Institute for Translational Epidemiology

The Institute of Translational Epidemiology, headed by Dr. Paolo Boffetta, takes advantage of Mount Sinai's extraordinary strengths in both research and practice in basic, clinical and preventive disciplines to foster the development of cutting-edge, multidisciplinary epidemiology research projects in the clinic, in the community, and in collaborating institutions across the world. The mission of the Institute for Translational Epidemiology is to establish an institute of international excellence in epidemiologic research that builds on the strengths of Mount Sinai in clinical and preventive research. Epidemiology research has greatly contributed in the last 60 years to improving our knowledge in many areas of medicine, which in turn has entailed major changes in clinical and preventive practices. The observational nature of epidemiology makes it susceptible to bias and confounding, and research should be conducted according to the highest methodological standards.

Over the last decades, epidemiologic research has successfully identified the main lifestyle and environmental risk factors of chronic diseases. Observational research is key in establishing causal associations in medicine, when experimental studies are not feasible for ethical or logistical reasons. Recently, genome-wide association studies have contributed to the identification of variants contributing to the individual susceptibility to disease. A major challenge of epidemiologic research rests in the elucidation of the separate and combined effects of genetic, biochemical and lifestyle risk factors of chronic diseases and outcome determinants. The goals of the Institute for Translational Epidemiology will be attained through projects conducted both at the local level, on the population of patients at Mount Sinai, and globally, through large-scale, international collaborative studies. The main areas of epidemiologic research within the Institute are cancer (as part of the Cancer Prevention Program of the Tisch Cancer Institute), cardiovascular disease, geriatrics, psychiatry, and infectious diseases.

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