

# University briefs



## UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA

According to research from the University of Ottawa, the key players involved in clinical trials need to collaborate better, and create a more coherent and integrated system. If not, Canada risks losing many valuable clinical trials to other countries, and Canadian patients will be the first to suffer. The report, prepared for Industry Canada and Health Canada, examined the major elements and players in the process of clinical trials in Canada and how the current process contributes to, or hinders access to, new treatments for patients. For more information, contact Bob LeDrew at: [bledrew@uottawa.ca](mailto:bledrew@uottawa.ca)



## MCMASTER UNIVERSITY

McMaster researchers and the Ontario government will conduct the first Canadian study aimed to help protect the public from the West Nile virus. About 1,500 residents from the Oakville area (the largest infected area last year) will be involved, and the study will be conducted by McMaster medical geographers, John Eyles and Susan Elliott, along with infectious diseases specialist, Mark Loeb. The objective is to gather information on how many people were infected by the virus last summer, but did not exhibit serious symptoms of the illness.



## UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

University of British Columbia School of Nursing researchers Joan Bottorff and Mary McCullum will be evaluating a decision-making guide designed to help women who carry a genetic marker for hereditary breast cancer decide whether to have prophylactic mastectomy surgery that removes healthy breast to virtually eliminate the chance of getting the disease. In a one-year study, they will ask 15 women to provide feedback on the 20-page draft booklet. For more information contact, Mary McCullum at: (604) 877-6000, ext. 2325.



## MCGILL UNIVERSITY

Professor Kalle Gehring and Dr. Alexei Denisov from McGill's department of biochemistry have discovered a mechanism that sheds light on how certain proteins regulate programmed cell death (also known as apoptosis). In collaboration with scientists from Gemin X Biotechnologies, Inc., their findings have important implications for anticancer drugs. For more information, contact the university relations office at (514) 398-6748.



## UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

Researchers at the University of Toronto and Mount Sinai Hospital have discovered a defect in a molecule linked to bone stem cells which may contribute to the development of age-related osteoporosis. The study found that mice genetically engineered to lack a molecule called Stem Cell Antigen-1 (Sca-1) experienced normal bone development and maintained normal bone density well into adulthood, but exhibited dramatically decreased bone mass and brittle bones as they aged.

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## UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Dr. Kerry Courneya, from the Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation, has completed a study that proves exercise is safe and beneficial for survivors of breast cancer, and may improve chances for long-term survival. When breast cancer patients undergo intense treatment, their heart and lung capacity is compromised, but Courneya's study of 407 Canadian women showed improved cardiopulmonary benefits, quality of life, and happiness after exercising.