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>NCI Establishes Mouse Model Technology Consortium

>WESTPORT, Dec 28 (Reuters Health) - The National Cancer Institute (NCI) has established the Mouse Models of Human Cancers Consortium. The NCI announces today that it will be funding 19 groups of investigators from more than 30 institutions in the US "...to develop models that parallel the ways that human cancers develop, progress and respond to therapy or preventive agents."

>Co-leaders of the consortium are Dr. Terry Van Dyke of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Dr. Tyler Jacks of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge.

>The consortium will initially work on developing mouse models of cancer in eight organ systems: breast, prostate, lung, ovary, skin, the blood and lymph system, colon and brain.

>The consortium will use mouse models to "...support discovery of new cancer-related genes and to disclose the pathways and processes through which cancer-related genes affect human cancer development, promote tumor progression and facilitate metastasis. Ultimately, the models will be used to test new approaches to diagnosis and medical care for cancer," Dr. Dinah Singer, director of NCI's Division of Cancer Biology, said in an agency release announcing the formation of the consortium.

>The consortium will also "...set standards for integrating information and tracking the progress of the models being derived and validated, with the help of non-government advisors," NCI said in its release. The agency will be establishing Internet discussion groups for use by the research community.

>"The NCI will give the cancer research community access to the models, the experimental tactics used to derive and validate the models, and the knowledge about the models and their practical uses that are developed," Dr. Cheryl Marks of NCI said in the release.

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