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NEWS

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*****Prize-winning research shows new
proof of liver's role in immune
system

CHICAGO--New proof that the liver has an active part in the body's immune system is detailed in research done by a fellow at The University of Texas Health Science Center at Dallas.

Thomas M. Rogoff, M.D., is winner of the American Liver Foundation's first annual Research Prize for his work isolating Kupffer cells and discovering the role they play with blood lymphocytes, or white cells, in disposing of antigens, or foreign materials in the liver. The work was supported by both training and research grants from the National Institutes of Health.

Rogoff, who joined the school's internal medicine faculty as an assistant professor July 1, will present his paper Nov. 8 at the twenty-ninth annual meeting of the American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases at the Hyatt-Regency Chicago. The prize carries a \$500 cash award. Also chosen for presentation at the conference were 19 other papers on liver research done by fellows from across the country. Chairman of the Scientific Advisory Committee which selected the winners was Dr. Irwin M. Arias of New York.

"Dr. Rogoff's work, carried out in the laboratory of Dr. Peter Lipsky, adds a new immunological dimension to the liver," said Dr. Burton Combes, Chairman of the Board of the foundation and one of the country's foremost liver researchers. The liver has long been looked on as a chemical regulator, manufacturer and treatment plant, but this work has clearly shown that it also has an immunological function, a role that had been suspected.

A lot of information showed that Kupffer cells, a type of macrophage, take up foreign material circulating in the body. However, before Rogoff developed his method for isolating the Kupffer cells, it was not possible to obtain enough cells to observe their workings. It is now clear, Combes explained, that these cells work in a cooperative effort with lymphocytes, a kind of white cell present in the blood and other parts of the body. The Kupffer cells first process foreign substances and then pass along signals about their presence to the lymphocytes, which are capable of mounting an immune response to these materials.

The American Liver Foundation, which is awarding the prize, was established in 1976 as a national volunteer agency concerned with the understanding, prevention and cure of liver diseases. It hopes to develop support to accomplish these aims through professional and public education and by supporting research, said Combes, who is professor of internal medicine at the UT center in Dallas.

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