



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

NEI files  
Public Health Service

National Institutes of Health  
Bethesda, Maryland 20205

National Cancer Institute  
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September 8, 1981

*CCU  
Loeb castle  
Merkel  
+ Copy to  
H. Stetler  
HANS FYC*

*9/10  
cc: D. Adamson - FYC  
This time it  
looks real!  
Vince*

Dr. Vincent T. DeVita, Jr.  
Director  
National Cancer Institute

Dr. Richard H. Adamson  
National Cancer Institute (LCHPH)

Dear Vince and Dick,

This story is really breaking very nicely. The Japanese reported extensive confirmation of our human type-C retrovirus (RNA tumor virus) (HTLV). This is the first clear cut unambiguous and non-controversial RNA tumor virus of humans. It is also the first time a virus of a kind known to cause the same disease (leukemias and lymphomas) in multiple animal species has been found specifically associated with a human leukemia-lymphoma. It appears now that the virus will define a certain specific form of T-cell leukemia-lymphoma. The first isolate from a case from the NCI-VA was in all probability mis-diagnosed as mycosis fungoides. All subsequent cases (and that one too) have been relatively young adults with splenomegaly, an aggressive leukemia-lymphoma of relatively mature T-lymphocytes, and sometimes a cutaneous manifestation. Clearly, HTLV is associated with so called Japanese adult T-cell leukemia. \*

The enclosure is from Bill Blattner. It is outdated but still essentially correct. It summarizes a trip to London Bill and I made at the end of April.

I will keep you both informed on the developments in this, and I hope you will have time to follow it.

Sincerely,

*Bob*  
Robert C. Gallo

RCG/am

Encl.

*\* and it appears also to be associated with what the English call acute lymphocytic leukemia*