

ROBERT C. GALLO
SHORT BIO

Since 1996, Dr. Robert C. Gallo has been Director of the Institute of Human Virology and Professor of Medicine at the University of Maryland School of Medicine. He is also the Homer & Martha Gudelsky Distinguished Professor in Medicine and Co-Founder and Scientific Director of the Global Virus Network (GVN). Previously (for 30 years) he was at the National Cancer Institute (NCI) in Bethesda, MD. While at NCI, he and his co-workers discovered interleukin-2 (IL-2) in 1976. IL-2 was one of the first cytokines (“messenger” molecules that allow cells to communicate and alter one another’s function) and proved to be a major tool not only for immunology but also for the discovery of all human retroviruses. Gallo and his colleagues then opened and pioneered the field of human retrovirology with the discovery of the first human retrovirus (HTLV-1) and along with Japanese investigators showed it was a cause of a particular form of human leukemia. A year later he and his group discovered the second known human retrovirus (HTLV-2). Dr. Gallo and his colleagues also co-independently discovered HIV, and provided the first results to show that HIV was the cause of AIDS. They also developed the life-saving HIV blood test. In 1986 he and his co-workers discovered human herpes virus-6 (HHV-6), the first new herpes virus found in more than 25 years and the cause of Roseola. In 1995 he and his colleagues discovered the first endogenous inhibitors of HIV, namely some of the beta chemokines. This discovery helped in the later discovery of the HIV co-receptor, CCR5, and opened up entire new approaches to treatment of HIV disease.

Dr. Gallo has been awarded 35 honorary doctorates, is a member of the U.S. National Academy of Sciences and Institute of Medicine (National Academy of Medicine), and is a member of the National Inventors Hall of Fame. He is also the recipient of numerous scientific honors and awards, most notably twice receiving the Lasker Award (1982, 1986). He has also received the Gairdner Foundation International Award (Canada, 1987), the Japan Prize in the field of Science and Technology (1988), the Paul Ehrlich and Ludwig Darmstaedter Prize (Germany, 1999), the Principe de Asturias Award (Spain, 2000), and the Dan David Prize (Israel, 2009), among many others. Dr. Gallo was the most cited scientist in the world 1980-1990, according to the Institute for Scientific Information, and he was ranked third in the world for scientific impact for the period 1983-2002. He has published close to 1,300 papers.

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