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## ■ FOR THE MEDIA

Three globally known leaders in cancer research from Memorial Sloan Kettering – [Charles L. Sawyers](#), [Larry Norton](#), and [Kenneth Offit](#) – are being honored with special awards at the annual meeting of the [American Society of Clinical Oncology \(ASCO\)](#), the world's leading professional organization for cancer physicians and researchers.



The three clinician-scientists will each present a lecture at the event, which takes place in Chicago from May 31 to June 4.

Charles Sawyers, Kenneth Offit, and Larry Norton

## The Science of Oncology Award to Dr. Sawyers

Charles L. Sawyers, Chair of Memorial Sloan Kettering's [Human Oncology and Pathogenesis Program](#) and a Howard Hughes Medical Institute investigator, is receiving ASCO's 2013 Science of Oncology Award and Lecture, which recognizes outstanding contributions to basic or translational cancer research. Investigations led by Dr. Sawyers have brought new targeted therapies into clinical trials that changed the standard treatment for a number of cancer types.

In recent years, Dr. Sawyers's lab has studied the mechanisms by which advanced [prostate cancers](#) may acquire resistance to hormone therapy. The research led to the discovery of the prostate cancer drug enzalutamide (Xtandi®), which was [approved by the US Food and Drug Administration in 2012](#).

Earlier work performed in his laboratory led to the development of imatinib (Gleevec®) and dasatinib (Sprycel®), two drugs used to treat chronic myeloid leukemia (CML), a relatively rare form of blood cancer. The generation of these drugs has transformed CML from a fatal disease into one that is nearly always treatable.

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## The ASCO-American Cancer Society Award to Dr. Offit

Kenneth Offit, who heads the Clinical Genetics Service and is a member of [Sloan Kettering Institute's Cancer Biology and Genetics Program](#), is honored with this year's ASCO – American Cancer Society Award and Lecture, which distinguishes noteworthy contributions to the prevention and management of cancer.

In 1996, Dr. Offit and his colleagues discovered a mutation in the gene *BRCA2* that is the most common genetic alteration associated with inherited

Three Memorial-Sloan Kettering Researchers Receive Special Awards by the  
American Society of Clinical Oncology

breast and [ovarian cancer](#) among people with Ashkenazi Jewish ancestry. In subsequent studies, the team identified a number of other mutations that increase people's risk for developing hereditary ovarian, colon, or prostate cancer.

In addition, Dr. Offit's lab was the first to prospectively measure the impact of preventive ovarian surgery and screening in women at risk for hereditary ovarian and [breast cancer](#). The group is currently using genomic-sequencing methods to identify new risk markers for a number of types of cancer.

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## The Gianni Bonadonna Breast Cancer Award to Dr. Norton

Larry Norton, Deputy Physician-in-Chief for Breast Cancer Programs and Medical Director of the [Evelyn H. Lauder Breast Center](#), is the recipient of the 2013 Gianni Bonadonna Breast Cancer Award and Lecture. The prize is given each year to a breast cancer researcher with distinguished accomplishments and exceptional mentoring abilities.

Dr. Norton is an expert on the biology and mathematical principles underlying the formation and development of tumors. His research is aimed at developing more-effective approaches for cancer diagnosis, treatment, and prevention.

Among his many accomplishments is a mathematics-based approach to therapy including dose density, which maximizes the ability of cancer drugs to kill tumor cells while minimizing their toxicity. In addition, Dr. Norton was instrumental in the development of several widely used cancer drugs, including paclitaxel (Taxol®) and trastuzumab (Herceptin®).

Last year, the Bonadonna Breast Cancer Award was given to [Monica Morrow](#), who heads Memorial Sloan Kettering's Breast Surgical Service.

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