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# Charles Sawyers Elected to the National Academy of Sciences

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[Charles L. Sawyers](#), Chair of the [Human Oncology and Pathogenesis Program](#) (HOPP), was elected to the National Academy of Sciences at the group's 147th annual meeting in April.

"Charles has been important in advancing the field of molecular medicine," said Memorial Sloan Kettering President Harold Varmus. "His contributions to the development of therapies for both chronic myeloid leukemia (CML) and [prostate cancer](#) have taught us much about those diseases, as well as how tumors are able to develop resistance to molecularly targeted drugs."



Charles Sawyers

Dr. Sawyers' work examines how signaling pathway abnormalities in cancer cells can be exploited as targets for new cancer drugs. His current focus is on developing new treatments for patients with prostate cancer who have developed resistance to drugs that fight the cancer by blocking androgens (male sex hormones). A promising new drug, based on work by Dr. Sawyers and his colleagues, is now in clinical trials.

Dr. Sawyers came to Memorial Sloan Kettering in 2006 after nearly two decades at the University of California, Los Angeles, where he was instrumental in the development of two drugs for the treatment of CML — imatinib (Gleevec®) and dasatinib (Sprycel®). In 2009, he was awarded the Lasker-DeBakey Award for Clinical Medical Research for his work with CML. He is a Howard Hughes Medical Institute investigator, a member of the Institute of Medicine, and the incumbent of the Marie Josée and Henry R. Kravis Chair at Memorial Sloan Kettering.

"It is a huge honor for me to be recognized in this way by my peers," said Dr. Sawyers. "I learned about it in the middle of my weekly laboratory group meeting — when my administrator burst in with the news. Very appropriate since I am indebted to my entire research team for this honor."

With the election of Dr. Sawyers, twelve Memorial Sloan Kettering investigators are members of the Academy, one of the most prestigious honors a scientist can receive.