

## **Professor Vincent Donckier wins the Fonds Gaston Ithier award for his collaborative work on oligometastases**



Brussels, 6<sup>th</sup> March, 2020 – **This Thursday 5 March, Professor Vincent Donckier, Head of the Department of Surgery at the Jules Bordet Institute, the reference centre in the fight against cancer, is honoured by the Fonds Gaston Ithier. This Fonds, which supports creative projects in the field of oncology, rewards the creation of a multidisciplinary and collaborative platform between different institutions seeking to identify oligometastatic profiles in colorectal cancer.**

### **A multidisciplinary consortium around the concept of oligometastases**

In 2018, a multidisciplinary research consortium of members of the Jules Bordet Institute and the Erasmus Hospital at the ULB, the Duve Institute at the UCL, the KUL Translational Research Laboratory into Oncology, the University of Antwerp Research Laboratory into Pathology and Oncology and Milan University's Department of Medical Statistics was founded. All these specialists (researchers, surgeons, radiologists, oncologists, anatomopathologists, nuclear medicine physicians, biostatisticians, etc.) are studying the concept of oligometastases in colorectal cancer. Oligometastatic cancers are defined as those with a capacity for dissemination at a limited distance, at the origin of a limited number of metastases and at a limited number of secondary sites, as opposed to cancers whose progress in the body is diffuse or systemic. This concept of oligometastatic disease is important because it identifies patients who may be able to benefit from a treatment that targets these metastases, such as surgery. A type of treatment that serves no purpose among patients whose cancer spread is diffuse. At present there is no predictive biomarker of the oligometastatic state of a cancer, which means it is not possible to select patients who would benefit from an initial surgical treatment of the metastases.

## **Retrospective analysis to identify oligometastatic colorectal cancers**

Faced with this situation, the consortium proposes a categorisation of patients on the basis of their post-operative development, thanks to an analysis of a database developed in cooperation between the Bordet Institute and the Erasmus Hospital. The retrospective study of these data makes it possible to distinguish two groups among patients operated on for liver metastases of colorectal cancer. On one hand, the "oligometastatic" patients, defined as those with a survival without relapse that is prolonged after surgical resection of the liver metastases (approximately 25% of patients). At the other extreme, "polymetastatic" patients, defined as those with a rapid relapse after surgery and for whom surgery brought no benefits. A comparison between these two groups could reveal biomarker candidates, thanks to an in-depth analysis of the clinical, radiological, anatomopathological, metabolic, immunological and/or molecular criteria and, more particularly, by virtue of the pooling these different parameters. This study pursues two aims. On one hand, to improve the selection of patients for whom a targeted local or locoregional treatment would be effective (surgery, radiotherapy, intra-arterial treatment, etc.) and to limit risk of pointless surgery among polymetastatic patients. On the other hand, to better understand the mechanisms involved in the methods of metastatic progression and, potentially, to develop new diagnostic and treatment approaches.

### **About the Fonds Gaston Ithier**

The Fonds Gaston Ithier has the mission of promoting the fight against cancer and supports creative and original projects in the field of oncology. Thanks to the Fonds, the consortium, headed by Professor Vincent Donckier, aims to deepen the analyses and open up new horizons in the personalised treatment of metastatic colorectal cancers.

### **Press Contacts**

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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 80 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 OEIC (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. The only Comprehensive Cancer Center accredited by the OEIC in Belgium.

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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



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., 15,000 out-patients and provides 84,000 consultations. To effectively meet future demographic and scientific developments, a new Bordet Institute is being built on the ULB Anderlecht campus, next to the Erasmus Hospital. Inauguration is scheduled for the end of 2021.

[www.bordet.be](http://www.bordet.be)

### **About the Friends of the Bordet Institute**

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For more than 50 years, "The Friends of the Bordet Institute" have been financing research against cancer research at the Jules Bordet Institute, the reference centre in the fight against cancer in Belgium and abroad. As the Institute's biggest private donor, it has given close to 13 million euros to the Institute 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 50 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)