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BLOOD MOLECULES MAY HOLD THE ANSWERS TO CANCER'S TOUGHEST QUESTIONS, SAYS NOBELIST HARTWELL AT SNS FiRe CONFERENCE

SAN DIEGO, California – June 6, 2008 – Patients need look no further than the molecules in their own bodies for disease diagnoses, risk of infection, and treatment options, according to Nobelist Lee Hartwell, President and Director of the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, in an interview at the SNS Future in Review (FiRe) technology conference, held May 20-23.

While Hartwell's own work has been focused primarily on cancer, this technology could be instrumental in improving care for patients with a broad range of diseases. "I think there is a fundamental answer that will change medicine, and that's basically molecular diagnostics. There are enormous amounts of information in our bodies from a complexity of the molecules that are circling around, whether they be DNA, RNA, or protein," commented Hartwell.

While tissue biopsy is currently used to test for cancer types, Hartwell hopes to develop a method of early diagnosis through biomarkers in patients' blood.

Still, much more work will be needed in order to fully integrate the use of molecular diagnostics into the U.S. healthcare system. "After you have effective biomarkers, there's a very long process in terms of getting those into patient management," Hartwell explained.

Aside from his work at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, Hartwell has taught at both the University of California Irvine and the University of Washington, where he has been a member of the faculty since 1968. He received his BS from the California Institute of Technology and his Ph.D. from M.I.T., and did postdoctoral work at the Salk Institute for Biological Studies.

"Lee sees the future of diagnostics and treatment quite clearly," said Mark Anderson, CEO of Strategic News Service. "Now it's a matter of implementing his program on a massive scale, across all diseases, all protein markers, all countries."

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