

## New Study Targets Cancer That Strikes Young

**D**esmoplastic Small Round Cell Tumor (DSRCT) is an aggressive cancer that usually occurs in multiple masses in the abdomen and affects the lymph nodes and lining of the pelvis and abdomen. Associated with Ewing's Sarcoma, DSRCT usually affects children, adolescents and young adults. Survival rates are poor.

Unfortunately, because this form of cancer affects only a small number of children and even fewer adults, the research aimed at improving treatment results has been limited.

The Stehlin Foundation recently launched a study that involves growing DSRCT samples in the laboratory's nude mice, and evaluating the effectiveness of both standard and camptothecin drugs in treatment of the tumors.

To date, the Foundation has received tumor samples from DSRCT patients in Canada, Japan and the US based on a support group web site developed and maintained by Patrick Scranton, himself a DSRCT patient (see story below). Patients in the program are not charged for these studies.

DSRCT is one of the cancers that could be studied through the GFP Tumor Metastasis Study. Said Doug Coil, Associate Laboratory Supervisor, "The research we have performed over the past 30-plus years for solid tumors may be of benefit to our new research on DSRCT. We fully expect to 'jump start' this new research based upon our background of knowledge." □



Patrick Scranton, diagnosed with DSRCT in 2003, became an active participant in providing information and funding research on the disease.

## Saying NO to the Status Quo

**I**magine you are Patrick Scranton – a 40-year-old, vital, energetic entrepreneur – and you become the oldest person ever diagnosed with DSRCT, an aggressive form of cancer that strikes mostly juveniles. Imagine that you can't really find much information about the rare disease. Imagine being frustrated by debilitating treatments and feeling strongly that there must be an alternative. What do you do?

What Patrick did was start his own campaign to, first, gather and provide as much information as possible to other patients via the Internet, and, second, to provide funding for continued research into the disease and its treatment.

Diagnosed in 2003, Patrick launched a DSRCT web site ([www.dsrect.com](http://www.dsrect.com)) in April of 2004. "My goal was to create a place where everyone on the planet who

had this disease could share their experiences and the options for treatment. It can save people thousands of hours of time."

Patrick was well into a traditional cancer treatment program when he learned about the research on human tumors used at the Stehlin Foundation. "With my short time frame, I was intrigued by the idea of research paying off immediately," he said.

As a result of his findings, Patrick decided to help fund the Stehlin Foundation's DSRCT tumor cancer study, where patients send samples of their tumors to be grown in nude mice and tested for various treatments. "I am specifically interested in the Foundation's role as a

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clearinghouse for DSRCT information to be shared by everyone," he said.

DSRCT patients who log onto Patrick's web site are encouraged to become part of the Stehlin study, and Patrick's family has been helping with the fundraising efforts. "The results may actually be too late for me," said Patrick, "but the Stehlin Foundation has the people and approach to make a real leap in cancer treatment." □

*After a long and courageous battle with DSRCT, Patrick Scranton died May 5, 2005. A tireless friend of the Stehlin Foundation and DSRCT patients and families everywhere, Patrick will be sorely missed.*

# HOPE

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