



Simposio Internacional / *International Symposium:*

Nuevas perspectivas en la investigación sobre el cáncer *New insights in cancer discovery*

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VARDA ROTTER

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Prof. **Varda Rotter** received her BSc and MSc from Bar-Ilan University, in 1969 and 1971, respectively. She earned her PhD in cell biology from the Weizmann Institute in 1976. Following postdoctoral research at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, she returned to Israel and joined the faculty of the Weizmann Institute. Since 2003, she chaired the Institute's Department of Molecular Cell Biology, and served as the President's Advisor for Advancing Women in Science from 2011 to 2013. She is director of the Women's Health Research Center. She is also the Norman and Helen Asher Professorial Chair of Cancer Research.

Prof. Rotter is a genetic engineer who, with two other Weizmann scientists, first cloned and characterized the p53 gene and showed that it actively prevents cancer. It has since been found that p53 is dysfunctional in about half of all cancers, making it the most frequently altered gene in tumors. The gene is known as the "guardian of the genome" because it puts the "brakes" on cancer when the cell's DNA is damaged. However, when these brakes are not functioning properly, the road to cancer remains open, and there is nothing to stop a normal cell from transforming into a full-blown cancerous one. Prof. Rotter is searching for ways in which p53 may be used to stop the proliferation of cancer cells.

A recipient of numerous honors, Prof. Rotter has been awarded the EMET Prize for Art, Science, and Culture in the field of biology (2003), together with colleague Prof. Moshe Oren, and, more recently, the Lombroso Award in Cancer Research (2007-2008). She is a member of several professional societies, including the American Association for Cancer Research, International Union Against Cancer, the European Molecular Biology Organization (EMBO), the Israel Cancer Research Association, the Israel Immunological Association, and the American Society for Microbiology. She was elected in 2011 as president of the Israel Society for Cancer Research (ISCR). She has been appointed external scientific advisor to the advisory board of the Technion - Israel Institute of Technology's Rappaport Research Institute and serves as a member of the Board of Governors of DKFZ, Heidelberg. She also serves on the editorial board of *Oncogene*; *International Journal of Cancer*, *Predictive Oncology*; *Cancer Research and An Encyclopedic Reference*; and is an associate editor of *Cancer Research* and *FEBS Letters*.