

**For immediate release:**  
Monday, June 30, 2025

**Contact:**  
Darien Sutton  
(215) 898-3988  
[dsutton@wistar.org](mailto:dsutton@wistar.org)

## **The Wistar Institute Announces the Appointment of Qingsheng Li, Ph.D., to HIV Cure and Viral Diseases Center**

**PHILADELPHIA — (JUNE 30, 2025)** [The Wistar Institute](https://www.wistar.org), a world leader in cancer, immunology, and infectious disease research, announces the appointment of **Qingsheng Li, Ph.D.**, as professor in the HIV Cure and Viral Diseases Center. Li analyzes the complex immune response to HIV pathogenesis and studies HIV transmission to better understand virus – host interaction. He’s interested in one of the biggest challenges to the field: HIV virus latency (when the virus is dormant in a cell), why it reactivates and how it infects surrounding tissue. He uses genome engineering tools like CRISPR as well as RNA technologies to advance new immunotherapies.

“We are excited to welcome Qingsheng as he has been an active collaborator with Wistar for more than 15 years, including as a founding member of the BEAT-HIV Delaney Collaboratory (one of two HIV cure research consortiums in Philadelphia and one of 10 across the nation). He brings a depth of expertise in how best to measure the persistence of viral infections within tissues, which is the perfect complement to the research strategies our Wistar scientists are making alongside the HIV community,” said Luis Montaner, D.V.M., D.Phil., executive vice president, director of the HIV Cure and Viral Diseases Center and the Herbert Kean, M. D., Family Professor, at The Wistar Institute. “I can’t wait to see the collaborations he makes with our scientists who study different diseases and immunotherapy delivery systems and how the insights he gains from working with our DNA technology founder Dr. David Weiner or collaborating with Dr. Paul Lieberman through his work in Epstein-Barr virus will challenge and inspire Qingsheng to push HIV cure research to the next level.”

Li developed a way to quantify latently infected HIV virus in tissue and uses this method to detect the lowest amount of HIV DNA or RNA in patients living with HIV. This ability to quantify viral amounts helps him understand where HIV is integrated into the human chromosome. He combines this very active area of research with genome editing, using CRISPR-Cas12a technology, like molecular scissors to cut the HIV virus from the chromosome. The goal is to eventually create an immunotherapy to cure HIV.

“Wistar is known across the nation and globe as a highly regarded, top-tier research institute that has made several fundamentally important health discoveries in the 20th century—those being rabies, rubella and rotavirus. Dr. Montaner is a leader in the HIV cure field, and I couldn’t be more excited to join Wistar’s strong, established program in this exciting moment of expansion and critical mass.”



A Cancer Center Designated by the  
National Cancer Institute

Li earned his medical degree at Datong Medical College, China, and his M.S. at Shanxi Medical University, China, and his Ph.D. at Beijing University Medical School, China. Before joining Wistar, he was a professor in the School of Biological Sciences at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

###

*The Wistar Institute is an international leader in biomedical research with special expertise in cancer research and vaccine development. Founded in 1892 as the first independent nonprofit biomedical research institute in the United States, Wistar has held the prestigious Cancer Center designation from the National Cancer Institute since 1972. The Institute works actively to ensure that research advances move from the laboratory to the clinic as quickly as possible. [wistar.org](http://wistar.org).*



A Cancer Center Designated by the  
National Cancer Institute