

Medical Milestones

The Top Five Advances In 50 Years Of Progress Against Cancer

(NAPSA)—The American Society of Clinical Oncology, the world's leading professional organization representing physicians who care for people with cancer, announced the "Top 5 Advances in 50 Years of Modern Oncology," based on results of worldwide voting on Cancer Progress.Net—ASCO's interactive website documenting the history of progress against cancer.

The "Top 5 in 50" results identify pivotal discoveries in chemotherapy, prevention, molecularly targeted therapy and supportive care that have stood the test of time, and upon which further discoveries have since been based.

Federal funding played a role in many of these advances as a result of research supported by the U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH). The NIH has lost almost a quarter of its purchasing power in the last decade, adjusting for inflation.

"Over the past five decades, NIH-funded research has transformed the outlook for people with cancer," said ASCO President Peter Paul Yu, M.D., FACP, FASCO. "These Top 5 in 50 highlight transformational discoveries that represent a shining sliver of what we have learned from a sustained investment in federally funded research. However, without greater federal investment going forward, the pace of progress against cancer and other diseases will be far slower."



Greater federal investment in research can mean the pace of progress against cancer and other diseases will be faster.

The "Top 5 Advances" were:

1. The first chemotherapy treatment that cured advanced Hodgkin's lymphoma, called MOPP, discovered in 1965, paving the way to 90 percent cure rates for patients with this disease today.

2. The HPV vaccine, Gardasil, approved to prevent cervical cancer in 2006.

3. The targeted drug imatinib (Gleevec), approved in 2001 to treat chronic myelogenous leukemia.

4. A three-drug combination, PVB, developed in 1977 that led to the cure of advanced testicular cancer.

5. The 1991 approval of the anti-nausea drug ondansetron (Zofran) that dramatically improved many patients' quality of life while going through cancer treatment.

Further information is available at www.cancerprogress.net.