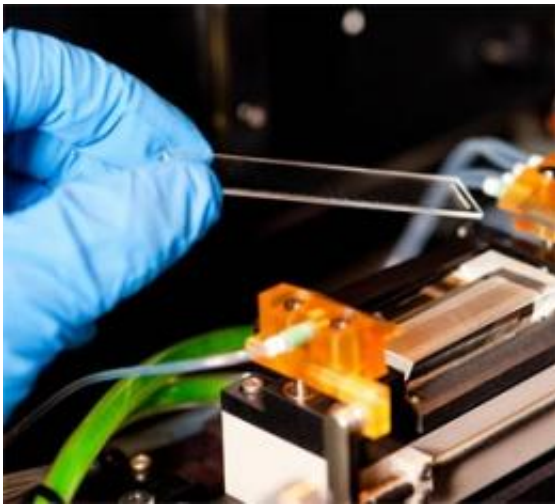


Better treatment for common childhood brain cancer

June 26 2012



Pediatric Cancer Genome Project researchers identified potential drug targets for medulloblastoma. Credit: St. Jude Children's Research Hospital

Children diagnosed with the most common paediatric malignant brain cancer, medulloblastoma, will benefit from more targeted treatment following the identification of genetic mutations in the cancer.

The international research findings published in *Nature* may lead to the development of [new drugs](#) and better outcomes for patients, says Richard Cohn, Conjoint Associate Professor at the University of New South Wales.

A specialist at the Centre for Children’s Cancer and Blood Disorders, Associate Professor Cohn contributed to the research led by a team at St. Jude Comprehensive Cancer Center in the United States.

“The discovery of tumour-specific gene alterations linked to subtypes of [medulloblastoma](#) provides important insights into the development of the cancer and highlights targets for new treatment approaches,” he said.

The findings were a direct result of collaboration between six children’s oncology centres internationally, which pooled patient specimens and information.

“Now that we know about these mutations, the hope is we’ll be able to develop new drugs, or utilise existing drugs not currently used to treat this disease, to specifically attack the molecular abnormality,” Associate Professor Cohn said.

“Ideally this will lead to better outcomes for patients and better cure rates and the ability to achieve that with fewer side effects.”

Provided by University of New South Wales

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