# Correspondence

#### Taking common medicines might matter for cancer treatment

The Article by J. Yang and colleagues (Nature 640. 1052-1061; 2025) suggests that common medicines, such as aspirin, could boost immune responses that suppress metastasis, the spread of cancer cells from primary tumours to distant organs. In the study, the inhibition of an enzyme called cyclooxygenase1 (COX-1) - particularly with aspirin - restored the function of a type of immune cell called T cells, which then destroyed metastatic tumour cells.

Other work has similarly indicated the importance of co-medications, but with different effects. In a 2022 study, for example, exposure to paracetamol during immunotherapy was associated with a significant reduction in the effectiveness of the treatment (A. Bessede *et al. Ann. Oncol.* **33**, 909–915; 2022).

Clinical researchers could target pharmacological modulators of the immune system as a fresh way to improve cancer outcomes, particularly for people whose cancers have spread. Medical providers should start evaluating what other medications (if any) people are taking during cancer immunotherapy, and clinical trials should be conducted to clarify which drugs should be favoured and which avoided or substituted.

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#### Address academic bullying through structural reform

Your Career feature, although well intentioned, oversimplifies the complexities surrounding academic bullying (see *Nature* https://doi.org/g9d5ph; 2025).

In job applications, if researchers characterize employment gaps as stemming from 'personality mismatches', they risk portraying themselves as being challenging to work with. And omitting a principal investigator's reference can raise suspicion, because a reference from an individual's most recent line manager is often required.

Many researchers try to address concerns at their institutes, only to experience retaliation or escalating tensions with their supervisors. Shortterm academic contracts can compel people simply to move to the next job. Elite universities, in particular, benefit from a steady influx of eager candidates who are willing to endure challenging conditions in exchange for institutional prestige. And responses from institutes sometimes prioritize protecting reputations over meaningful action (S. E. Moss and M. Mahmoudi eClinicalMedicine 40,101121;2021).

Transparent, anonymized evaluations incorporating feedback from current and recent former laboratory members could expose issues, and inform departmental decisions and potential actions by funding bodies. To be effective, findings from such evaluations need to be centrally recorded, auditable and subject to continued monitoring. But meaningful reform requires shifting accountability from researchers to institutions.

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## Global measles eradication goal is urgently needed

Fifteen years ago, a World Health Organization (WHO) Global Technical Consultation concluded that measles eradication was feasible using existing tools (WHO*J. Infect. Dis.* **204** (Suppl. 1), S4–13; 2011). But despite all six WHO regions pledging to eliminate measles by 2030, devastating worldwide outbreaks are occurring every five years because there is no explicit global commitment to eradicate measles.

Endemic transmission has been re-established in 13 of the 96 countries or territories where elimination of endemic measles had previously been verified (D. N. Durrheim *et al. Vaccines* **12**, 699; 2024).

We are chairs of the six WHO Regional Verification Commissions for measles and rubella elimination. In our view, a galvanizing global eradication goal with a genuine commitment from the World Health Assembly is crucial. Without it, measles elimination will remain precarious.

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### The forest space age needs eyes on the ground

This year, space agencies are launching US\$2 billion worth of satellite radars to measure Earth's forests, with 'NISAR' developed by India and the United States about to join the European Space Agency's 'Biomass' in orbit. These initiatives foster international collaboration and can help to address climate change and protect biodiversity.

To interpret data from space missions, however, millions of measurements are needed from foresters, botanists and technicians on the ground, some of whom are in extremely disadvantaged regions.

To obtain fair, long-term tropical-forest data, public agencies, the private sector and foundations must fund the costs of taking such measurements properly. This includes ensuring secure jobs for those responsible and strengthening communities and institutions. If fieldworkers are not valued as equal partners, the forest space age risks becoming a vast helicopter project, with forests being spied from afar without benefiting those whose livelihoods are connected to them.

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