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## **Advancements in Colon Cancer Treatment Pioneered by College of Pharmacy Faculty Member & Researcher Dr. Igor Roninson & His Research Team, Which Includes University Students, in Columbia**

(COLUMBIA) A promising new class of drugs for the treatment of colon cancer is emerging, due to research and work done at the University of South Carolina College of Pharmacy under the guidance of Dr. Igor Roninson.

The research and findings have recently been reported in the journal **Cancer Research**, published by the **American Association of Cancer Research** and can be read here: <https://bit.ly/2RRsWxa>.

In summary, colon cancer metastasis – or development of secondary malignant growths at a distance from the primary cancer location - is the leading cause of death in colon cancer patients. Colon cancer metastasis in the liver is especially common and difficult to treat, thus unique therapeutic approaches are needed. Research and findings by College of Pharmacy graduate student Jiaxin Liang and other team members at USC have showed the potential for using a new class of drugs for the treatment of patients with colon cancer that has metastasized in the liver. These studies reveal that a new drug candidate, discovered by a Columbia based company, Senex Biotechnology, in collaboration with the College of Pharmacy, was found to suppress the growth of colon cancer metastasis in the liver. This drug candidate acts on CDK8, an oncogene implicated in several signaling pathways that regulate cancer metastasis and drug resistance in different types of cancer.

“Doctor Roninson is an exceedingly accomplished scientist who has made major contributions to drug discovery,” said Dr. Stephen J. Cutler, Dean of the College of Pharmacy. “He leads a very productive research team at the College of Pharmacy.”

Doctor Roninson joined the College of Pharmacy in April of 2011 as a SmartState Endowed Chair in Translational Cancer Therapeutics. Dr. Roninson is an internationally acclaimed scientist-educator with more than 160 published articles and 44 issued U.S. patents. Dr. Roninson is the Director of the NIH-funded Center of Biomedical Research Excellence (COBRE) in Targeted Therapeutics, which organizes and supports interdisciplinary research on drug discovery in different medical areas.

*The University of South Carolina College of Pharmacy is a leader in cutting-edge pharmacological research, contributing to the advancement of the industry, providing a proven training ground for the next generation of researchers, and working to transform the lives of millions of people who rely on effective treatment of diseases. The College of Pharmacy conducts research in cancer, neuroscience, pharmaceuticals, and pharmacology, receiving support through on-site centers that provide access to technology and collaborative knowledge necessary for significant pharmacy advancements and scientific breakthroughs. College of Pharmacy students benefit from direct access to these facilities, providing them with unique, hands-on learning experiences and mentor relationships.*

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