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Memorial Sloan Kettering
Cancer Center

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also a Howard Hughes Medical Institute investigator, a member of the National Academy of Sciences, and the incumbent of the David H. Koch Chair in Immunologic Studies at Memorial Sloan Kettering.



James Allison, PhD -- Chair, Immunology Program

Dr. Allison is a leader in the field of immunology, particularly in developing ways to help the immune system recognize and destroy cancer cells. His research is focused on the mechanisms that regulate the immunological response of T lymphocytes, especially strategies to manipulate those responses in clinically relevant areas, including autoimmunity, allergies, vaccinations, and tumor therapy. Dr. Allison has shown that an immune-regulating molecule called cytotoxic T lymphocyte-associated antigen-4 (CTLA-4) inhibits activated T cells in the immune system and prevents them from attacking the body's own tissues. In mouse models, he identified an antibody that blocks CTLA-4 and showed that it enhances the cancer-fighting activity of certain vaccines. He and his colleagues have now created antibodies to human CTLA-4 that are being studied in human clinical trials for the treatment of [melanoma](#), [renal cell carcinoma](#), [prostate cancer](#), and [ovarian cancer](#).

The Institute of Medicine is a branch of the National Academies and was established to honor professional achievement in the health sciences and to serve as a national resource for recommendations on issues related to medicine, biomedical sciences, and health. Eleven members of Memorial Sloan Kettering's staff are already members of the Institute of Medicine.

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