

Act with Love

MAKE BREAST CANCER HISTORY

Breast Duct Bacterial and Viral Diversity Study Launches

Dr. Delphine Lee of the John Wayne Cancer Institute and the Dr. Susan Love Research Foundation Partner on Innovative Study Seeking the Cause of Breast Cancer

Santa Monica, Calif. (December 7, 2012) – The Dr. Susan Love Research Foundation announces the launch of the Bacterial and Viral Diversity Study, led by Principal Investigator Delphine Lee, M.D., Ph.D. of the John Wayne Cancer Institute, and Co-Principal Investigator Dr. Susan Love of the Dr. Susan Love Research Foundation . This study will be the first to investigate whether there are bacteria and viruses normally in the breast ducts of healthy women and women with breast cancer. Many cancers have been found to be caused by either viruses such as HPV (cervical cancer) or bacteria such as heliobacter (stomach). In addition, breast cancer in mice has been shown to be caused by a virus. This study will be the first step in exploring the possibility that breast cancer in women and men could also be caused by a bacteria or virus.

“In spite of all the money spent on breast cancer research we still do not know the cause in women. This exploratory study is the first to see whether bacteria and viruses are normally found in the breast,” said Dr. Susan Love, President of the Dr. Susan Love Research Foundation. “Our goal at the Foundation is to conduct and fast-track research to find the causes of breast cancer and develop ways to prevent it, so we are extremely excited about this study, which we hope will give us significant clues about the cause of the disease”.

In this study, Karen Duvall, MD, MPH, Assistant Clinical Professor in the Department of Family Medicine and Associate Director of the Preventive Medicine Residency Program at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA, will be meeting with study participants in a clinical setting to obtain a small sample of fluid from their breast that will then be characterized using advanced DNA sequencing technology. Study participants are women 18 years and older who meet specific criteria. The DNA sequences will be analyzed to identify whether viruses and bacteria are present in the fluid.

“We are very excited about the opportunity to work on this project.” said Dr. Lee. “The National Institute of Health Common Fund’s Human Microbiome Project has proven that studying the biome can give us significant insight into many diseases. We feel strongly that this type of research has great potential as it is applied to the study of breast cancer, a disease that impacts one in eight women.”

This study was made possible by a grant of \$300,000 from the Avon Foundation for Women, awarded in October of 2012. Study participants are being recruited through the Love/Avon Army of Women, a program of the Dr. Susan Love Research Foundation.

“The Army of Women is a virtual bank of volunteers interested in participating in breast cancer prevention studies,” said Dr. Love. “The Army of Women has been responsible for recruiting volunteers for 63 national research studies, and this is the first time we have called upon the Army of Women volunteers for a study we are doing at the Foundation. The response from Army of Women members willing to participate has been overwhelming, with more than 135 volunteers who signed up in the first 24 hours.”

“The goal of this study is to identify the bacteria and/or viruses that are present in the breast of women with and without breast cancer,” said Dr. Lee. “The results will lead us to a targeted microbiome study, studying specific microbes that might be the cause of breast cancer.”

About the Dr. Susan Love Research Foundation

The mission of Dr. Susan Love Research Foundation is to eradicate breast cancer and improve the quality of women’s health through innovative research, education and advocacy. www.dslrf.org.

About the John Wayne Cancer Institute

Since 1981, the John Wayne name has been committed by the Wayne family to groundbreaking cancer research and education in memory of their father, who died of cancer. The John Wayne Cancer Institute has received worldwide acclaim for advances in melanoma (skin cancer), breast and colon cancer as well as for immune therapy of cancer. Other areas of research include prostate and liver cancer. With its unique ability to rapidly turn scientific breakthroughs into innovative approaches to treatment and early detection, the Institute provides immediate hope to cancer patients around the globe. For more information, visit www.jwci.org.