

Publications of the Week

Human Complete NFAT1 Deficiency Causes a Triad of Joint Contractures, Osteochondromas, and B Cell Malignancy

First Author: Mehul Sharma (pictured, left) | Senior Author: Stuart Turvey (right)  
Blood | BC Children & Women's Hospital, BC Cancer Research Centre, and UBC



Discovery of humans with monogenic disorders has a rich history of generating new insights into biology. The authors report the first human identified with complete deficiency of nuclear factor of activated T cells 1 (NFAT1). NFAT1, encoded by *NFATC2*, mediates calcium-calceinurin signals that drive cell activation, proliferation, and survival. [Profile](#) | [Abstract](#)

Genome-Wide Detection of Imprinted Differentially Methylated Regions Using Nanopore Sequencing

First Author: Vahid Akbari | Senior Author: Steven Jones (pictured)  
eLife | Canada's Michael Smith Genome Sciences Centre and UBC



Imprinting is a critical part of normal embryonic development in mammals, controlled by defined parent-of-origin differentially methylated regions known as imprinting control regions. Direct nanopore sequencing of DNA provides a means to detect allelic methylation and to overcome the drawbacks of methylation array and short-read technologies. [Abstract](#)

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Awards

Congratulations CIHR Spring 2022 Project Grant Recipients

BC Children's Hospital Research Institute



Congratulations to the BC Children's Hospital Research Institute and Women's Health Research Institute investigators and their teams who were awarded funding through the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) Spring 2022 Project Grant competition. Drs. Daniel Goldowitz (pictured) and Paul Pavlidis received funding for their project on *Pax6* regulation of glutamatergic lineages in cerebellar development. [Read More](#)

Brian Kwon Receives a \$2.4M CAD Grant from the United States Department of Defense for SCRIBBLE Clinical Trial and Rapid Testing to Predict Acute Spinal Cord Injury Severity and Outcome

UBC Department of Orthopaedics



The US Department of Defense awarded Dr. Brian Kwon (pictured) a \$1.89M USD (approximately \$2.4M CAD) grant to conduct a clinical trial called Spinal Cord Injury Blood Biomarker Longitudinal Evaluation — or SCRIBBLE — to evaluate how well the blood proteins NF-L and GFAP perform in classifying injury severity and predicting outcome of patients with acute spinal cord injury. [Read More](#)

BC Cancer Researchers Part of International Collaboration to Develop Treatments for Osteosarcoma

BC Cancer Research



Drs. Poul Sorensen (pictured, left) and Samuel Aparicio (right) are playing a central role in a new international collaboration aimed at developing innovative treatments for osteosarcoma — a highly malignant bone cancer. Uncovering how to stop its metastatic spread will be a key focus of the new project, which recently received a USD \$3.1M research grant from Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation. [Read More](#)

UBC Researcher Gets \$3M for Development of Credit-Card-Sized Biomedical Sensor

Business in Vancouver



A UBC researcher is kicking the development of a credit-card-sized, disposable "biomedical sensor" — capable of detecting not only COVID-19 but also other ailments almost anytime, any place — into high gear. Dr. Sudip Shekhar (pictured) received recognition in the form of a \$3 million Schmidt Science Polymaths Award that is aimed at supporting tenured researchers around the world in driving interdisciplinary research. [Read More](#)

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Local News

Finding Alternatives to Antibiotics in Amphibian and Insect RNA with rAMPage

Canada's Michael Smith Genome Sciences Centre



Antimicrobial peptides (AMPs) are a promising alternative to conventional antibiotics that could save us from the looming global health crisis related to antibiotic resistance. A new publication from Diana Lin (pictured) and the lab of Dr. Inanc Birol presents a bioinformatics pipeline for high throughput identification of AMPs in RNA sequencing datasets from 75 amphibian and insect species. [Read More](#)

DMCBH Trainee Spotlight: Ellen Koch

Djavad Mowafaghian Centre for Brain Health (DMCBH)



Ellen Koch (pictured) is a PhD student in Dr. Lynn Raymond's lab, who just recently successfully defended her thesis. She has always been fascinated by the brain, and how it is able to control so many diverse and complex behaviours in humans and animals. She wants to be a part of building on our collective knowledge of the brain and nervous system, and to contribute to research that could lead to treatments for neurological disorders. [Read More](#)

Versant Ventures Collaborates with AbCellera to Accelerate Drug Development for its Portfolio of Biotech Companies

AbCellera



AbCellera and Versant Ventures have announced a multi-year collaboration to discover therapeutic antibodies for multiple targets selected by Versant's portfolio of biologics-focused biotechs. Versant and AbCellera already have enabled three of the firm's stealth-stage companies under previous partnerships. Under the terms of the deal, Versant portfolio companies will have rights to develop and commercialize the resulting therapeutic antibodies. [Read More](#)

Mapping the Brain

UBC Faculty of Medicine



Dr. Fidel Vila-Rodriguez (pictured) and his team have made it their mission to unlock the treatment potential of repetitive transcranial magnetic stimulation and other neurostimulative techniques through research. "The possibilities are incredibly exciting," he says. Their work is part of a larger push by neuroscientists at UBC and around the world to map the functional physiology of the brain. [Read More](#)

Qu Biologics to Receive Additional Funding to Launch Clinical Trial for the Restoration of Innate Immune Function in the Elderly Following Health Canada Go-Ahead

Qu Biologics



Qu Biologics, a private clinical stage biopharmaceutical company developing site specific immunomodulators, a novel platform of immunotherapies designed to restore innate immune function, has announced it received clearance from Health Canada to proceed with a randomized placebo-controlled clinical trial of QBKPN, a first-in-class innate immune modulator that enhances lung immunity, in the elderly. [Read More](#)

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Upcoming Events in Vancouver

- August 4 11:00 AM **SBME Presents: Mikhail Shapiro**  
UBC Biomedical Research Centre, Room 351+352A
- August 4 4:00 PM **D.R.I.N.K.S. Vancouver**  
Mahoney and Sons
- August 16 9:00 AM **SBME Synergy Research Day**  
Life Sciences Centre
- August 16 12:00 PM **CBR Research Day 2022**  
Life Sciences Centre
- September 7 12:00 PM **WHRI's World Sexual Health Day 2022**  
Online

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Zymeworks
- Laboratory Operations Assistant**  
AbCellera

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