



Arthur and Sonia Labatt Brain Tumour Research Centre (BTRC)

BACKGROUND

The Arthur and Sonia Labatt Brain Tumour Research Centre (BTRC) is a multi-institutional project led by SickKids, the University Health Network (UHN) and the University of Toronto (UofT). Housed within the SickKids labs at MaRS, the BTRC brings together scientists and clinicians dedicated to understanding and eliminating brain tumours.

As the first brain tumour research centre in Canada dedicated to basic science and the first in North America to focus on both paediatric and adult brain tumours, the BTRC's goal is to foster excellence in brain tumour research. Within the BTRC, a stimulating research environment has been created allowing scientists to share ideas, resources and equipment in an atmosphere conducive to achieving excellence in molecular neuro-oncology research, scientific publications, and translational research.

Since its inception in 1996, the BTRC's mission has been to foster leading-edge brain tumour research. In 2003, a research team led by BTRC investigator Dr. Peter Dirks identified for the first time a cancer stem cell in both malignant and benign brain tumours. This discovery has changed how brain tumours are studied and may change the treatments available to patients in the future.

Each year in Canada, 300 children under the age of 15 will be diagnosed with a brain tumour. Brain tumours are the second most common type of cancer in children and the leading cause of cancerous death in children under 20 in Canada. The establishment of The Arthur and Sonia Labatt Brain Tumour Research Centre has been a vital resource in the search for new answers and new treatments for patients with brain tumours.