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Dr. Rudensky's laboratory studies the development of white blood cells called T lymphocytes, which play a role in the immune system response to infection. This work has important implications for cancer.



Specifically, his research is focused on a subset of T lymphocytes called regulatory T cells, which are believed to suppress the immune system's ability to fight tumors by acting on other T cells and reducing their immune response. Understanding how regulatory T cells function has many potential applications in the clinic.

The basic research in his lab is focused on determining how regulatory T cells are formed and how they function. Potential therapies that act by boosting or targeting these cells are now being explored for autoimmune diseases, such as diabetes and rheumatoid arthritis, as well as for cancer. Most types of tumors are infiltrated by regulatory T cells, which are believed to suppress the immune system's ability to fight the tumor.

Dr. Rudensky, a native of Russia, earned his PhD degree in immunology from the Gabrichevsky Research Institute of Epidemiology and Microbiology, in Moscow. He completed a postdoctoral fellowship at the Yale School of Medicine. He joined Memorial Sloan Kettering in 2009, after more than 16 years on the faculty of the University of Washington School of Medicine. He is also a Howard Hughes Medical Institute investigator.

"I'm delighted that Sasha Rudensky has accepted our offer to become Chair of Immunology," says [Thomas J. Kelly](#), Director of SKI. "He is widely recognized as a brilliant scientist with exemplary leadership skills. I expect that, under his leadership, the Immunology Program will continue on the strong upward trajectory that it has already established."

Dr. Rudensky succeeds James P. Allison, who became the Immunology Program Chair in 2004 and stepped down earlier this year.

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