaceutical research as well as the research of drug therapy and works to expand the scientific dialog about pharmaceutical research and development between medical scientists at universities, hospitals, the research-based pharmaceutical industry, other research institutions and government agencies. The foundation is sponsored by the German Association of Research-based Pharmaceutical Companies (VFA), Berlin, with its 42 member companies.

The foundation was named after the outstanding scientist and physician from Bonn, Professor Paul Martini (1889 - 1964), in honor of his special achievements and service with regard to the advancement and continued development of clinical-therapeutic research, which he impacted significantly for decades with his "Methods of Therapeutic Examination" published in 1932. The prize awarded annually by the foundation for outstanding clinical research is also named in his honor.

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