Medical researchers speak out across Australia

Medical Research Week 2004

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Cloning, obesity, genetic privacy, engineered foods and more

Today's announcements on melanoma and diabetes vaccines highlight how medical research is changing our lives.

Over the next week medical researchers across Australia will engage the community in discussion over some of the hot issues.

"Vaccines, antibiotics and advances in heart and stroke treatment have saved millions of lives around the world," says ASMR President, Associate Professor Andrew Sinclair. "But what will the future bring? We need to understand how the brain works and tackle Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, Huntington's disease, and schizophrenia. We need to continue the fight against cancers; and, develop long-term prevention tools for HIV. We need to be prepared for and fight the emerging epidemics of lifestyle diseases such as obesity."

"And we need to understand the impact – good and bad – of new tools such as cloning, genetic passports, and foods as medicine."

Across the country medical researchers want to talk to the media about these issues and more.

Hot issues for Medical Research Week include:

- Exercise to fight osteoporosis: a Melbourne physiotherapy researcher receives the Amgen Award and calls for volunteers to trial the value of exercise to combat osteoporosis in post-menopausal women who have stopped taking HRT (embargo 12 noon Monday)
- Childhood obesity why are our children getting fatter? What can we do about it? Boyd Swinburn from Deakin University leads a public forum on Tuesday evening in Melbourne he and the panellists are available for interview from Monday.
- Will every child have a genetic passport US researcher Mary Hendrix will speak at the National Press Club in Canberra and on ABC TV on Wednesday (embargo 12.30 pm, Wednesday). She's available for interview on embargo from Monday.
- Human cloning panacea or Pandora's box would you want a scientist to clone your child a
 Queensland discussion on Wednesday 9 June convenor Jon Harris is available for interview from
 Monday
- Diet, genes and TV sick of fad diets and junk food advertising. Kay Mehta, Manny Noakes, and Michael Fenech will present the real facts behind what you are eating and what it does to your body at a forum in Adelaide on Wednesday 9 June they are available to talk to the media from Monday.
- The future of food food technologists are promising a new generation of engineered foods that will keep us healthy as we eat foods that will enhance brain performance, and actively reduce our risk of heart disease, obesity, diabetes and more. Is this a good idea? The pros and cons will be discussed in Sydney on Wednesday night. The panellists are available for interview from Monday.
- Plus research stories released daily by institutes across Australia.

Andrew Sinclair, President of the Australian Society for Medical Research is available for interview throughout the week.

For further information on these stories and more call Niall on 03 5253 1391, email medical@scienceinpublic.com or visit www.scienceinpublic.com/medical



ASMR Medical Research Week is a national initiative of the Australian Society for Medical Research.

Medical Research Week highlights the contributions made by medical researchers to the health and well being of all Australians in the past, today and in the future. Supporters of Medical Research Week include the Australian Government's Department of Health and Ageing, the National Health and Medical Research Council, Amgen, MSD, Pfizer and the Royal Australian College Of General Practitioners.