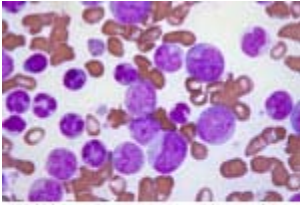


Leukemia: New Model Shows Human Disease Back to “Big Bang”



A blood smear showing myelogenous leukemia cells (in purple).

(April 27, 2007) - Cancer researchers led by McEwen Centre Investigator Dr. John Dick have developed a method to convert normal human blood cells into “human” leukemia stem cells. The converted cells, when transplanted into special mice that permit the growth of human cells, can replicate the entire disease process from the very moment it begins.

Explains Dr. Dick: “Most human leukemia research involves studying a patient's diseased cells or a cell line grown from those cells. However, since cancer takes many months or years to develop, just studying the cells at the end of the process does not let you know what the series of changes were that caused the cells to become leukemic, and when they happened.”

“With the method we developed, we have duplicated the natural process every step of the way. It opens the pathway generally to understanding the process of how cancer begins.”