

## Awards for Cancer Research with High Application Potential

**The German Cancer Research Center (Deutsches Krebsforschungszentrum, DKFZ) awards two prizes to excellent researchers whose work has a high potential of improving cancer treatment: The Richtzenhain Prize goes to Stephan Herzig (Deutsches Krebsforschungszentrum); Florian Greten of the University Hospitals of Munich Technical University will be awarded the Dr. Emil Salzer Prize.**

Obesity, insulin resistance and diabetes have been proven to be risk factors for a number of cancers. Reversely, metabolic disorders not only promote risk factors for cancer, but they also occur as a result of it. Thus, tumor growth often goes along with extreme loss of weight, a condition called tumor cachexia. These two contrary states – obesity and wasting – are characterized by a multitude of common metabolic properties. This suggests that there are common molecular control points for both processes.

**Dr. Stephan Herzig**, winner of this year's Richtzenhain Prize, has focused his research on this particular area. In the process, he identified numerous factors that play a key role in the control of liver metabolism. Thus, they play a direct part in the development of cancer risk factors and cancer-associated effects (cachexia). These metabolic control points can now be studied as targets for new treatment methods.

Biologist Stephan Herzig has headed the Emmy Noether Junior Research Group "Molecular Metabolic Control", which was turned into a department last July, at DKFZ since 2003. For his scientific work Herzig has been distinguished with numerous awards including the Marie Curie Excellence Award of the European Commission, the Ferdinand Bertram Prize of the German Diabetes Society and the Research Award of the German Obesity Society.

The 2010 Emil Salzer Prize will be awarded to Professor **Dr. Florian Greten**, who is a research group leader at Klinikum rechts der Isar of Munich Technical University. He investigates the connection between inflammatory bowel diseases (colitis) and colon cancer.

Florian Greten discovered that colon cancer growth is promoted both directly and indirectly by an important gene regulator: A protein called NF- $\kappa$ B suppresses the death of malignant cells and, at the same time, stimulates specific white blood cells to produce signaling molecules which accelerate tumor cell growth. Thus, Greten was able to show that inflammation-promoting modulators produced by immune cells boost cancer development.

The Salzer Prize jury particularly commended the high potential of this work for improving colon cancer treatment, because Greten also identified the target molecule of the inflammation-promoting modulators in cancer cells. If this molecule is turned off in mice, tumor growth comes to a halt. Thus, Florian Greten has presented a novel target for the treatment of colon cancer.

The Richtzenhain Prize, which DKFZ awards on behalf of a foundation established by neurologist Walther Richtzenhain and his wife Christine, is awarded annually, alternately to doctoral students at Heidelberg research institutes and to scientists from across Germany for publications in the area of translational cancer research. This year's prize is worth 10,000 euros.

The Dr. Emil Salzer Prize has been awarded by DKFZ on behalf of Baden-Wuerttemberg's Ministry of Science, Research and the Arts since 1970. It was founded by Emil Salzer, a

physician from Reutlingen, Germany. Salzer left his bequest to the State of Baden-Wuerttemberg under the condition that the proceeds be used for supporting cancer research. The prize money is 5,000 euros.

The award ceremony will take place on Thursday, December 2, at 5 p.m. at DKFZ's Communication Center (KOZ). Guests are very welcome to attend.

Pictures for this press release are available on the Internet at:  
[www.dkfz.de/de/presse/pressemitteilungen/2010/images/Greten.jpg](http://www.dkfz.de/de/presse/pressemitteilungen/2010/images/Greten.jpg)  
[www.dkfz.de/de/presse/pressemitteilungen/2010/images/Herzig\\_Stephan.jpg](http://www.dkfz.de/de/presse/pressemitteilungen/2010/images/Herzig_Stephan.jpg)

The German Cancer Research Center (Deutsches Krebsforschungszentrum, DKFZ) is the largest biomedical research institute in Germany and is a member of the Helmholtz Association of National Research Centers. More than 2,200 staff members, including 1,000 scientists, are investigating the mechanisms of cancer and are working to identify cancer risk factors. They provide the foundations for developing novel approaches in the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of cancer. In addition, the staff of the Cancer Information Service (KID) offers information about the widespread disease of cancer for patients, their families, and the general public. The Center is funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (90%) and the State of Baden-Württemberg (10%).

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