



**INSTITUT DE  
CARDIOLOGIE  
DE MONTRÉAL**

**AFFILIÉ À**  
Université   
de Montréal

**PRESS RELEASE**  
**For immediate distribution**

**A research project at the Montreal Heart Institute  
is selected to receive a grant of more than \$2.3 million from  
the Canadian Institutes of Health Research**

**Montreal, February 3, 2010** – A research team led by Dr. John D. Rioux, a researcher at the Montreal Heart Institute (MHI) and professor in the faculty of medicine at the Université de Montréal, has been awarded a grant of more than \$2.3 million to finance a major research project on the integrative biology of inflammatory diseases. From among the roughly 70 applications submitted, Dr. Rioux's team is one of six selected by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research to receive the Emerging Team Grant - From Genes to Proteins, Cells, Tissues and Patients.

Spread out over five years, this more than \$2.3 million financing package was provided by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, with a portion also coming from the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of Canada, more specifically from the Ross McMaster Memorial Fund and from a philanthropic family in Montreal. "Bench-to-bedside work in genetics such as this project has tremendous potential to lead to cures for Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis. It's also inspiring to see donors play such a direct role in funding specific research projects," says Dr. Kevin Glasgow, chief executive officer of the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of Canada.

The MHI team includes researchers from the Université de Montréal, CHU Ste-Justine and Hôpital Maisonneuve-Rosemont, as well as international collaborators, including Harvard University and Oxford University.

This research project's chief objective is to use genetic findings to improve the diagnosis and treatment of common diseases. To achieve this, the project will focus on the biological pathway of the IL23R gene (which has been closely linked to inflammatory diseases such as Crohn's, ulcerative colitis and psoriasis) with the objective of also using this as a model for translating other genetic discoveries into clinical discoveries. "Our genetics studies have shown that multiple genes in the IL23R pathway influence an individual's risk to developing chronic inflammatory diseases. Knowing more about how these genetic variations influence the development of these diseases should make it possible to develop powerful biomarkers and better therapeutic alternatives" says Dr. John D. Rioux.

For patients with inflammatory diseases, this important study, in concrete terms, represents a new source of hope. "Dr. Rioux is a leading international expert in this field, and supporting his research could lead to significant improvements in the treatment of

chronic diseases, which affect three to five percent of the population worldwide. This is great news that's sure to contribute to the advancement of personalized medicine," says Nathalie Fradet, a volunteer for the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of Canada. Fradet has lived with Crohn's disease for almost 25 years.

#### **About the Montreal Heart Institute**

Founded in 1954 by Dr. Paul David, the Montreal Heart Institute constantly aims for the highest standards of excellence in the cardiovascular field through its leadership in prevention, ultra-specialized care, professionals training, clinical and fundamental research, and assessment of new technologies. The Institute is part of a vast network of excellence in health formed by the Université de Montréal and its affiliated institutions. To learn more about the Institute, please visit our website at [www.icm-mhi.org](http://www.icm-mhi.org).

#### **About the Université de Montréal**

Rooted in Montreal and international in its vocation, the Université de Montréal is one of the largest French-speaking universities in the world. Founded in 1878, the Université de Montréal includes 13 faculties and two professional schools. With its affiliated schools, HEC Montréal and École Polytechnique, the Université de Montréal is the leading centre for higher learning and research in Québec and one of the most important in North America. The Université de Montréal brings together some 2,500 teachers and researchers and is home to over 60, 000 students. To learn more about the Université de Montréal, please go to [www.umontreal.ca](http://www.umontreal.ca).

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