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Laboratoire Européen de Biologie Moléculaire

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PRESS RELEASE

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Neue Forschungseinheit in der Universitätskinderklinik / EMBL

New research unit established
between Heidelberg University Clinic
and EMBL

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PRESS RELEASE

Neue Forschungseinheit in der Universitätskinderklinik / EMBL

Molekulare Mechanismen von Krankheiten werden erforscht

(Heidelberg) Das Universitätsklinikum Heidelberg und das Europäische Laboratorium für Molekularbiologie (EMBL), Heidelberg, haben eine gemeinsame Forschungseinheit eingerichtet. Dies gaben der Dekan der Medizinischen Fakultät, Prof. Hans-Günther Sonntag, und der Direktor des EMBL, Prof. Fotis Kafatos, bekannt. Die "Molecular Medicine Partnership Unit" ist in der Universitätskinderklinik untergebracht und soll eine Lücke in der Zusammenarbeit zwischen klinischer Forschung und Grundlagenforschung schließen sowie universitäre und nicht-universitäre Forschung zusammenbringen.

Die Forschungseinheit wird gemeinsam geleitet von Prof. Andreas Kulozik, dem Leiter der Abteilung Hämatologie, Onkologie und Immunologie an der Kinderklinik, und Dr. Matthias Hentze, Gruppenleiter und Senior Scientist am EMBL. Ihre Zusammenarbeit hat bereits in den vergangenen Jahren wichtige Erkenntnisse über molekulare Mechanismen häufiger Erkrankungen des Blutes erbracht, zum Beispiel bei der Thalassämie, der weltweit häufigsten vererbten Erkrankung. Dabei ist die Qualitätskontrolle der Genexpression beeinträchtigt, also der Übersetzung genetischer Information in Proteine (Eiweißkörper). Außerdem entdeckte die Arbeitsgruppe von Kulozik und Hentze einen neuen molekularen Mechanismus für die Bildung von Blutgerinnseln, die zu tödlichen Embolien führen können: Durch veränderte Genexpression wird ein bestimmtes gerinnungsförderndes Eiweiß im Blut im Übermaß produziert. Dieser Mechanismus könnte auch bei anderen Krankheiten eine Rolle spielen und soll nun weiter erforscht werden.

- Annette Tuffs, Universitätsklinikum Heidelberg



PRESS RELEASE

New research unit established between the University of Heidelberg Clinic and EMBL

Research to focus on the molecular mechanisms of disease

Heidelberg. The Medical Clinic of the University of Heidelberg and the European Molecular Biology Laboratory (EMBL) in Heidelberg have created a new cooperative research unit. The news was announced today by the Dean of the Medical School, Prof. Hans-Günther Sonntag, and EMBL Director General Fotis C. Kafatos. The “Molecular Medicine Partnership Unit” will be housed in the University Clinic and is designed to fill a gap that exists between clinical and basic research, as well as to bring together university and external research.

The research unit will be co-directed by Prof. Andreas Kulozik, who is the Director of the Hematology, Oncology, and Immunology Departments of the Children’s clinic, and Dr. Matthias Hentze, who is a research group leader and senior scientist at EMBL. The two scientists have already led fruitful collaborations; over the past few years they have made important contributions to understanding the molecular mechanisms behind common blood diseases - such as thalassemia, the world’s most common inherited disease. The mechanism involves an impairment of “quality control” mechanisms as the information contained in genes is expressed in proteins. Another important collaboration by Kulozik and Hentze revealed a new molecular mechanism by which blood clots form, sometimes leading to deadly embolisms. They discovered that a change in gene expression leads to an overproduction of a particular clot-promoting protein in the blood. The researchers have expanded their investigation to pursue the question of whether this mechanism might also play a role in other diseases.

- Annette Tuffs, Universitätsklinikum Heidelberg
(trans. Russ Hodge)



Notes for editors:

The European Molecular Biology Laboratory is a basic research institute funded by public research monies from 16 member states, including most of the EU, Switzerland and Israel. Research at EMBL is conducted by approximately 80 independent groups covering the spectrum of molecular biology. The Laboratory has five units: the main Laboratory in Heidelberg, Outstations in Hinxton (the European Bioinformatics Institute), Grenoble, Hamburg, and an external research programme in Mouse Biology in Monterotondo near Rome. The cornerstones of EMBL's mission are: to perform basic research in molecular biology, to train scientists, students and visitors at all levels, to offer vital services to scientists in the member states, and to develop new instruments and methods in the life sciences. The Laboratory also sponsors an active Science and Society programme. Visitors from the press are welcome. For more information see the EMBL website at:

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