

HUMANS OF MEDICAL RESEARCH



Understanding DISEASE... Finding a CURE

DR CLAUDIO COUNOUPAS



In medical research, it's often curiosity which is credited for leading to some of the biggest breakthroughs. Dr Claudio Counoupas says while that's true, it's also important to have a plan.

"Try to find a problem you want to solve and always start thinking at the end and work backwards. It doesn't mean you can't maintain a sense of curiosity, but you should also structure your work within a set of guidelines to stay on track."

Born in Egypt to parents who were half-Italian and half-Greek, Claudio grew up fascinated by science.

"As a child, I read books about dinosaurs and geology. I even had a game I used to play called 'Little Chemist'. I've always enjoyed understanding how things work, and in doing so, make a change for the better."

Claudio attended university in Italy's Tuscany region, where he also

worked in a hospital for several years. But after growing restless with diagnostics and the lack of job opportunities in Italy, he decided it was time to change careers... as well as country.

Eight years ago, Claudio successfully applied for a scholarship from the Australian Government, before joining Centenary. He is part of Professor Warwick Britton and the University of Sydney's Professor Jamie Triccas' team, who are working to develop a vaccine against tuberculosis; the world's deadliest infectious disease.

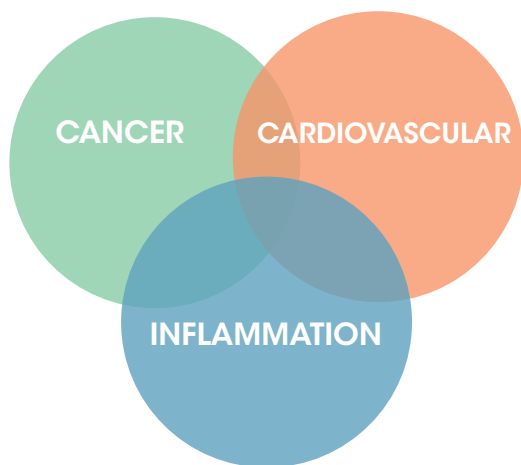
"I have always been interested in the immunology of infectious diseases and understanding how an organism is able to mount a response to infectious disease. The ultimate goal for us would be to develop a vaccine against tuberculosis which makes it to the clinical trial stage."

Claudio's contribution to life at Centenary extends well beyond the lab. He's taken part in several fundraising running events - most recently completing the 21km half-marathon at the Sydney Running Festival.

Not one to be intimidated by a challenge, Claudio is also training for his first triathlon event. It's known as a 'sprint' and is the first step towards eventually competing in a gruelling Iron Man series, which involves a 3.8km swim, followed by a 180km cycle and finishing with a 42km full marathon.

In his spare time, Claudio enjoys scuba diving, rock climbing, reading, going to the theatre and speaking multiple languages. He is already fluent in Arabic, French, Italian and English, and is currently learning Spanish through his friends and "watching lots of Netflix shows in Spanish!"

WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN?



CANCER

Cancer is a disease of the cells, which are the body's basic building blocks.

1 in 3 women and 1 in 2 men will be diagnosed with cancer by the age of 85.

INFLAMMATION

Inflammation is the body's natural response to protect itself against harm. There are two types: acute and chronic.

1 in 9 Australians have asthma, around 2.5 million people.

CARDIOVASCULAR

Cardiovascular Disease (CVD) is a collective term for diseases of the heart and blood vessels.

Almost 1 in 3 deaths in Australia in 2015 were due to cardiovascular disease.

Together we are the solution...together we can save lives.



Ask Nick a question here <https://www.centenary.org.au/meet-dr-claudio-counoupas/>