

Pancreatic cancer finally better known!

Researchers at the Jules Bordet Institute and the Erasmus Hospital identify five subtypes of pancreatic cancer

11/12/2018 – With more than 1500 new cases detected in Belgium every year, pancreatic cancer today kills nearly all those who develop the disease. An alarming figure that is a driving force behind researchers and in particular for Doctor Francesco Puleo, gastroenterologist at the Digestive Oncology Clinic headed by Professor A. Hendlisz at the Jules Bordet Institute, Professor Jean-Luc Van Laethem, Head of the Digestive Oncology Clinic at the Erasmus Hospital and Doctor Raphael Maréchal, researcher under mandate from the Foundation against Cancer. In December 2018 these researchers published a crucial study in the prestigious US journal *Gastroenterology* for a better understanding of pancreatic cancer, thereby paving the way for numerous possible studies on targeted treatment that is more effective.

Today, 1,500 new cases of pancreatic cancer are recorded every year in Belgium. Surgery offers the sole chance of survival but just 15% of patients are deemed operable at the time of diagnosis. Hence the urgency of learning more about this cancer.

The study carried out by five Belgian and French university hospitals, including the Erasmus Hospital and the Jules Bordet Institute for Belgium, relates to the redefining of pancreatic cancer subtypes through the molecular analysis of 309 pancreatic tumour samples. The result was the identification of five cancer subtypes. Each of these subtypes presents a different prognosis and specific characteristics that could predict the effectiveness of certain treatments, such as immunotherapy. *"The originality of the study lies in the fact that our classification takes into account the two components that constitute the tumour: the tumoural cells and the tumoural micro-environment that plays a very active role in the tumour,"* explains Dr Puleo *"Following this discovery there is a need to arrive rapidly at an international consensus on pancreatic cancer subtypes, as was done a few years ago for colon cancer. In this way we can move towards a classification for use in routine practice and clinical research,"* concludes Professor Van Laethem.

Study carried out with the Hôpital Pitié-Salpêtrière, the Hôpital Sant-Antoine, the Hôpital Beaujon and the League against Cancer in Paris.

Link to study: [https://www.gastrojournal.org/article/S0016-5085\(18\)34919-9/fulltext?referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov%2F](https://www.gastrojournal.org/article/S0016-5085(18)34919-9/fulltext?referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov%2F)

Documents attached: photos of Dr Doctor Francesco Puleo, gastroenterologist at the Jules Bordet Institute, and Professor Jean-Luc Van Laethem, Head of the Digestive Oncology Unit at the Erasmus Hospital.

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About the Jules Bordet Institute

An integrated multidisciplinary centre, unique in Belgium, the Jules Bordet Institute is an autonomous hospital devoted exclusively to cancer.

For more than 75 years, the Jules Bordet Institute has been providing its patients with diagnostic and therapeutic strategies at the forefront of progress to prevent, detect and actively combat cancer. The Institute pursues three missions: care, research and teaching. Its international reputation attracts the world's leading cancer experts. Its spirit of innovation has enabled it to participate in the development and discovery of major new methods of diagnosis and treatment with the aim of bringing the findings to the patient as rapidly as possible.

In May 2018, the Jules Bordet Institute received official accreditation and designation from the OECI (Organisation of European Cancer Institutes) as a "Comprehensive Cancer Centre", a quality label reserved for multidisciplinary cancer care institutions whose activities include research and teaching. This is a first for Belgium.

The Jules Bordet Institute is a member of the Iris and Université Libre de Bruxelles hospital networks. With its 160 beds dedicated exclusively to cancer patients, every year the Institute treats more than 6,000 in-patients, 12,000 out-patients and provides 75,000 consultations. To effectively meet future demographic and scientific developments, the Institute is planning to build a new Institute Bordet on the ULB university campus in Anderlecht, next to the Erasmus Hospital. Inauguration is planned for 2020.

www.bordet.be

About the Erasmus Hospital

The Erasmus Hospital, the ULB's university hospital, is one of seven teaching hospitals in Belgium. An academic institution, both private and secular, it fulfils three missions: patient care, teaching and research. Its principal fields of excellence are in the Neurosciences, Psychiatry and Medicosurgical Gastroenterology as well as the Cardiovascular and Pulmonary sectors, Gynaecology-Obstetrics, Genetics, Transplantation and Intensive Care. Two polyclinics (Lothier and Nivelles), two exterior centres (Centre for Traumatology and Rehabilitation and Centre for Geriatric Revalidation) and a centre specialising in medical imaging (the Centre Ambulatoire Erasme-Imedia) complete the care offer. Opened in 1977 and with a present capacity of 1048 beds, the hospital treats between 25,000 and 30,000 in-patients a year and provides between 350,000 and 400,000 consultations.

www.erasme.ulb.ac.be