Johnson&Johnson

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For Immediate Release

Johnson & Johnson celebrates innovation in cancer research with 2025 Dr. Paul Janssen Award

Tony Hunter, Ph.D., celebrated for pioneering discoveries that inspired the development of more than 80 cancer therapies that continue to transform patient lives

New Brunswick, N.J. (January 8, 2026) – Johnson & Johnson today announced Tony Hunter, Ph.D., of the Salk Institute as the recipient of the 2025 Dr. Paul Janssen Award for Biomedical Research. Dr. Hunter is honored for his role in the discovery of tyrosine kinases and protein-tyrosine phosphorylation as mechanisms for the malignant transformation of normal cells into cancer cells and other disease states.

“Dr. Hunter’s discoveries are the cornerstone upon which today’s cancer therapies have been built,” said John C. Reed, M.D., Ph.D., Executive Vice President, Innovative Medicine R&D for Johnson & Johnson. “His groundbreaking work embodies the legacy and spirit of Dr. Paul Janssen and J&J's ongoing commitment to cancer research – addressing patient needs and improving health for all.”

Dr. Hunter’s seminal discovery four decades ago paved the way for the development of more than 80 cancer therapies and sparked innovation in neuroimmunology, neurology, hematology, and autoimmune disorders. His lab at the Salk Institute continues to lead the field in understanding how chemical additions to proteins control the cell cycle and growth, leading to new potential therapeutic targets for cancers.

An independent committee of world-renowned scientists selected Dr. Hunter for this recognition. He joins 25 other scientists who have received the Dr. Paul Janssen Award since 2004, including ten who have gone on to win the Nobel Prize.

“Dr. Hunter’s work stood out to the selection committee for its foundational impact in addressing one of the most pressing medical questions of our generation: Why do cancers thrive, and how do we stop them from growing? His discoveries have already made a great impact, and they continue to pave the way for new innovations in cancer therapies, improving outcomes for patients worldwide,” said Elaine Fuchs, Ph.D., Selection Committee Chair for the Dr. Paul Janssen Award. “As in every year, we had an impressive slate of researchers nominated for their exceptional work in the field of biomedical research.”

Johnson & Johnson will honor Dr. Hunter during a virtual symposium, cohosted with The New York Academy of Sciences on March 2, 2026. The symposium is free to anyone interested in celebrating scientific innovation. (Registration is required.)

“I am delighted to receive the Dr. Paul Janssen Award for Biomedical Research,” Hunter said. “I discovered tyrosine phosphorylation as a cancer mechanism while carrying out studies with a simple chicken tumor virus, hoping our findings would give us clues as to how human cancer develops. This serendipitous discovery led to a whole new class of cancer drugs and underscores the importance of funding for basic biomedical research, which can lead to other breakthrough cancer treatments.”

The Dr. Paul Janssen Award builds on Dr. Hunter’s extensive list of international scientific awards and recognitions, including the AACR Lifetime Achievement Award in Cancer Research, the Tang Prize in Biopharmaceutical Science and the Sjöberg Prize, among others.

About the Dr. Paul Janssen Award for Biomedical Research

Dr. Paul Janssen was one of the 20th century's most gifted, accomplished and passionate researchers. He helped save millions of lives through his contribution to the discovery and development of more than 80 medicines, four of which remain on the World Health Organization's list of essential medicines.
The Dr. Paul Janssen Award for Biomedical Research was established by Johnson & Johnson in 2004 to honor the memory of Dr. Janssen. Since its inception, the Award has recognized 25 outstanding scientists. Winners are chosen by an independent selection committee of the world's most renowned scientists. The Award includes a $200,000 prize.

Previous winners include:

- 2024 – Lynne Maquat, Ph.D., and Alexander Varshavsky, Ph.D.
- 2023 – Robert Langer Sc.D.
- 2022 – Jeffrey Gordon, M.D.
- 2021 – Katalin Karikó, Ph.D., and Drew Weissman, M.D., Ph.D.; Nobel Laureates
- 2020 – Lewis Cantley, Ph.D.
- 2019 – Franz-Ulrich Hartl, M.D., and Arthur Horwich, M.D.
- 2018 – James Allison, Ph.D.; Nobel Laureate
- 2017 – Douglas Wallace, Ph.D.
- 2016 – Yoshinori Ohsumi, Ph.D.; Nobel Laureate
- 2015 – Bert Vogelstein, M.D.
- 2014 – Emmanuelle Charpentier, Ph.D., and Jennifer Doudna, Ph.D.; Nobel Laureates
- 2013 – David Julius, Ph.D.; Nobel Laureate
- 2012 – Victor Ambros, Ph.D., and Gary Ruvkun, Ph.D.; Nobel Laureates
- 2011 – Napoleon Ferrara, M.D.
- 2010 – Anthony S. Fauci, M.D., and Erick De Clercq, M.D., Ph.D.
- 2009 – Axel Ullrich, Ph.D.
- 2008 – Sri Ravinder Maini, FRCP, FMedSci, FRS, and Marc Feldmann, FMedSci, FAA, FRS
- 2006 – Craig Mello, Ph.D.; Nobel Laureate

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At Johnson & Johnson, we believe health is everything. Our strength in healthcare innovation empowers us to build a world where complex diseases are prevented, treated and cured, where treatments are smarter and less invasive, and solutions are personal. Through our expertise in Innovative Medicine and MedTech, we are uniquely positioned to innovate across the full spectrum of healthcare solutions today to deliver the breakthroughs of tomorrow, and profoundly impact health for humanity. Learn more at https://www.jnj.com/.