

Information on the project

EpiStem is a collaborative project to guide and investigate the potential for HIV cure in HIV-infected patients requiring allogeneic stem cell transplantation for hematological disorders.

The EpiStem consortium consists of hematologists with extensive experience in allogeneic SCT procedures in HIV-infected patients, along with infectious disease specialists, virologists and immunologists with expertise in the field of HIV-1 tropism, innate and adaptive immunity, pharmacology, reservoirs and cure. EpiStem has built an inventory in European blood banks of CCR5 Δ 32/32 or heterozygous (cord) blood donors. The experts are available for guidance in donor search and CCR5 screening, ethical regulations, the SCT procedure, sampling procedures and in depth investigations to study HIV persistence.

Clinicians of HIV infected patients who require an SCT may register their patient in the EpiStem observational cohort. We collect clinical information and virological and immunological characteristics of a variety of samples taken before and after SCT according to an advanced monitoring and sampling strategy.

Mission

EpiStem aims to better understand the implications of stem cell transplantation in the control and eradication of HIV.

Sponsoring

EpiStem is sponsored by amfAR Research Consortium on HIV Eradication (ARCHE), a program from The Foundation for AIDS Research (amfAR)

Long term goals

We analyze over time the viral reservoirs and the immune reconstitution within the patients included in EpiStem. The knowledge as gathered in EpiStem will provide in-depth insight in the viral reservoirs and biological determinants of cure essential for HIV eradication strategies.

Principal Investigators:

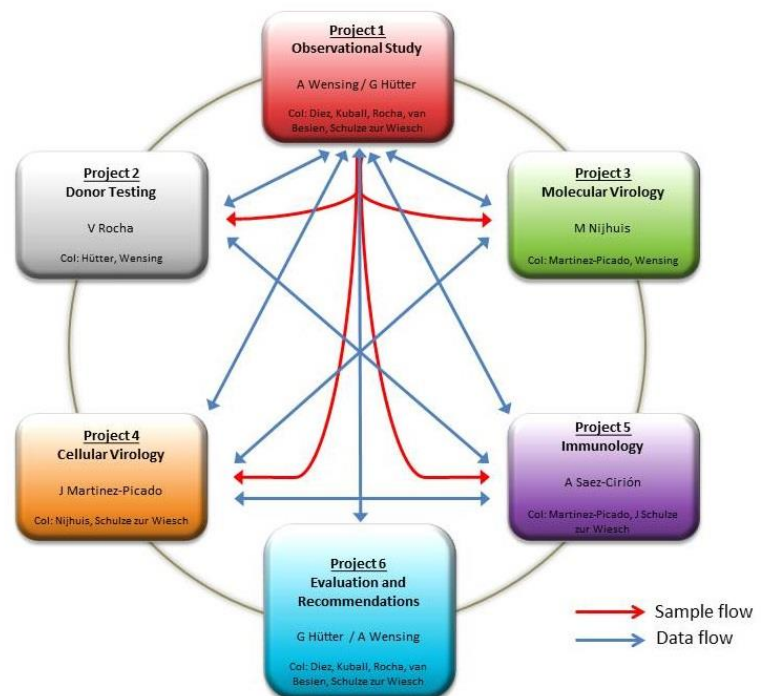
Javier Martinez-Picado & Annemarie Wensing

Investigators:

Gero Hütter
 Jürgen Kuball
 Jose Diez-Martin
 Monique Nijhuis
 Vanderson Rocha
 Asier Sáez-Ciri3n
 Julian Schulze zur Wiesch

Researchers/project management:

Pascual Balsalobre Lopez
 Kobus Bosman
 Judith Dalmau
 Johanna Eberhard
 Antoinet van Kessel
 Mi Kwon
 Mar3a Salgado
 Arjen Stam



Scientific Advisors:

Koen van Besien
Jan van Lunzen

EpiStem Participants

Belgium

Linos Vandekerckhove, Marie-Angélique de Scheerder, Eva Steel (University of Ghent)

Canada

Lisa Barrett, Sharon Oldford, Nate Stepner, Marina Turner (NSHA/Dalhousie University, Halifax)

Germany

Dieter Häussinger, Guido Kobbe, Björn Jensen (University Hospital Düsseldorf)
Rolf Kaiser, Elena Knops (University of Cologne)

Italy

Alessandra Bandera, Antonio Muscatello and Dr. Alessandro Soria (Infectious Diseases Unit, San Gerardo Hospital, Monza, Italy).

Netherlands

Lodewijk Brosens, Anke Bruns, Pauline Ellerbroek, Erik van Maarseveen (University Medical Center Utrecht), Jan van der Meer, Sacha Zeerleder (Academisch Medisch Centrum Amsterdam)

Spain

Idefonso Espigado (University Hospital Virgen del Rocío, Seville)

United Kingdom

Kavita Raj, Fabio Cruciani, Varun Mehra, Carmel Rice, (Kings College Hospital, London)
Angela Bailey (Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust, London), Waseem Qasim (Institute of Child Health & Great Ormond Street Hospital, London)

More information:

www.epistem-project.org
Antoinet van Kessel, epistem@umcutrecht.nl