

Press release for immediate release

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## **The new generation of researchers doubly rewarded**

### **Double Merit Award of the Conquer Cancer Foundation of the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) 2018 in the field of breast cancer for two young researchers at the Institut Jules Bordet**

Brussels, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2018 – **On 15 May 2018, Noam Pondé and Matteo Lambertini, researchers at the Institut Jules Bordet, both received a Merit Award from the Conquer Cancer Foundation of the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) for their unique work in the field of breast cancer research: respectively, a T-DM1 cardio-toxicity study (targeted therapy) and a pregnancy study of patients with a history of HER2+ breast cancer. This is great recognition for these two young researchers, filled with passion and motivation, at the beginning of a promising career.**

#### **Research at the APT / CTSU of the Institut Jules Bordet rewarded**

Matteo Lambertini and Noam Pondé are part of this generation of young international scientists, eager to practice research in a renowned international centre such as the Jules Bordet Institute. In the APT / CTSU (Academic Promoting Team & Clinical Trials Support Unit) of the Institut Jules Bordet, data of more than 8,000 cancer patients are analysed within a specific research framework with rules involving patient agreement. Thanks to this important database, both researchers have developed two studies that provide a better understanding of targeted therapy treatments and their side effects on patients. For these studies, they were each rewarded with a Merit Award of the Conquer Cancer Foundation of ASCO. This award recognises significant projects and studies that advance the fight against cancer.

#### **Noam Pondé and the T-DM1 cardio-toxicity study**

Noam Pondé's study focuses on patients with HER2+ breast cancer (15-20% of all breast cancer cases) in the metastatic stage to demonstrate if T-DM1 has consequences on the cardiac system. T-DM1 is the combination of Trastuzumab (a monoclonal antibody) which, supported by DM1 - a powerful chemotherapeutic agent - specifically recognises, integrates and directly destroys cancer cells that overexpress the HER2 receptor present on their surfaces and is responsible for the proliferation and survival of cancer. This type of treatment, also called targeted therapy, in addition to high efficiency, reduces side effects. Based on an accurate database of 1,961 patients, Noam Pondé determined that treatment with T-DM1 did not result in cardiac risk. However, the cardiac system of older patients receiving this treatment should be evaluated more carefully. This study is the largest and most comprehensive on the subject to date.

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Institut Jules Bordet, Association Hospitalière de Bruxelles régie par la loi du 8 juillet 1976  
Jules Bordet Instituut, Ziekenhuisvereniging van Brussel onderworpen aan de wet van 8 juli 1976

## Matteo Lambertini and the study of pregnancy in patients with a history of HER2+ breast cancer

The research project carried out by Matteo Lambertini focuses specifically on patients around 40 years old with a history of HER2+ breast cancer who were treated with Trastuzumab and / or Lapatinib (two therapeutic agents that target the HER2+ receptors of cancer cells) and who fell pregnant during or after their treatment. The analysis and study of data from 92 patients, included in two international studies for which forms containing individual pregnancy information were collected, yielded two important conclusions. Firstly, the prior administration of treatment did not lead to complications during pregnancy, neither for the mother nor for the child. Secondly, five patients had an unplanned pregnancy while taking the Trastuzumab and / or Lapatinib treatment; taking it during the first trimester of pregnancy did not cause any complications. This last conclusion remains inconclusive given the small number of patients studied.

## The international face of research at the Institut Jules Bordet

Matteo Lambertini, from the University of Genova, San Martino Hospital, Italy, is now involved in cancer research at the Jules Bordet Institute thanks to the ESMO - European Society for Medical Oncology. This organisation allows young oncologists to take on fellowships in renowned medical institutions; in other words, practical research internships to carry out clinical / translational research projects. Noam Pondé, a native of Brazil, chose research to change the lives of patients and from there, develops his study project in Belgium. Both students at the Institut Jules Bordet, they chose the Institute for part of their doctoral theses for its international fame, especially through the work of Martine Piccart, particularly in the field of breast cancer research. Alongside Dr Evandro de Azambuja, head of the Medical Support Team (APT), they improve the daily lives of cancer patients. *"I was very pleased to hear that two of our Fellows received a Merit Award from the Conquer Cancer Foundation of ASCO. This Merit Award is a very important recognition for these new researchers and allows them to participate in a conference that brings together more than 35,000 participants, all with one goal: to conquer cancer! This represents an international recognition of our Institute. I am pleased and very proud of Matteo and Noam. This is just the beginning of a promising career for each of them"*, says Dr de Azambuja.

**For more information on the award:** [www.conquercancerfoundation.org](http://www.conquercancerfoundation.org)

### Publications references:

- An individual patient level data pooled analysis of T-DM1 cardiac safety in HER2-positive (HER2+) metastatic breast cancer (MBC) patients. Abstract number 10068, Noam Pondé.
- Pregnancies during and following trastuzumab (T) and/or lapatinib (L) in patients (pts) with HER2-positive (HER2+) early breast cancer (EBC): Analysis from the NeoALTTO (BIG 1-06) and ALTTO (BIG 2- 06) trials. Abstract number: 10065, Lambertini M et al

**Attached :** photo of Noam Pondé, Dr Evandro de Azambuja & Matteo Lambertini

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## About the Jules Bordet Institute

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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 2013, 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 Institut Bordet on the ULB university campus in Anderlecht, next to the Erasmus Hospital. Inauguration is planned for 2018.

- Jules Bordet Institute website: [www.bordet.be](http://www.bordet.be)
- To consult the Jules Bordet Institute presentation brochure, go to: <http://www.bordet.be/fr/presentation/brochure/index.html>
- To view the Jules Bordet Institute presentation video, go to: <http://www.bordet.be/fr/presentation/organigr/textes/bordet.htm>

## About the Friends of the Bordet Institute

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The Friends of the Jules Bordet Institute is a non-profit-making organisation with the sole aim of supporting and financing research at the Jules Bordet Institute, a cancer centre that is a reference in Belgium and abroad. As the largest private donor to the Bordet Institute, "The Friends" have donated almost 12 million euros in the past five years.

Considerable progress has been made in the field of oncology in recent years. Our understanding of the biological origin of cancer is growing all the time. Whereas 10 years ago we spoke of the microscopic analysis of tumours, today we speak of genetic profile, of sequencing, etc. Dozens of new molecules and markers have been developed, permitting the advent of personalised treatment. This progress has to a large extent been made possible through the extraordinary technological progress of recent years. But these new techniques that now enable us to probe the infinitesimally small are increasingly expensive.

For more than 40 years, the help of the "Friends" has enabled the Jules Bordet Institute to pursue its research using the most advanced technologies, thereby providing patients with the most innovative screening and treatment techniques. Techniques that generate life and hope.

By helping and supporting "The Friends of the Bordet Institute" you are participating in the many research programmes that they support and that all pursue a single aim: victory for life.

To find out more about the association The Friends of the Jules Bordet Institute, go to the website [www.amis-bordet.be](http://www.amis-bordet.be)  
To find out more about the "101 tables pour la vie", go to the website [www.101tables.com](http://www.101tables.com)