

News Release

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CPRIT Awards Research Grant to TTUHSC's Reynolds

Funds to Aid Childhood, Adolescent Cancer Study

The Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas (CPRIT) in February announced a \$1,196,214 grant to C. Patrick Reynolds, M.D., Ph.D., director for the School of Medicine Cancer Center at the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC).

The grant, "GD2 Expression and Response to Chemoimmunotherapy in Neuroblastoma," will provide funding for Reynolds' ongoing investigations into the way cancer cells escape from therapy with antibodies that bind to GD2, for which preliminary data suggest the mechanism is loss of GD2 from the cancer cells. Dinutuximab, an antibody binding to GD2, can enhance chemoimmunotherapy both in patients and in preclinical models.

Neuroblastoma is the most common cancer outside of the brain in infants and young children and is challenging to treat, especially in patients that relapse after initial therapy. GD2 is a complex molecule highly expressed on neuroblastoma cells and is a target for successfully treating tumors.

"Children with cancer, both in Texas and beyond are fortunate that CPRIT has made funding childhood cancer a priority," Reynolds said. "This recent grant from CPRIT will enable us to understand how tumor cells escape therapy with an antibody that is effective at treating neuroblastoma. The grant also supports our laboratory here at TTUHSC in analyzing clinical samples from across the U.S. and Canada from patients with neuroblastoma to assess the amount of antibody that binds to their tumor cells."

Reynolds, a University Distinguished Professor, also directs the South Plains Cancer Consortium and the Childhood Oncology Group Childhood Cancer Repository, powered by Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation. The repository, based at TTUHSC, collects, preserves and distributes validated childhood cancer cell lines to researchers around the world who are investigating childhood cancer.