



For Immediate Release
Office of the Press Secretary
January 17, 2007

Fact Sheet: A New Era in Cancer Prevention

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Today, The President Visited The National Institutes Of Health (NIH), Toured A Cancer Research Lab, And Participated In A Roundtable Discussion On Advances In The Fight Against Cancer.

The NIH is the primary Federal agency for conducting and supporting medical research. Composed of 27 Institutes and Centers, the NIH provides leadership and financial support to researchers in every State and throughout the world. The NIH Clinical Center is the world's largest complex providing both patient care and an environment for researchers to advance clinical science.

- **The President Announced The Second Consecutive Decline, And The Steepest Drop Ever Recorded, In U.S. Cancer Deaths.** The American Cancer Society's Annual Statistics Report found that there was a drop of 3,014 cancer deaths in the U.S. from 2003 to 2004, the most recent year for which data are available from the National Center for Health Statistics. This decline was significantly larger than that reported for the 2002 to 2003 time period, which marked the first decline in the actual number of cancer deaths in more than 70 years.
- **Scientists and Cancer Survivors Briefed The President On Two Breakthroughs In The Struggle Against Cancer That Have Recently Emerged From The NIH: The Cancer Genome Atlas And The Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Vaccine.**
 - **Every Day More Than 1,500 Americans Die From Cancer - Nearly One Person Every Minute.** As the U.S. population ages, this rate is expected to rise significantly unless scientists, such as those at the NIH, can develop new ways to stop the growth of cancer cells within the patient's body. Americans can prevent or reduce some forms of cancer by taking steps to improve their own health, including proper nutrition, exercise, and early screenings.
- **The President Toured A Research Lab That Focuses On Patients With Hereditary Kidney Cancer, Aiming To Identify The Genetic Mutations That Cause The Affliction.** This work, and the work of the Cancer Genome Atlas, is part of an effort to profile the genetic changes involved in human cancers of many types and locations. In the lab, the President observed how scientists study the genes that cause kidney cancer and met with patients affected with a hereditary form of kidney cancer.

- **Participants In The President's Roundtable Discussion On Advances In The Fight Against Cancer Included:**

- Mike Leavitt, Secretary, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- Elias Zerhouni, M.D., Director, National Institutes of Health
- John Niederhuber, M.D., Director, National Cancer Institute
- Francis Collins, M.D., Director, National Human Genome Institute
- Grace Butler, Ph.D., colorectal cancer survivor and President of Hope Through Grace
- Becky Fisher, breast cancer survivor and Librarian for the Center for the Study of Intelligence

The HPV Vaccine Is The First Vaccine Against A Cause Of Cervical Cancer And Is Available For The First Time In FY07

The HPV Vaccine Blocks The Virus That Causes More Than 70 Percent Of Cervical Cancer Cases. The FDA approved the vaccine in June 2006, and FY 2007 marks the first time it is available to States as part of the Vaccines for Children (VFC) program. The VFC program is a mandatory program, meaning each year's budget will include sufficient funding to ensure the vaccine is accessible to all eligible children who want it.

- **Every Year In The U.S., About 6.2 Million People Get HPV.** In the United States, approximately 20 million people are infected with HPV, and - absent the vaccine - approximately 80 percent of females will have acquired HPV by age 50.
- **Cervical Cancer Is The Second Most Common Cause Of Cancer Death In Women Worldwide.** It results in nearly a half-million diagnoses and 240,000 deaths each year. Cervical cancer deaths have declined greatly in the U.S. due to increases in the use of Pap testing; nevertheless, it remains one of the fifteen most common cancers in women. The American Cancer Society estimated that in 2006 (the latest year for which estimates are available), about 9,710 cases of invasive cervical cancer would be diagnosed in the United States, and about 3,700 women would die from cervical cancer.
- **Health Insurers Covering Approximately 94 Percent Of Americans With Health Insurance (Currently More Than 95 Insurance Plans) Have Decided To Reimburse For The HPV Vaccine.** Children who are uninsured or underinsured are eligible to receive the vaccine under the VFC program.

The Cancer Genome Atlas Is Helping Scientists Understand The Genetic Sources Of Cancer

The Cancer Genome Atlas, Launched In 2005, Is A Three-Year, \$100 Million Collaboration Of NIH's National Cancer Institute And National Human Genome Research Institute. Today, scientists at leading research institutions are using technologies developed through the Human Genome Project to understand the genetic sources of cancer. Data from this project will provide researchers and clinicians with an early glimpse of what promises to become an unprecedented,

comprehensive "atlas" of molecular information describing the genomic changes in all types of cancer. Scientists expect that a deeper, systematic understanding of cancer genomics will provide important insights into the mechanisms responsible for the uncontrolled growth of cancer cells and their spread throughout the patient's body.

- **The Hope For Better Understanding Cancer's Genetic Vulnerabilities Is Based On Understanding The Human Genome.** Sequencing the human genome, which was completed in 2003, though a monumental achievement in itself, was just the first step in the quest to fully understand the biology of cancer.
 - **The Genomic Information Generated By The Cancer Genome Atlas Could Fuel Rapid Advances In Cancer Research And Suggest New Therapeutic Targets.** It could also provide new ways to categorize tumors, which might allow clinical trials to focus on patients who are most likely to respond to specific treatments.
- **The Cancer Genome Atlas Project Is Studying Lung, Brain, And Ovarian Cancers.** These cancers collectively account for more than 210,000 cancer cases each year in the United States.

The President Calls On Congress To Pass Genetic Nondiscrimination Legislation

The Administration Praises The Senate For Passing A Bipartisan Genetic Nondiscrimination Bill In The Last Congress. This Congress, the Administration looks to build on that success and work with both houses of Congress, and the business community, to pass a bill the President can sign into law.

- **The President Believes It Is Critical That An Individual's Personal Genetic Information Not Be Used By An Employer To Deny A Job Based On A Person's Genetic Profile.** It is also important that insurance companies do not use genetic information to deny an application for coverage. The Administration will work closely with the science community, employers, and other stakeholders on a proposal that is responsible and fair.
- **Unwarranted Use Of Genetic Information, And The Fear Of Potential Discrimination, Threatens Both Society's Ability To Use New Genetic Technologies To Improve Human Health And The Ability To Conduct The Research Needed To Understand, Treat, And Prevent Diseases.** Enactment of Federal legislation will help guarantee that the Nation fully realizes the potential of ongoing advances in genetic sciences.

Progress In The Fight Against Cancer

The Administration Invested More Than \$5 Billion In Cancer Research Last Year. Cancer-research funding has increased by 26 percent at the NIH and by 24 percent at the Centers for Disease Control since 2001.

- **From FY2001 To FY2006, Funding For The National Institutes Of Health (NIH) Has Increased By Nearly \$8 Billion - From \$20.6 Billion To \$28.5 Billion.**

We Are Making Progress In Understanding, Detecting, And Treating Cancer. Thirty years ago, there were 3 million cancer survivors. Today, there are more than 10 million.

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