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Heroes and cancer – Teenagers and young adults are in the focus of the latest “einblick” issue

Superheroes save the world. Cancer researchers and physicians do not aspire to do so, but they do struggle for their patients’ lives every day. Young people also play an important role in this struggle: PhD students, biology laboratory assistants, apprentices. Their efforts have contributed to successful research in the past decades. For this reason, the latest issue of the journal “einblick” is dedicated to them.

What possible relationship is there between Obi-Wan Kenobi and Wolverine and cancer? The actors who play these characters struggle against evil forces not only in their professional lives, but also privately. In the case of the superstar actors Ewan McGregor and Hugh Jackman, the enemy has been skin cancer: their chances of developing the disease are the same as anyone else's. Fortunately, these two have won the fight. Jackman later posted messages on Twitter and Instagram in which he encouraged everyone to use sunscreen to protect themselves from UV damage to the skin. So even Wolverine says wear sunscreen! #pleasewearsunscreen.

Cancer can strike young people as well as superheroes. But why are children and adolescents susceptible to cancer in the first place? How good are their chances of being cured? Does or should their treatment differ from that of adults? Answers to these questions can be found in the latest issue of “einblick,” alongside portraits of some young people who have made the fight against cancer part of their work. In this issue two apprentices talk about their work as biology laboratory assistants at the DKFZ, while others report on their experiences abroad during internships all over Europe.

Dr. Lutz Breitling is another person from the DKFZ who recently worked abroad when he traveled to treat patients in Bangladesh and the Philippines as a volunteer for German Doctors. Poor people living in remote areas often cannot afford the trip to see a doctor. The organization reaches out to them by providing a “rolling clinic” – Breitling worked as part of its team. His missions in Asia have shown for him that individuals can make a big difference even when faced with limited resources.

Other topics covered in the issue include:

- Team players for the medicine of the future – the junior research group “Computer-assisted Interventions” presents itself
- Science? Slam! – A young cancer researcher presents her work
- A fabulous ring of fire – Heidelberg students win the iGEM competition
- Never give up – Words and images from young cancer patients
- Across borders – A portrait of the Berlin DKTK site
- Pat-a-cake: How to make a fire extinguisher and other experiments to try at home

Download:

http://www.dkfz.de/de/presse/veroeffentlichungen/einblick/download/einblick_02_2015.pdf

The German Cancer Research Center (Deutsches Krebsforschungszentrum, DKFZ) with its more than 3,000 employees is the largest biomedical research institute in Germany. At DKFZ, more than 1,000 scientists investigate how cancer develops, identify cancer risk factors and endeavor to find new strategies to prevent people from getting cancer. They develop novel approaches to make tumor diagnosis more precise and treatment of cancer patients more successful. The staff of the Cancer Information Service (KID) offers information about the widespread disease

of cancer for patients, their families, and the general public. Jointly with Heidelberg University Hospital, DKFZ has established the National Center for Tumor Diseases (NCT) Heidelberg, where promising approaches from cancer research are translated into the clinic. In the German Consortium for Translational Cancer Research (DKTK), one of six German Centers for Health Research, DKFZ maintains translational centers at seven university partnering sites. Combining excellent university hospitals with high-profile research at a Helmholtz Center is an important contribution to improving the chances of cancer patients. DKFZ is a member of the Helmholtz Association of National Research Centers, with ninety percent of its funding coming from the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research and the remaining ten percent from the State of Baden-Württemberg.

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