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Biography

For many years my main research focus has been the molecular etiology of chronic inflammatory diseases in the gut and lung. My instigation is to go beyond the mere analysis of molecular mechanisms to derive new therapeutic principles and translate those principles into innovative therapies for this group of incurable diseases. The group has been the speaker institution of the National Genome Research Network (NGFN) and driven the German GWAS initiative that led to many seminal papers delineating molecular risk maps for human complex disorders, including Crohn's disease, periodontitis and sarcoidosis. The group commands a high throughput genotyping facility and is a partner in the PopGen biobank program with more than 70,000 patients in Schleswig-Holstein under long-term follow-up. An interdisciplinary treatment centre for longitudinal examinations of patients under experimental therapies was set up with the help of a DFG Cluster of Excellence "Inflammation at Interfaces".

I am also a director of the Clinic for Internal Medicine I at Kiel Campus of the University Hospital Schleswig-Holstein, which is an academic maximum-care medical centre in the fields of gastroenterology, pulmonology, endocrinology, rheumatology, adiposity, nutrition and ageing medicine. The hospital has a strong history as a leading partner in international multi-centre clinical trials in chronic inflammatory disease and is traditionally linked to basic science groups, especially in the field of genetics and genomics.

