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LJI Professor named world's leading Type 1 Diabetes expert

The ranking was announced by Expertscape, an online knowledge base of worldwide biomedical expertise in many medical conditions, including type 1 diabetes

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LA JOLLA, CA—[Dr. Matthias von Herrath](#), M.D., who founded the [Type 1 Diabetes Center](#) at [La Jolla Institute for Immunology \(LJI\)](#) has been identified as the world's top expert in Type 1 Diabetes by [Expertscape](#), an organization that provides tools to quickly and easily find the best clinicians or pioneering scientists specializing in a wide range of medical conditions or biomedical topics.

Rankings by Expertscape use an objective algorithm to assign a weighted score to peer-reviewed scientific publications over the last ten years to identify the most knowledgeable and experienced physicians, clinicians and researchers across more than 26,000 specific topics.

Dr. von Herrath splits his time between his lab at La Jolla Institute and Novo Nordisk, a global pharmaceutical company best known for its diabetes products, where he recently assumed the position of Vice President and Senior Medical Officer. Dr. von Herrath's position allows him to realize his dream of playing a key role in clinical trials on potential type 1 diabetes treatments, while continuing to lead his world-renowned research program at La Jolla Institute.

During their early life, immune cells learn to get along with the body's own cells. In individuals with type 1 diabetes (T1D) that tolerance breaks down and immune cells selectively destroy insulin-producing beta cells in the pancreas. Although the reasons why the immune system turns on beta cells are still unclear, scientists believe that a combination of genetic and environmental factors triggers the disease.

Approximately three million Americans have type 1 diabetes, and each year 30,000 children and 30,000 adults are diagnosed with this disease. After witnessing first hand, how patients with type 1 diabetes struggle with the disease, Dr. von Herrath made it his life's mission to gain a solid mechanistic understanding of type 1 diabetes and develop immune-based interventions. When he joined LJI in 2001, he founded the Center for Type 1 Diabetes and began studying the causes of the disease.

At LJI, Dr. von Herrath runs an innovative and world-renowned research program on the pathology of type 1 and, to a lesser extent, type 2 diabetes. He was one of the first scientists to join the [Network for Pancreatic Organ Donors with Diabetes \(nPOD\)](#). It allowed him to study clinical pathology in human tissues instead of relying on mouse models of disease, these human studies are fundamental to understanding what's actually happening in patients.

Trained as a virologist, Dr. von Herrath was a latecomer to biomedical research. Born and raised in Germany, he received his M.D. from the University of Freiburg and spent several years working in infectious diseases, internal medicine, and intensive care before his passion for bench research brought him to San Diego. He went to Scripps Research for his postdoctoral studies before joining the faculty of LJI in 2001. In addition, he is an Adjunct Professor of Medicine at the University of California, San Diego.

Dr. von Herrath is the recipient of the 2008 American Diabetes Association-Lilly Outstanding Scientist Achievements Award, the 2006 Grotzky Award from the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation International, the 2007-2012 Scholar Award from the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation, and the 2014 Langerhans-Preis by the German Diabetes Foundation. Dr. von Herrath was previously ranked as the #1 Juvenile Diabetes Expert by Expertscape.

About La Jolla Institute for Immunology

The La Jolla Institute for Immunology is dedicated to understanding the intricacies and power of the immune system so that we may apply that knowledge to promote human health and prevent a wide range of diseases. Since its founding in 1988 as an independent, nonprofit research organization, the Institute has made numerous advances leading toward its goal: *life without disease*.

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