

Findings could help target best chemotherapies

Identifying gene variants may help evaluate colon cancer risk

Keck School of Medicine oncologists recently took their research on the road, sharing results from their studies on genetic variations and their relationship to colon cancer patients' outcomes.

Heinz-Josef Lenz, associate professor of medicine, and researchers in his lab at the USC/Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center reported that certain polymorphisms in genes might help direct treatment choices or potentially provide a way to tip off people at high risk of developing cancer.

The researchers reported their findings at the 93rd annual meeting of the American Association for Cancer Research, held from April 6 to 10 in San Francisco.

The investigators are looking into three genes: thymidylate synthase, or TS; glutathione S-transferase P1, or GSTP1; and excision repair cross complementation group 1, or ERCC1.

Thymidylate synthase, or TS

Lenz looked at a newly discovered polymorphism in the TS gene. A polymorphism is a part of a specific gene that can be found in several different forms within the population.

In this case, Lenz investigated a deletion of six base pairs in a region of the TS gene.

Within the population, any random person may have a single six-base-pair deletion, two six-base-pair deletions, or no six-base-pair deletions at all.

The team tested 43 patients with advanced colorectal cancer and found that the more six-base-pair deletions a patient has, the less a tumor expresses TS.

That has important implications, said Lenz, scientific director of the USC/Norris Cancer Genetics program.

"Tumors need TS to reproduce their DNA,"

Lenz said, "and decreased TS levels have been shown to be associated with superior clinical outcome for patients treated with 5-FU, a chemotherapy that is the mainstay in the treatment of colorectal cancer."

Potentially, colorectal cancer patients could be tested for the presence of deletions, he said.

Patients with two deletions would be likelier to respond well to 5-FU, while those with no deletions would do better with another chemotherapy.

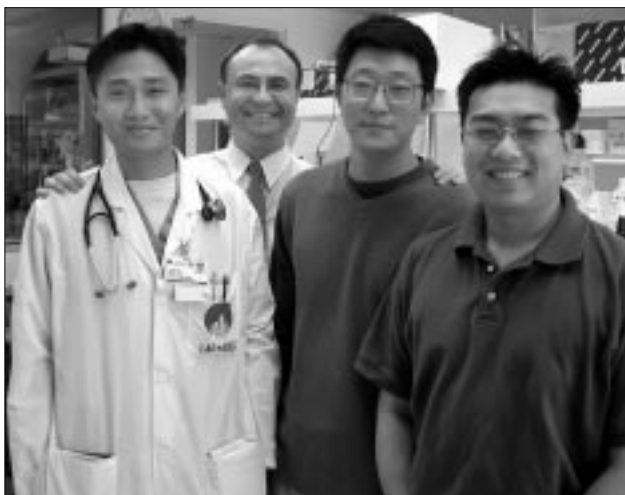
Not only does the finding have implications for treatment, but for risk assessment, too. People who have two deletions and whose bodies create less TS may be more likely to experience a problem in replicating cells, which may mean a greater risk for malignant growth at some point in their lives.

Testing for the presence of the deletions may potentially give patients and physicians a tip that they need to be more vigilant to watch for signs of colon cancer.

Glutathione S-transferase P1, or GSTP1

Glutathione S-transferases (GST) are enzymes that play an important role in defending cells from damage caused by toxic molecules, Lenz explained.

These GST enzymes seem to determine how well a variety of chemotherapy drugs kill



Alicia Di Rado

From left, resident David Park, oncologist Heinz-Josef Lenz, resident Wu Zhang and graduate student Ji Gil gather in Lenz's USC/Norris lab, where seven post-docs and students perform cancer-related research.

cancer cells. In this study, the team looked at 81 patients with advanced colorectal cancer receiving 5-FU and oxaliplatin chemotherapy.

They took samples of tumor tissue, analyzing them for the presence of a polymorphism in the GSTP1 gene, said Jan Stoehlmacher, USC/Norris research associate.

Patients with a certain GSTP1 polymorphism survived nearly 25 months after treatment, longer than the 13 months recorded for the second polymorphism and the nearly eight months for the third polymorphism.

The patients who survived longest were the ones whose genes could express the least GSTP1 messenger RNA, and whose tumors produced the least GSTP1.

"The superior survival of participants may be due to a decreased inactivation of the administered chemotherapeutic agent oxaliplatin," Stoehlmacher said.

Such research may help choose the right cancer-fighting drugs for patients who would be especially responsive to oxaliplatin.

See **GENES**, Page 3

Genetics influences link between hair dye and bladder cancer

Certain women may be more susceptible to bladder cancer associated with the use of permanent hair dyes than other women, based on their genetic makeup, according to a study by Keck School of Medicine of USC preventive medicine researchers and their colleagues.

Women in the study whose bodies could only slowly flush out carcinogens known as arylamines, which are an ingredient of hair dye, had a higher risk of bladder cancer than women whose bodies eliminated the carcinogens more quickly, the investigators reported. The body's efficiency in removing such toxins depends on whether someone possesses the "fast" or "slow" version of certain key genes.

Researchers presented results at the American Association for Cancer Research's 93rd Annual Meeting on April 9.

"We believe these results provide further evidence supporting a causal association between permanent hair dye use and bladder cancer risk," said Manuela Gago-Dominguez, researcher in preventive medicine at the Keck School and USC/Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center and lead author of the study. "They implicate the arylamines contained in hair dye solutions as the carcinogenic substances responsible for bladder cancer development in the users of these dyes."

In early 2001, USC preventive medicine researchers reported that women who use permanent dyes at least once a month for one year or longer have twice the risk of bladder cancer as non-users. Monthly or more frequent users of 15 or more years experience

See **BLADDER**, Page 2

BMT staff members donate pay bonus to buy laptops for patients

USC/Norris Bone Marrow Transplant (BMT) nurses have taken their reputation for providing special care to another level—using a recruitment bonus to buy bedside laptop computers for each of the five BMT rooms.

USC/Norris offers recruitment bonuses to nurses who sign on as employees—to both the nurse and the individual who referred them to the hospital.

Such was the case with Lisa Johnston, who decided to stay with USC/Norris after her contract as a temporary employee was over.

Johnston said it was the work environ-

ment, as well as the advanced BMT training that she received, that persuaded her to join the USC/Norris staff. She felt it wouldn't be fair to list a single recipient of the \$5,000 recruiter referral bonus.

She attributed her colleague Lisa Mark, physician assistant in hematology, with the idea of using the bonus to buy the laptops.

"I immediately agreed," said Johnston. "This way, everyone benefits. The average stay for BMT patients is 4-6 weeks, and laptops seemed like a good idea because they can provide features such as Internet access and DVD players, or even Web cameras."

Many recovering patients have small

children, Lisa explained, so the Webcam can allow patients to see their families at home.

Another use for the patients may be to carry out medical research or communicate with friends and family through email.

Word got out quickly of the nurses' generosity. An executive at Disney decided to help start a video library with a donation of a large set of DVDs.

Meanwhile, Johnston is happy with her decision to stay with the BMT unit. "It's been a long time since work has been this gratifying," she said.

—Christie Castro



Lane Igoudin

Lisa Johnston shows off one of the new laptops purchased for patients.

Using art to teach science—or is it the other way around?

Eighteen local high school students are getting an unusual art education at USC, thanks to an after-school program with activities that include first-hand examinations of a fossilized sabertoothed tiger skull and the chest cavity of a human cadaver.

Designed to teach science through art and vice versa, the four-month program offers students from Francisco Bravo Medical Magnet High School instruction in drawing techniques, primarily using anatomy-themed subject matter.

Joel Schechter, professor of cell and neurobiology, runs the program and said its goal is to broaden the experience of students who hope to enter medicine as a career as well as teach them a useful skill.

"We want to expand their horizons and show that art and science can be fused in such a way that you can learn from both," he said.

Schechter knows something about that kind of fusion: he has a master's in medical illustration from Johns Hopkins and a Ph.D. in anatomy from UCLA. "I'm a research scientist who also has roots as an artist," he said.

The after-school program is split into three sections, one focusing on the structure and function of the eye, another focusing on fossils of animals including wolves and sloths, and another focusing on optical perception and the nature of illusions.

In recent weeks, students learned



Jon Nalick

Above, class participants peer into microscopes for a look at cells from human tear glands. Right, another student sketches the fossilized skull of a sabertoothed tiger.



about anatomy from examining human cadavers and also got a behind-the-scenes tour of the Page Museum in Los Angeles—which cosponsors the program with the California Wellness Foundation. During the museum tour, they saw archaeological dig sites that are not open to the general public.

Another important aspect of the program is the high school students' interaction with their first-year medical student mentors. The medical students answer questions, offer advice about college and careers and generally encourage their charges.

"That aspect of the program is working out wonderfully well, better than I had hoped," Schechter said, adding that he originally anticipated having two mentors, but 22 of them volunteered, so mentors actually outnumber the high school students.

Portions of the classes are held on the Health Sciences Campus and are usually led by Schechter, while others are held at Bravo and are led by the high school's science teacher, Joe Cocozza, and art teacher Marjorie Rydberg.

Since the program began in February, students have been introduced to basic techniques of drawing, such as continuous tone techniques, light and dark values, how to create forms that look three-dimensional, and when to develop details and when not to, Schechter said.

Student projects have included drawing a sabertoothed tiger skull, dire wolves, sloths and horses. And despite having little or no previous training students have already produced work that Schechter calls "shockingly good."

The students' future art subjects

will focus on optical illusions, camouflage and the visual system and the program will conclude Saturday, May 24, with a public exhibit of their artwork at the Page Museum.

During one recent afternoon, the Bravo students attended a lecture and slideshow by Schechter that focused on the anatomy of the eye and the protective mechanisms that help keep it safe from injury and infection. Afterward they broke into groups that rotated through learning stations that included optical microscope slides of lacrimal, or tear, glands, eyelids and hairs and at an electron microscope displaying a thin section of the lacrimal gland.

During a break, Bravo sophomore Gor Hakobian, 15, praised the program, which he said emphasized hands-on activities over lectures.

"I don't like lectures too much,

but I did like it when we dissected cow eyes and started drawing what we had seen. When you can see and touch something and see how big it is, you get a better picture of it in your brain," he said.

He also said the program reaffirmed his desire to become a surgeon when he grows older: "That's how I want to help my community, by doing free surgeries for the poor."

Sophomore Syuzanna Petrosyan, 16, said she joined the program also because of an interest in a career in medicine.

"I learned a lot when we saw the cadavers. You could see the liver and the lungs and the abdomen. I really wanted to learn about the body and that made me want to learn even more in school," she said.

Plus, she said, "I'm taking advanced placement biology right now and this really helps. And our biology teacher adds more information in class because he knows we've already been exposed to a lot of it because of the program."

Schechter said that the program appears to be succeeding in ways he had not imagined, noting that some of the medical student mentors have started participating in the drawing exercises and learning art techniques alongside their younger peers.

"That's one thing I did not anticipate," he said. "But I'm not complaining."

—Jon Nalick

BLADDER: Presence of "slow" genes can multiply cancer risk

Continued from Page 1
three times that risk—even after adjusting for smoking, a known risk factor for bladder cancer.

The increase in bladder cancer risk also was observed in people who are exposed to hair dyes in their work, such as barbers and hairdressers. Increased risk was not seen for those who used temporary or semi-permanent dyes.

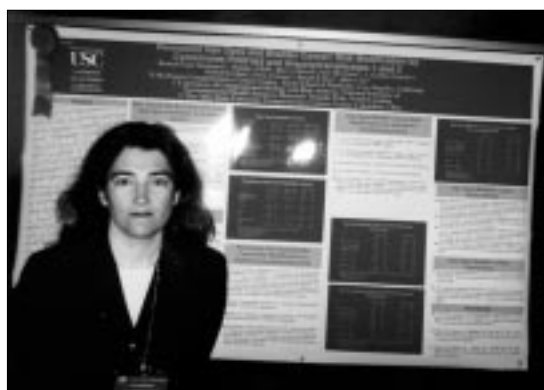
Gago-Dominguez explained that small amounts of arylamines are absorbed through the skin during the use of hair dye.

Certain agents contained in permanent dye might cause more of the arylamines to be absorbed through the skin than in the case of temporary or semi-permanent dyes, some theorize.

Certain important, protective enzymes in the body metabolize those arylamines, trying to render them harmless. The body expels the chemicals through urine, which passes through the bladder.

The efficiency of these protective enzymes depends on genes that provide the recipe for making the enzymes. The genes come in fast and slow varieties.

The research team looked at 159 female



The AACR honored Manuela Gago-Dominguez of preventive medicine for her research on hair dye and bladder cancer risk.

bladder cancer patients in Los Angeles and compared them to 164 similar, healthy women, analyzing their genetic makeup through blood and urine samples.

They found that in women with certain slow genes (the "NAT2 slow" phenotype), exclusive permanent hair dye use was associated with a nearly tripled risk of bladder cancer.

Among women with other slow genes (the "CYP1A2 slow" phenotype), exclusive permanent hair dye use was associated with a 2.5-fold increased risk.

Finally, among non-smoking women with a

third type of slow genes ("NAT1 slow" genotype), exclusive permanent hair dye use was associated with a 6.8-fold increased risk.

Further study is needed to fully understand relationships between hair dyes and bladder cancer, researchers said.

Bladder cancer currently accounts for 6 percent of all new cancer cases in men and 2 percent of all new cancer cases in women. The American Cancer Society estimates that 56,500 Americans will be diagnosed with the cancer and 12,600 Americans will die from it in 2002.

The research was supported by grants from the National Cancer Institute and the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences.

Manuela Gago-Dominguez, Douglas A. Bell, Mary A. Watson, Jian-Min Yuan, J. Esteban Castela, Kenneth K. Chan, Gerry A. Coetzee, Ronald K. Ross, Mimi C. Yu, "Permanent hair dyes and bladder cancer: Risk modification by Cytochrome P4501A2 and N-acetyltransferases 1 and 2," American Association for Cancer Research's 93rd Annual Meeting, April 6-10, 2002.

—Alicia Di Rado

HSC Weekly

Next Issue: April 26

HSC Weekly is published on Fridays, except for academic holiday periods. Copies are distributed throughout the Health Sciences Campus, University of Southern California. It is written and produced by the staff of Health Sciences Public Relations. Permission to reprint articles with attribution is freely given.

Editor: Jon Nalick
Associate Vice President, Health Sciences Public Relations: Brenda Maceo
Senior Vice President, University Relations: Martha Harris

Contributors: Alexis Bergen, Alicia Di Rado, Greg Kerr, Alfred Kildow, Brenda Maceo, Jon Nalick, Chrissie Castro, Lori Oliwenstein, LaCarol Pratt, Richard Stone, Mary Ellen Stumpfl, Carol Varma and Jon Weiner

323/442-2830
FAX: 323/442-2832
hscwklly@hsc.usc.edu
www.usc.edu/hsc/info/pr/

Keck School climbs in *U.S. News* rankings

The Keck School of Medicine jumped seven places—from 43rd to 36th—in *U.S. News & World Report's* 2002 rankings of best graduate schools.

The rankings of 125 medical schools are based on reputation (40 percent), NIH funding averaged for 2000 and 2001 (30 percent), student selectivity (20 percent) and faculty/student ratio (10 percent).

The Keck School improved in all major categories, and with federal research funding of \$130.9 million it ranked 25th among medical schools in the research category.

The Keck School's 36th place ranking for top schools in research was a seven-place improvement from the 2001 rankings and reversed a three-year decline in standings. The school had ranked 43rd in 2001, 40th in 2000 and 36th in 1999.

"While we improved in nearly all categories we realize we have a significant climb ahead of us to reach the top 10," said Dean Stephen J. Ryan.

Rankings for related health graduate programs were not published in the magazine, but were included on the magazine's Web site. USC's Occupational Therapy program ranked number one in 2001 rankings and USC's Physical Therapy program ranked number two in the nation in 2000 rankings.

USC staffer receives Congressional honor

Lucia Reyes, a project manager in the department of neurology, has been honored by Congressman Adam Schiff as one of his district's top women.

Reyes was selected as one of the 27th Congressional District Women of the Year. The 27th Congressional District includes the city of Pasadena where a luncheon was held March 27 to honor the nine women chosen.

Reyes works as Project Manager for the three-year Phase II clinical trial of a T-cell vaccine for secondary progressive multiple sclerosis, under the direction of Leslie Weiner, the Richard Angus Grant, Sr., Chair in Neurology and chair of the department.

"It gave me great pleasure to read Congressman Schiff's announcement that Lucia was selected," said Weiner. "Just think of all the women in his area and she was one of the chosen few."

Reyes was chosen from a large group of women dedicated to their communities and was honored as part of March's Women's History Month.

GENES: Noting variants may aid ability to individualize a patient's treatment

Continued from Page 1

Excision repair cross complementation group 1, or ERCC1

In a healthy person, ERCC1 helps repair routinely damaged genetic material in cells. Unfortunately, tumor cells use ERCC1 to fix their DNA, too.

David J. Park, medical resident in Lenz's lab, looked at 31 patients with advanced colon cancer and checked for a particular, less-common polymorphism in ERCC1.

Park found that in 75 percent of patients with the less-common polymorphism, their ERCC1 genes produced greater-than-average levels of ERCC1; meanwhile, only 39 percent of patients with the ordinary form of the ERCC1 polymorphism produced greater-than-average levels of ERCC1.

Because the polymorphism seems to be linked to differences in expression of ERCC1, Park, Lenz and their colleagues may have identified another new target for determining the potential clinical outcome of patients with colorectal cancer treated with 5-FU and oxaliplatin.

Said Lenz: "Each genetic polymorphism that is proven significant increases what we know about patients' clinical outcome and risk. The advances will make it possible to individualize cancer treatment and provide the best known

treatment for each patient."

Heinz-Josef Lenz, Wu Zhang, Sepideh Zahedy, Ji Gil, Mimi Yu, Jan Stoehlmacher, "A 6 base-pair deletion in the 3' UTR of the thymidylate synthase (TS) gene predicts TS mRNA expression in colorectal tumors. A possible candidate gene for colorectal cancer risk," American Association for Cancer Research's 93rd Annual Meeting, April 6-10, 2002.

Jan Stoehlmacher, Jan Brabender, Susan Groshen, David J. Park, Kathleen D. Danenberg, Denise D. Tsao-Wei, Wu Zhang, Andy Sherrod, Peter V. Danenberg, Heinz-Josef Lenz, "Glutathione S-transferase P1 polymorphism: Association with mRNA expression and survival of patients with metastatic colorectal cancer," American Association for Cancer Research's 93rd Annual Meeting, April 6-10, 2002.

David J. Park, Jan Stoehlmacher, Wu Zhang, Denise Tsao-Wei, Susan Groshen, Sepi Zahedy, Ji Gil, Nalin Mallik, Heinz-Josef Lenz, "ERCC1 polymorphism is associated with differential ERCC1 mRNA levels," American Association for Cancer Research's 93rd Annual Meeting, April 6-10, 2002.

—Alicia Di Rado

Recognizing outstanding alumni

USC honored notable alumni for their achievements during its 70th annual Alumni Awards Dinner on March 2.

Right, alumnus Ed Roski, Keck School Overseer, accepts the Asa V. Call Achievement Award, from USC President Steven B. Sample.

Below right, Alumni Merit Award winners (from left) Yale Gieszl, member of the Board of Councilors of the School of Policy, Planning and Development, and Phil Manning, the Paul Ingalls Hoagland Hastings Professor of Continuing Medical Education, associate dean for postgraduate affairs and associate vice president for health affairs, relax after the awards dinner with alumnus Dick Cook, chair of Walt Disney Studios.



Revlon Run/Walk slated for May 11 at the Coliseum

Join Team USC/Norris at the 2002 Revlon Run/Walk on May 11 at the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum and help the fight against cancer.

USC/Norris team members will be

among 60,000 runners and walkers who are raising money and awareness for breast and ovarian cancer research. USC/Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center and Hospital is one of

several local institutions that benefit from the event's proceeds.

To join the team, or for more information, please call (323) 442-2826.

Confused about compliance?

Call on us.

When you call our Help Hotline you get the information you need to understand compliance issues. Like what laws, regulations and university policies really mean. And which ones apply to you.

If you have questions—or want to report a suspected violation—phone the Office of Compliance Help & Hotline at (213) 740-2500.

Because when it comes to compliance relying on our expertise is a very good call.

USC

Office of Compliance

Help & Hotline: (213) 740-2500

Calendar

Monday, April 22

10:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. "USC HSC Armenian Student Assoc. Blood Drive." Hoffman Bldg. Lobby. Info: 442-2923

Noon. "Observing Protein Folding, Dynamics and Associations by EPR Spectroscopy," John Voss, UC Davis. Norris Tower 7th Floor Conf. Ctr. Info: 442-1145

Tuesday, April 23

8 a.m. Neurology Grand Rounds. "Newest Advances in Inclusion-Body Myositis," Valerie Askanas, USC. Univ. Hospital, Troy Room. Info: 226-1238

9:30 a.m. Neurology Post Grand Rounds. "Multiple Sclerosis I," Norman Kachuck, USC. Univ. Hospital, Troy Room. Info: 226-1238

Noon. "Contribution of the Androgen Receptor to Prostate Cancer Predisposition and Progression," Gerhard Coetzee, USC. Norris Tower 7th Floor Conf. Ctr. Info: 865-0801

12:15 p.m. Psychiatry Grand Rounds. "What Does the Research Literature Have to Say to the Practicing Psychotherapist?" Roy MacKenzie, Univ. of British Columbia. Hoffman Hall, Hastings Aud. Info: 226-5572

6:30 - 10 p.m. Common Problems in Primary Care 2002. "New Drugs for 2002 - Part I and II," Gregory Thompson, USC. DEI 3rd Floor Conf. Ctr. Info: 442-1313

Wednesday, April 24

7 a.m. Dept. of Medicine Grand Rounds. "Cocaine Related Diseases," Gregory Thompson, USC. GNH 1645. Info: 226-3867

Noon. "Recent Human Evolution and Genes of Neuropsychiatric Relevance," Kenneth Kidd, Yale Univ. Norris Tower 7th Floor Conf. Ctr. Info: 442-2144

Thursday, April 25

Noon. Cellular Homeostasis Lecture. "Role of Viral and Host Factors in Assembly and Budding of Influenza Viruses," Debi Nayak, UCLA. AHC Aud., Room 102. Info: 442-3121

Noon. "Handling Conflict with Confidence," Marc Sadoff, Pacific Skills Training. Hoffman Hall, Hastings Aud. Info: (213) 821-0800

5 p.m. "Alzheimer's Pathology," Leslie Weiner, USC. KAM 308. Info: 226-2639

Friday, April 26

Noon. "Strategies for Developing SERMs for the Brain," Kathleen O'Neill, USC. PSC, Room 104. Info: 224-7473

SAVE THE DATE

The sixth annual 5k AIDS Walk for Minority Women and Children will take place April 27 at Cal State Dominguez Hills. The event raises hundreds of thousands of dollars each year to benefit clinics that serve the Los Angeles area.

For more information or to participate, contact Sharon Stewart at (213) 743-0251.

Monday, April 29

Noon. "Fragile X Syndrome: Getting the Message," Paul Hagerman, UC Davis. Norris Tower 7th Floor Conf. Ctr. Info: 442-1145

Tuesday, April 30

8 a.m. Neurology Grand Rounds. "Stroke Prevention 2002," Jeffrey Saver, UCLA. Univ. Hospital, Troy Room. Info: 226-1238

9:30 a.m. Neurology Post Grand Rounds. "Multiple Sclerosis II," Norman Kachuck, USC. Univ. Hospital, Troy Room. Info: 226-1238

Noon. "Novel Radiosensitizers, the Cell Cycle and Glioblastoma Response," Colin Hill, USC. Norris Tower 7th Floor Conf. Ctr. Info: 865-0801

Noon. "Genetic Analysis of Repulsive Mechanism of Axon Guidance," Hwai-Jong Cheng, Stanford Univ. BMT Room 407. Info: 442-1818

Wednesday, May 1

8:30 a.m. - 6 p.m. IGM 6th Annual Symposium. "Make No Bones About It: Genes and Diseases of the Skeleton," Various Speakers. CSC, IGM Aud. Info: 442-1144

Friday, May 3 - Sunday, May 5

9 a.m. - 6:30 p.m. The Fiesta of the Spanish Horse Weekend. The Los Angeles Equestrian Center, 480 Riverside Drive, Burbank, CA. Info: 865-0700

Notice: Deadline for calendar submission is 4 p.m. Tuesday to be considered for that week's issue. Please note that timely submission does not guarantee an item will be printed. Send calendar items to HSC Weekly, DEI 2510 or fax to 442-2832, or e-mail to lpatt@hsc.usc.edu. Entries must include day, date, time, title of talk, first and last name of speaker, affiliation of speaker, location, and a phone number for information.

The HSC Calendar is online at
<http://www.usc.edu/hsc/calendar.html>

**USC Health Sciences
Public Relations
1450 San Pablo Street
DEI 2510
Los Angeles, CA 90033**

**Non-Profit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
University of Southern
California**



Jon Nalick

HEALTHY START—More than 550 fourth- and fifth-grade students from USC's partner schools attended the 2nd annual Health and Science Expo on campus on April 4. Above, students and Peter Katsufarakis (center), Keck School associate dean for students affairs, who served as a judge, examine a booth that described the effects of caffeine on the human body.

HSC Newsmakers

On April 8, the ABC News Web site ran a story on a study linking tea to a reduction in certain types of cancer. The story quoted the study's senior author, preventive medicine expert **Mimi Yu**.

"This study provides direct evidence that tea polyphenols may act as chemopreventive agents against gastric and esophageal cancer development," said Yu.

The story also appeared in London's ITV News, the *Toronto Star*, *Science Daily Magazine*, UPI wire, the *London Daily Record*, BBCNews.com, Reuters Health, HealthScout News, Ananova.com the *London Sunday Telegraph*, *Irish Examiner* and *The Scotsman*. Many of the stories included quotes by lead author Can-lan Sun.

On April 9, Reuters Health reported on a new study examining a link between hair dye and bladder cancer. "Our findings provide further evidence supporting a causal link between hair dye use and bladder cancer risk," said the study's lead author, epidemiologist **Manuela Gago-Dominguez**.

The story also appeared on KABC-TV Channel 7, *Science Daily Magazine*, the ABC News Web site, and the National Women's Health Information Center.

An April 9 story on the ABC News Web site looked at an effort by an Italian doctor to clone a baby. The story quoted fertility expert **Richard Paulson** who said, "Based on recent data from attempts to clone monkeys, it is extremely unlikely that human reproductive cloning is going to happen any time soon." The story also appeared on the TechTV Web site.

An Alzheimer's drug may benefit patients with dementia, according to an April 12 Reuters Health story. "This study provides initial support for the potential that galantamine might improve function in patients with vascular dementia as well," said psychiatrist **Lon Schneider**. The story also appeared on the ABC News Web site.

How closely do chimps resemble humans? That's the question posed in an April 12 *Los Angeles Times* front-page story on the difficulties of researching the connection. "On the one hand, you are doing really cutting-edge research, but then you hit the roadblocks," said genetic expert **Joe Hacia**. Alzheimer's expert **Caleb Finch** was also quoted in the article.

On April 15, two stories in the *Los Angeles Times* looked at safety issues surrounding easily accessible drugs. One focused on vitamin packets and the other on over-the-counter allergy medications. Pharmacist **Michael Wincor** pointed out that energy packets often contain high-levels of caffeine. "There's your energy boost right there," he said. Pharmacist **Jeff Goad** warned of the dangers of OTC allergy medications. "OTC drugs aren't like candy you can just pick up at the convenience store," he commented.

The April issue of *Ladies Home Journal* includes a list of the best doctors for women. On the list were Norris surgeon **Melvin Silverstein** and oncologist **Charles Paul Morrow**. *Ladies Home Journal* has a circulation of 4.1 million readers.