

Publications of the Week

Characterization of a DLBCL with a PMBL Gene Expression Signature

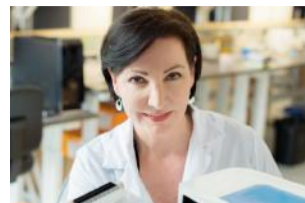
First Author: Gebben Duns | Senior Author: Christian Steidl (pictured)
Blood | B.C. Cancer Agency, SFU, Canada's Michael Smith Genome Sciences Centre, and UBC



Primary mediastinal large B-cell lymphoma (PMBL) is a type of aggressive B-cell lymphoma that typically affects young adults, characterized by presence of a bulky anterior mediastinal mass. Lymphomas with gene expression features of PMBL have been described in non-mediastinal sites, raising questions about how these tumours should be classified. The authors investigated whether these "non-mediastinal PMBLs" are indeed PMBLs or instead represent a distinct group within diffuse large B-cell lymphomas (DLBCLs). [Abstract](#)

Development of a Novel, Sensitive Translational Immunoassay to Detect Plasma Glial Fibrillary Acidic Protein (GFAP) after Murine Traumatic Brain Injury

First Author: Emily Button | Senior Author: Cheryl Wellington (pictured)
Alzheimer's Research and Therapy | Djavad Mowafaghian Centre for Brain Health, International Collaboration on Repair Discoveries, and UBC



GFAP has emerged as a promising fluid biomarker for several neurological indications including traumatic brain injury, a leading cause of death and disability worldwide. The authors developed and validated a novel sensitive GFAP immunoassay and found its performance by the parameters studied was similar to assays used to quantify human GFAP in clinical neurotrauma blood specimens and to assays used to measure murine GFAP in tissues. [Abstract](#)

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Awards

Faculty of Medicine Researchers Awarded Funding for COVID-19 Projects

UBC Faculty of Medicine



Faculty of Medicine researchers were awarded funding from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research through the Operating Grant: COVID-19 Research Gaps and Priorities program. This includes Dr. Eric Jan (pictured), who is using a rapid yeast platform to identify non-toxic, bioactive small molecules to block SARS-CoV-2 infection, and Dr. Honglin Luo, who is studying an FDA-approved anti-gout drug to see if it can be repurposed for COVID-19. [Read More](#)

BPK Professor Honoured with SFU Excellence in Teaching Award

SFU Faculty of Science



Congratulations to Dr. Victoria Claydon (pictured, standing), Professor in the Department of Biomedical Physiology and Kinesiology (BPK), who is one of three educators to win a 2021 SFU Excellence in Teaching Award. Her research focuses on human cardiovascular control in health and disease. She has made significant contributions to understanding how impaired cardiovascular responses contribute to disorders of blood pressure control and fainting, as well as the impact of spinal cord injury on cardiovascular regulation. [Read More](#)

Challenges 2020: Lay Science Writing Winners Announced

Canadian Blood Services



The Centre for Innovation partnered with the Centre for Blood Research at UBC to deliver its annual Lay Science Writing Competition. Graduate students Melina Messing (pictured) and Polina Petitsynya tied for first place for their pieces, "Lost in lab: deciphering blood immune cells to fight COVID-19" and "Developing cell biology lessons for seniors in the age of COVID," respectively. [Read More](#)

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Local News

Blocking Ulcerative Colitis with the Help of a Small Molecule

Vancouver Coastal Health Research Institute



UBC researchers including Dr. Alice Mui (pictured) have discovered a new targeted therapy that could have long-lasting effectiveness and few side effects. A small molecule that packs a big anti-inflammation activation punch may provide relief to the millions of individuals around the world who suffer from ulcerative colitis and other inflammation-related diseases, according to the findings of a new study published in *iScience*. [Read More](#)

Rapid SARS-CoV-2 Vaccine Research Initiative in B.C.

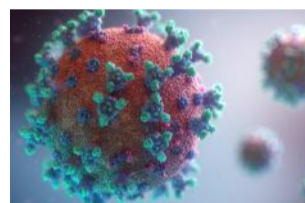
Genome B.C.



To date, four COVID-19 vaccines have been approved for use in Canada and priority populations are already receiving their vaccinations. However, critical questions remain around the vaccines' performance, access, and public perception that need evidence-based answers. Genome B.C., the Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research, and the B.C. Centre for Disease Control Foundation for Public Health have joined forces to support research that addresses, and implements solutions for, knowledge gaps around COVID-19 vaccination. [Read More](#)

AbCellera-Discovered Bamlanivimab Together with Etesevimab Reduced Hospitalizations and Prevented Death in Phase 3 Trial for Early COVID-19

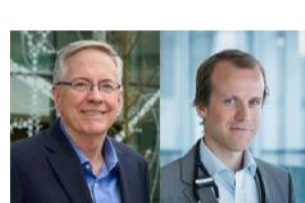
AbCellera



AbCellera has announced that bamlanivimab (LY-CoV555) 700 mg, a human antibody discovered by AbCellera and developed with Eli Lilly, and etesevimab 1400 mg (LY-CoV16) together reduced COVID-19-related hospitalizations and deaths by 87% in high-risk patients recently diagnosed with COVID-19. These results mark the second positive Phase 3 trial readout for bamlanivimab and etesevimab together, adding to the growing safety and efficacy data that has accelerated the adoption of the antibody therapy globally. [Read More](#)

\$3M Gift to Accelerate UBC Alzheimer's Research

UBC Faculty of Medicine



The gift from the McArthur, Aune and Copland families will support a new project to investigate the processes that lead to oxidative stress, an imbalance of pro-oxidants and antioxidants associated with cell damage that is a hallmark of Alzheimer's disease. Two UBC researchers in the Djavad Mowafaghian Centre for Brain Health, Dr. Brian MacVicar (pictured, left) and Dr. Haakon Nygaard (pictured, right) have the tools and knowledge from experience in the lab and clinic to drive this work forward. [Read More](#)

iCo Therapeutics, Inc. Announces Agreement for *In Vivo* Testing of iCo-019 on SARS-CoV-2

iCo Therapeutics



iCo Therapeutics Inc. has announced it will be testing the *in vivo* efficacy of its novel oral amphotericin B asset (iCo-019) against SARS-CoV-2, the causative agent of COVID-19 in the hACE2 mouse model. iCo Director of Research Dr. Kishor Wasan commented, "We have some exciting preliminary data suggesting the anti-viral activity of our compound against SARS-CoV-2 at concentrations that are not toxic to the cells themselves." [Read More](#)

Life in the Li Lab – MSL Graduate Student Award Recipient Shari Liu

Michael Smith Laboratories



Shari Liu, a graduate student in Dr. Xin Li's lab at UBC's Michael Smith Laboratories (MSL), is researching ways to strengthen plants' immune systems. "My current goal is to use the genetic tools to study plant immunity signalling pathways, such as how they are regulated by pathogen infection. This can be meaningful because it is critical to develop safer and more sustainable strategies to control plant diseases instead of using pesticides and chemicals." [Read More](#)

AbCellera Proposing to Build Massive City Block-Sized Biotech Campus in Vancouver

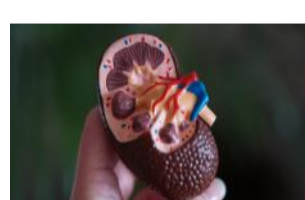
Daily Hive Vancouver



Major expansion plans are afoot for AbCellera over the next few years to the extent that the Vancouver-based biotechnology company is now looking to build a massive purpose-built office and medical laboratory campus in Mount Pleasant. Currently, the company employs 210 people, and it plans to double its workforce by the end of this year. By 2028, it will add over 1,000 people to its workforce, which necessitates the new additional office and laboratory space. [Read More](#)

Chinook Therapeutics Announces First Patient Enrolled in Pivotal Phase 3 ALIGN Study of Atrasentan for Patients with IgA Nephropathy

Chinook Therapeutics



Chinook Therapeutics, Inc. has announced that the first patient with IgA nephropathy (IgAN) has been enrolled in the ALIGN Study, a pivotal phase 3 clinical trial evaluating the efficacy and safety of atrasentan, a potent and selective inhibitor of the endothelin A receptor. IgAN is the most common primary glomerular disease globally and a leading cause of chronic kidney disease. Chinook expects to report top-line data from the 24-week primary endpoint efficacy analysis in 2023. [Read More](#)

What's Driving Canada's Biomedical Boom?

Research2Realty



With an increasing global demand for antibody-based therapeutics that can target cancer and other ailments, Canadian firms are stepping up. Antibody-based therapeutics have come to dominate modern medicine in recent years, and according to the Financial Post, six of the top 10 most innovative drugs globally in 2016 were antibody-related molecules. The Canadian biomedical sector hosts a number of companies advancing the field, and a notable example is the Vancouver-based group Zymeworks. [Read More](#)

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Interesting Articles

Canada's Health Security Depends on Increased Support for High-Risk, High-Reward Scientific Research: Op Ed

UBC Life Sciences Institute



Former LSI Director Dr. Pieter Cullis (pictured) and University of Toronto's Shana Kelly published an Op-Ed in the Hill Times calling for growing the biotech industry to accelerate growth of a knowledge-based economy, and to promote economic prosperity. "The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the fact that Canada lacks biopharmaceutical and vaccine manufacturing capacity," write the co-authors. "At the same time, it has highlighted Canada's strengths in biopharmaceutical innovation." [Read More](#)

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Upcoming Events in Vancouver

March 29

10:00 AM

UBC Science Communication Week

Online

March 31

12:00 PM

UBC Three-Minute Thesis Competition

Online

March 31

12:00 PM

TI Methods Speaker Series: The Development of a Risk of Bias Tool for Network Meta-Analysis

Online

April 1

3:00 PM

From Lab to Life: Translation of Regenerative Medicine Therapies and Technologies

Online

April 7

12:00 PM

W/P Seminar: Dr. Chonnetia Jones

Online

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Manufacturing Technologist, Clean Room

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adMare Bioinnovations

Research Associate II/Senior Research Associate, Assay Development

Zymeworks

Protein Engineer, Structural Immunology

AbCellera

Research Programmer

Canada's Michael Smith Genome Sciences Centre

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