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Cancer / Oncology News

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Granada-Based Scientists Prove That The Inhibition Of The Parp-1 Gene Slows Down The Growth Of Tumors

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Researchers from IBIMER, a University of Granada's institute for the research of biopathology and regenerative medicine, in collaboration with scientists of the Lopez Neyra institute of parasitology and biomedicine, have studied the functions of a gene, parp-1, in the processes of initiation and progression of tumours in experimental models. They have found out that the lack or inhibition of the protein it represents decreases the speed at which neoplasias occur, as it prevents the inflammation that contributes to the proliferation of cancer cells. Part of the conclusions of this research work are published in the June edition of the journal 'Cancer Research'.

Experts have used a model of experimental carcinogenesis, that is, have caused cancer in normal experimental mice and also in mice knocked out in that specific gene. After many experiments, they have found out that apart from collaborating to the DNA repair, the parp-1 gene has an influence on the growth of the carcinoma. Moreover, the gene's lack of expression obstructs the angiogenesis process, which causes the creation of new blood vessels that allow sick cells to survive by receiving nourishment from the host organism.

The novelty of this finding is the possibility of designing new strategies that inhibit protein parp-1 activity in order to stop the progression of cancer. The next step consists of checking in experimentation models the efficacy of inhibitors in the treatment of cancer processes. So far, experts have used molecular medicines to carry out this delay process.

Researchers are trying to find more efficient therapeutical strategies that reinforce the action of antitumoral agents and decrease the administered radiation or chemotherapy doses. This way, the side effects will also decrease.

USA-based scientists have recently proven that this enzyme which repairs sick cells and keeps cell energy could be useful for the treatment of Huntington's disease and other pathologies characterised by a low level of energy in cells. This is what an article published in the Chemistry & Biology's August edition reveals, written by researchers of the Institute for Neurodegenerative Disease of Massachusetts General Hospital. These experts describe a new inhibitor of polymerase Parp1 which protects the cells affected by the Huntington's disease in a lab.

About ANDALUCÍA INVESTIGA

Andalusia's I+D+I public system includes over 18,000 researchers and more than 1,700 research groups. Together with Madrid and Cataluña, Andalusia has a great potential, with 14% of the nation's total scientific output. This privileged position has been possible thanks both to the regional government's financial support to the I+D+I and the aid of the private sector. Last January 9, the Andalusian Programme for the Spreading of Scientific Knowledge created the news agency InnovaPress in Spanish, with the aim of providing prompt information about scientific developments in the region. The project follows the European Commission's guidelines for the creation of a major scientific news agency that will enhance the spread of such information, and will serve as a new tool for the EU's economic reforms set out in Lisbon, as debated in Brussels last December 2004. Now, from April 3rd, InnovaPress will also be available in English, in an attempt to spread scientific developments and results to mass media, researchers, and universities. The Andalusian Programme for the Spreading of Scientific Knowledge is sponsored by the Andalusian Ministry of Innovation, Science and Enterprise. This is a pioneering project in Europe, which has managed to gather research, higher education and knowledge-based industry, I.T.s, and entrepreneurial, industrial and energy policies. With the interaction of all these agents in mind, the Andalusian Ministry of Innovation, Science and Enterprise intends to create a major social alliance that will enable an "innovation explosion" in Andalusia as exclusive guarantee of progress and welfare development. In this vein, the Andalusian Regional Government has increased its investment in I+D+I by 37% with regard to the previous year, when investment was also increased by 32%. This shows the government's commitment to double investment in this area in the course of the present term of office. Some of the actions carried out by the regional government include a brand new Multi-annual Plan for University Infrastructure Investment for the period 2006-2010, with a total budget of 480 million Euros for the ten Andalusian public universities. With this new Plan, investment in university infrastructure and equipment agents in mind, ry policiesm groups. is increased by 32% with regard to the previous five-year period. Also, within five years, the Plan will match all investment made in the last 12 years (1994-2005), which amounted to 504 million Euros. Also, a new system of incentives has been established for Research Groups and Excellence Projects, reaching a total of 87 million Euros, which means an increase of 79 million with regard to the previous official announcement made by the regional government before the new system was in force. In the new system, 12 million Euros have been allocated as incentives to the work of 1731 research groups, and 30 million more have made it possible to start 219 excellence projects dealing with Life Sciences, Food and Agriculture, Information Technologies, etc. Through InnovaPress, the Andalusian Programme for the Spreading of Scientific Knowledge will channel this new sustainable economic and social model, based on the creation of social welfare, respect for the environment and equal opportunities, within the major framework of the second modernisation of Andalusia.

ANDALUCÍA INVESTIGA

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