

Lewis Chodosh, M.D., Ph.D.

Professor and Chairman, Department of Cancer Biology; Director, Cancer Genetics, Abramson Family Cancer Research Institute; Associate Director for Basic Science and Co-Leader, Breast Cancer Program; Abramson Cancer Center, University of Pennsylvania

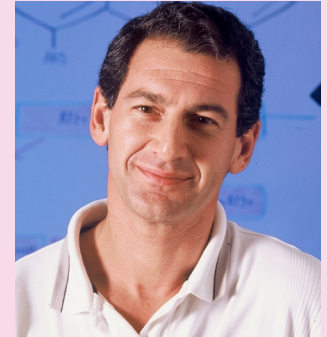
"I believe there will be real advances in the treatment of triple-negative breast cancers in the near future, based on laboratory research to understand the critical pathways that enable these cancers to survive and grow." -Dr. Chodosh

Lewis Chodosh, M.D., Ph.D. is an outstanding scholar – a graduate of Yale, Harvard and M.I.T. – who developed what he termed a “visceral type of motivation” for breast cancer research while treating breast cancer patients during his training at the Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston. Because they were often women in their 50s and early 60s with children, he remembers that “they were heartbreaking cases.” After two decades of studying breast cancer, Dr. Chodosh remarks, “It has been thrilling to see the impact that basic science has had on the availability of targeted, less toxic treatments for women in the clinic.”

Dr. Chodosh’s research spans a wide range of important issues, such as understanding the cellular and molecular basis for why women who have children at younger ages have a lower lifetime risk for breast cancer, developing genetically engineered mouse models to understand the reasons why breast cancers metastasize and recur, and using computer analyzed data to help identify the right drug for the right patient. Dr. Chodosh has a simple explanation for his diverse interests, “My goal is to understand why breast cancers behave in the way they do, as a route to devising better therapies for the most aggressive forms of this disease.” One of the most exciting discoveries from his laboratory to date has been demonstrating that by using genetic switches to “turn” cancer genes on and off in mice, critical pathways can be identified that are essential for breast cancers to recur following therapy. This approach has led to the identification of several new targets for breast cancer therapy.

Dr. Chodosh recalls the early days of his career and credits his first Susan G. Komen for the Cure® grant with helping him to gain a foothold in the field of breast cancer. “That grant played a big part in helping me to establish a laboratory and pursue some early, exciting ideas. During your first three years, your footing as an independent scientist can feel pretty tenuous.” Instead, Dr. Chodosh flourished; he has become an internationally recognized scientist, has received numerous distinguished awards, was elected to the American Society for Clinical Investigation and the Association of American Physicians, and currently serves on the advisory board for the Harvard Nurses’ Health Studies I and II.

Dr. Chodosh predicts that the next breakthrough in breast cancer research is going to be targeted therapies for aggressive forms of breast cancer, such as triple-negative breast cancer.



Professional Accolades

- 1981** – Emerson Tuttle Cup for Distinguished Academic Achievement from Yale University
- 1989** – Leon Reznick Memorial Prize for Excellence in Research from Harvard Medical School
- 1996** – Charles E. Culpeper Foundation Scholarship in Medical Science
- 2002** – Elected to the American Society for Clinical Investigation
- 2005** – Department of Defense Breast Cancer Center of Excellence Award

Komen Funded Research

- 1996** - \$149,891 - Breast Cancer Development in Ataxia-Telangiectasia Carriers
- 1999** - \$250,000 - Novel Models for the Influence of Mammary Development on Breast Cancer Risk
- 2001** - \$249,738 - Specific Role of K-ras in c-Myc-induced Breast Cancer
- 2001** - \$30,000 - The Role of a Novel SNF1-Related Kinase in Mammary Development and Carcinogenesis
- 2004** - \$249,777 - Preclinical Models for Treatment of Residual Neoplastic Disease
- 2007** - \$300,000 - Cancer Stem Cells and Breast Cancer Recurrence