IARC MONOGRAPHS NEWS

A newsletter from the *IARC Monographs* programme

June
2025
Issue No. 12

Highlights from Summer 2025

As a heat wave envelops Lyon in early summer 2025, we invite you to delve into the latest update from the *Monographs* programme. We have had a very busy Spring. On this page, you will find the calls for data and experts for newly announced Meeting 142 on butyl benzyl phthalate, dibutyl phthalate, and diisononyl phthalate. All three agents were accorded high priority for evaluation by our Advisory Group.

On p. 2, we present the results of Meeting 139, in which viruses were evaluated for the first time in 13 years. Hepatitis D virus and Merkel cell carcinoma were classified in Group 1 and human cytomegalovirus in Group 2B. We highlight the experiences of early career scientists who joined Meeting 139 on p. 4.

Our feature article on p. 3 introduces the celebrations underway for the 60th anniversary of the founding of IARC.

We also announce (p. 5) two important publications: the Talc monograph from Volume 136 (the full volume is anticipated by mid-September), and the technical report from the workshop on the advancement of the key characteristics of carcinogens framework.

Programme leaders have also been hard at work this Spring to diversify funding sources for the *IARC Monographs*. We welcome your suggestions for this important initiative, at imo@iarc.who.int.

Mary Schubauer-Berigan

Call for Data

IARC is interested in identifying studies that are relevant to the carcinogenicity of the agents that will be reviewed in each volume. This includes all pertinent cancer epidemiology studies, cancer bioassays, and mechanistic evidence in both exposed humans and experimental systems. Eligible studies should be published or accepted for publication in the openly available scientific literature. Relevant exposure data (particularly from low- and middle-income countries) that are or can be made publicly available are also requested. Please see the *IARC Monographs* Preamble for details of the types of study that may be reviewed.

The **Call for Data** and **Call for Experts** are announced approximately 1 year before the meeting on the *IARC Monographs* website.

Meeting 140: Atrazine, alachlor, and vinclozolin

Meeting dates: 28 October to 4 November 2025
Call for Data closing date: 22 September 2025
Call for Experts CLOSED: 16 December 2024

Meeting 141: Tris(chloropropyl)phosphate, butyraldehyde, and cumyl hydroperoxide

Meeting dates: 3–10 March 2026
Call for Data closing date: 2 February 2026
Call for Experts CLOSED: 2 June 2025

Meeting 142: Butyl benzyl phthalate, dibutyl phthalate, and diisononyl phthalate

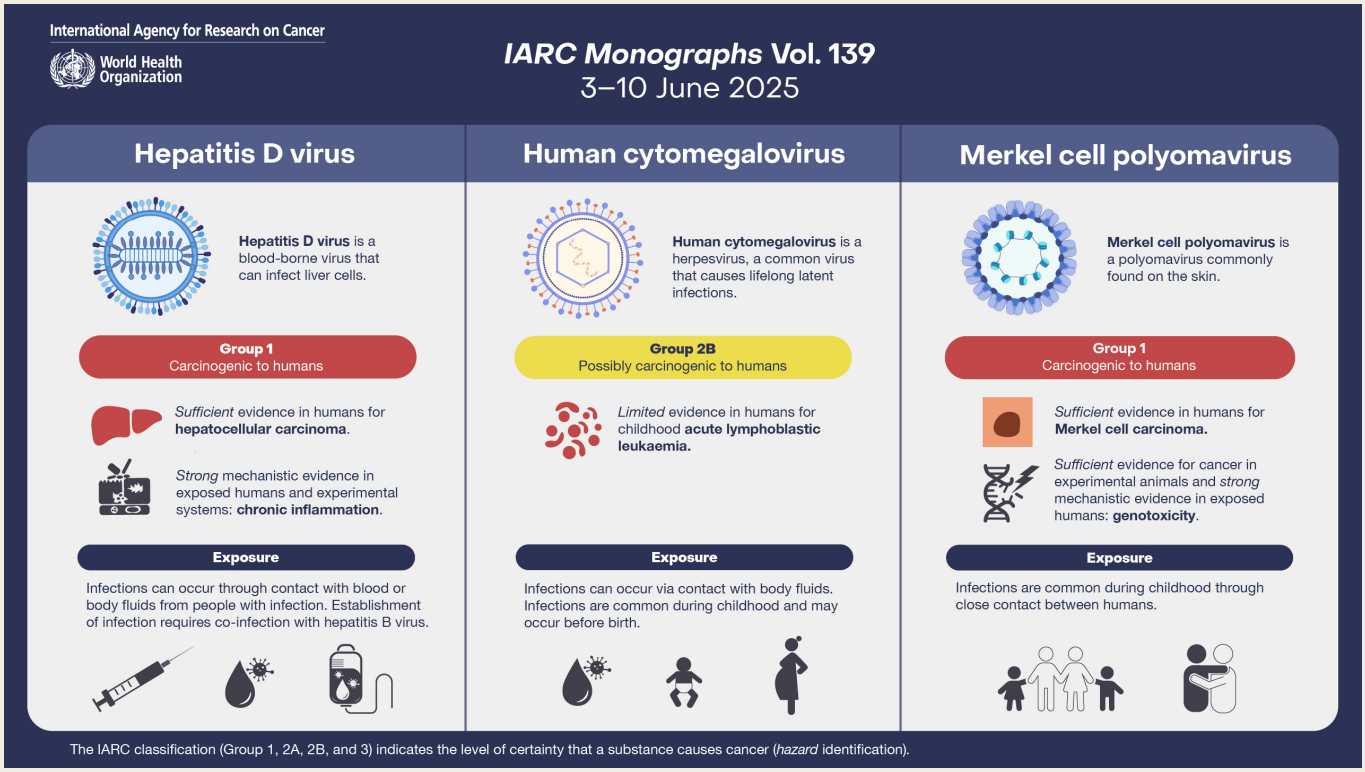
Meeting dates: 9–16 June 2026
Call for Data closing date: 10 May 2026
Call for Experts closing date: 10 August 2025

IARC encourages the participation of Representatives of national and international health agencies. If you are interested in serving as a Representative, contact us at imonews@iarc.who.int.

International Agency for Research on Cancer
World Health Organization

Results of *IARC Monographs* Meeting 139: Hepatitis D Virus, Human Cytomegalovirus, and Merkel Cell Polyomavirus

Meeting held on 3–10 June 2025, in Lyon, France



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A summary of the results of Meeting 139 has now been published in *The Lancet Oncology*.

Hepatitis D virus (HDV), human cytomegalovirus (HCMV), and Merkel cell polyomavirus (MCPyV) were all accorded high priority by the Advisory Group to Recommend Priorities for the *IARC Monographs* during 2020–2024.

Establishing an HDV infection requires prior or simultaneous infection with hepatitis B virus. HDV transmission occurs through contact with infected human blood or unprotected sex.

HCMV is transmitted through body fluids such as saliva, blood, urine, semen, and breast milk, and from mother to foetus.

Infection with MCPyV is typically acquired in early childhood via close contact, and the virus persists as a common component of the normal skin virome.

The Working Group evaluated HDV as *carcinogenic to humans* (Group 1) on the basis of *sufficient* evidence for cancer in humans. There was also *strong* mechanistic evidence, and *inadequate* evidence regarding cancer in experimental animals. HDV causes hepatocellular carcinoma.

MCPyV was also evaluated as *carcinogenic to humans* (Group 1) on the basis of *sufficient* evidence for cancer in humans, and on the combination of *sufficient* evidence for cancer in experimental animals and *strong* mechanistic evidence in exposed humans. MCPyV causes Merkel cell carcinoma.

HCMV was classified as *possibly carcinogenic to humans* (Group 2B) on the basis of *limited* evidence for cancer in humans. Positive associations have been observed between HCMV and childhood acute lymphoblastic leukaemia. There was *limited* mechanistic evidence and *inadequate* evidence regarding cancer in experimental animals.

IARC@60—time to celebrate!

The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) was created on 20 May 1965, with the passage by the World Health Assembly of resolution WHA18.44, which stated "The objective of the [IARC] shall be to promote international collaboration in cancer research." Shortly thereafter, IARC "opened its doors", with the confirmation of its first five Participating States in September 1965. In celebration of its 60th anniversary, IARC has kicked off a year-long campaign of events, starting in May 2025 and concluding in May 2026.

The **IARC@60** initiative highlights IARC's six decades of excellence in collaborative cancer research, training, and dissemination, and charts a vision for the future. Events span scientific meetings, educational programmes, community outreach, and global engagement, both in Lyon and abroad. Special events include on-site conferences for the general public on topics related to nutrition, lifestyle, and cancer.

Training of the next generation of experts in cancer research and prevention has long been at the heart of IARC's work, and the biennial **IARC Summer School** is aptly taking place during this year of celebration. The Summer School runs from 23 June to 4 July 2025 and uses a hybrid training platform combining online coursework with in-person sessions at IARC's Lyon campus, welcoming around 70 participants from over 40 countries. Training modules for Introduction to Cancer Epidemiology and Implementing Cancer Prevention and Early Detection, as well as many other resources, are freely available online on IARC's Learning Platforms.

IARC is planning special events for **World Cancer Day (4 February 2026)**, a global awareness day with coordinated campaigns aimed at cancer prevention.

The *IARC Monographs* programme has planned **three meetings** during IARC's celebratory year: Volume 139 on three viruses, Volume 140 on three pesticides, and Volume 141 on three high-priority chemicals.

Monographs scientists will also participate in a **Scientific Webinar** highlighting the work of the IARC flagship publications, the *Monographs*, the *IARC Handbooks of Cancer Prevention*, and the *WHO Classification of Tumours*, to take place in January 2026.

The year-long celebration will culminate in an international scientific conference, to be held on 19–21 May 2026 in Lyon. The venue will be Lyon's Biodistrict, spanning IARC's Lyon campus and Halle Tony Garnier. Registrations will open in September 2025, welcoming experts globally.

IARC@60 Conference Themes

Science for Policy and Health System Strengthening

Focusing on translating scientific evidence into stronger public health systems. Key topics include cancer registries, modelling, health economics, and implementation science – aiming to design resilient, data-driven health-care infrastructures.

Fundamental Research in a Changing World

Covering emerging research areas: genetic and epigenetic mechanisms; environmental factors like nutrition, metabolism, and climate change effects; and regional disparities in cancer burden.

Dissemination and Communication

Addressing strategies for effectively communicating scientific findings to policymakers, nongovernmental organizations, and the public, and including discussion on countering misinformation. A public-facing evening session will conclude the day, opening the conference to broader audiences.

We invite you to bookmark https://circ60.iarc.who.int/home-en/ and to follow iarc_circ60 on Instagram and "IARC 60th Anniversary" on Facebook for all the latest news on these exciting events, and we hope you can join us in celebrating **IARC@60**!

IARC Early Career and Visiting Scientists at Meeting 139

Sarra Ezzemni (EPR), Yue Huang (EPR), and Inmaculada Aguilera Buenosvinos (NME), who assisted with a *Monographs* meeting for the first time

Where are you originally from and how long have you been at IARC?

IAB: I am originally from Spain, and I joined IARC in May 2024.

SE: I am French, from the beautiful city of Toulouse ("la ville rose"). I have been at IARC for more than a year now.

YH: I am originally from China and have been at IARC for one year.

From left to right: Rachmad Anres Dongoran, Yue Zhai, Yue Huang, Sarra Ezzemni, and Inmaculada Aguilera Buenosvinos. Early Career and Visiting Scientists (ECVS) who participated in Meeting 139.

What is your role in your group at IARC? What research projects are you working on?

IAB: I am in the Nutrition and Metabolism Branch (NME), as part of the Oncometabolomics Team, where I contribute to research on diet, metabolic biomarkers, and cancer risk. My current projects focus on evaluating dietary patterns and metabolic profiles in relation to liver cancer, including the analysis of metabolomics data from large-scale prospective cohort studies (EPIC cohort).

SE: I am a postdoctoral scientist within the Early Detection, Prevention and Infections Branch (EPR) where I oversee the CanScreen5 (Cancer Screening in Five Continents) project, an IARC flagship initiative, alongside my supervisor. I am also involved in several projects related to cervical cancer, including assessing the impact of HPV vaccination and using an AI tool for triaging women.

YH: I am a postdoctoral scientist in EPR. My research focuses on infection-associated cancers (HIV-attributable cancers, HPV-related cancers, and gastric cancer), encompassing worldwide incidence analysis and identification of pre-diagnostic markers for early detection, and epidemiological investigation.

What were your main insights from your time at the *Monographs* meeting?

IAB: Participating in the *Monographs* meeting was a unique opportunity to witness the rigorous scientific evaluation process and the value of multidisciplinary collaboration. I gained a deeper understanding of how evidence is critically assessed to support public health recommendations. It also highlighted the importance of transparency, structured debate, and collective decision-making in international health evaluations.

SE: Working at Meeting 139 was very interesting! The preparatory tasks assigned to me before the meeting enabled me to fully engage in the discussions and provide effective support as a member of the secretariat. I learned a lot about how to rigorously assess scientific evidence and translate it into a comprehensive manuscript.

YH: From the comprehensive evidence-gathering and preparation beforehand to the in-depth discussions among experts from diverse scientific fields, I witnessed how a rigorous evaluation of causality is conducted to inform public-health practice and guide future research. Of the entire process, the most fascinating part for me was the collaborative evaluation of all the studies.

Call for Experts

Working Group Members are responsible for all scientific reviews and evaluations developed during the *IARC Monographs* meeting. The Working Group is interdisciplinary and comprises subgroups of experts in the fields of: (1) exposure characterization; (2) cancer in humans; (3) cancer in experimental animals; and (4) mechanistic evidence.

IARC selects Working Group Members on the basis of expertise related to the subject matter and relevant methodologies, and absence of conflicts of interest. Consideration is also given to diversity in scientific approaches and views, as well as demographic composition. Self-nominations and nomination of women and of candidates from low- and middle-income countries are particularly encouraged.

Nomination of Agents

For each new volume of the *IARC Monographs*, IARC selects the agents for review from those recommended by the most recent Advisory Group Report, considering the availability of pertinent research studies and current public health priorities. IARC encourages the general public, the scientific community, national health agencies, and other organizations to nominate agents for review in future *IARC Monographs* volumes.

If you would like to nominate an agent, please complete the online form (one agent per form) and the accompanying WHO Declaration of Interests.

Published in 2025

IARC Monographs

Perfluorooctanoic Acid (PFOA) and Perfluorooctanesulfonic Acid (PFOS)

February 2025: Volume 135

Available from:
https://publications.iarc.who.int/636

Talc and Acrylonitrile

June 2025: Volume 136

Advance publication of the monograph on Talc

Available from:
https://publications.iarc.who.int/646

The Lancet Oncology

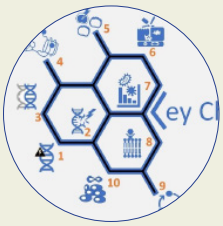
Karagas MR, Kaldor J, Michaelis M, Muchengeti MM, Alfaiate D, Argirion I, et al. (2025). Carcinogenicity of hepatitis D virus, human cytomegalovirus, and Merkel cell polyomavirus. *The Lancet Oncology*. Published online 27 June 2025. https://doi.org/10.1016/S1470-2045(25)00403-6

Turner MC, Godderis L, Guénel P, Hopf N, Quintanilla-Vega B, Coelho Soares-Lima SC, et al. (2025). Carcinogenicity of automotive gasoline and some oxygenated gasoline additives. *The Lancet Oncology*. 28(5):548–549. https://doi.org/10.1016/S1470-2045(25)00165-2

Report on Key Characteristics of Carcinogens Workshop

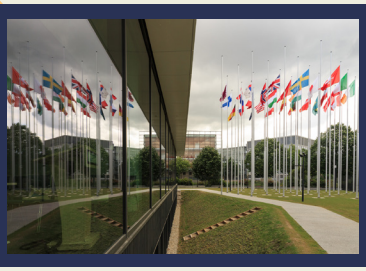
Commentary

DeMarini DM, Gwinn W, Watkins E, Reisfeld B, Chiu WA, Zeise L, et al. (2025). IARC Workshop on the key characteristics of carcinogens: assessment of end points for evaluating mechanistic evidence of carcinogenic hazards. *Environmental Health Perspectives*. 133(2):25001. https://ehp.niehs.nih.gov/doi/10.1289/EHP15389



KCs Report

IARC (2025). Key characteristics-associated endpoints for evaluating mechanistic evidence of carcinogenic hazards. *IARC Monographs* Technical Report. Lyon, France: International Agency for Research on Cancer. Available from: https://monographs.iarc.who.int/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/KCW-FINAL.pdf



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