Should Scientists Use Twitter? The Answer is YES!

simplyblood.org/2018/02/should-scientists-use-twitter-answer-is.html

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James Till, one of the preeminent pioneers of the hematopoietic stem cell field, is a staunch proponent of open-access publishing and sharing of science via social media, especially Twitter. When we interviewed him for this article, he stated, “A scientist can join Twitter in

Guidelines for effective Twitter usage

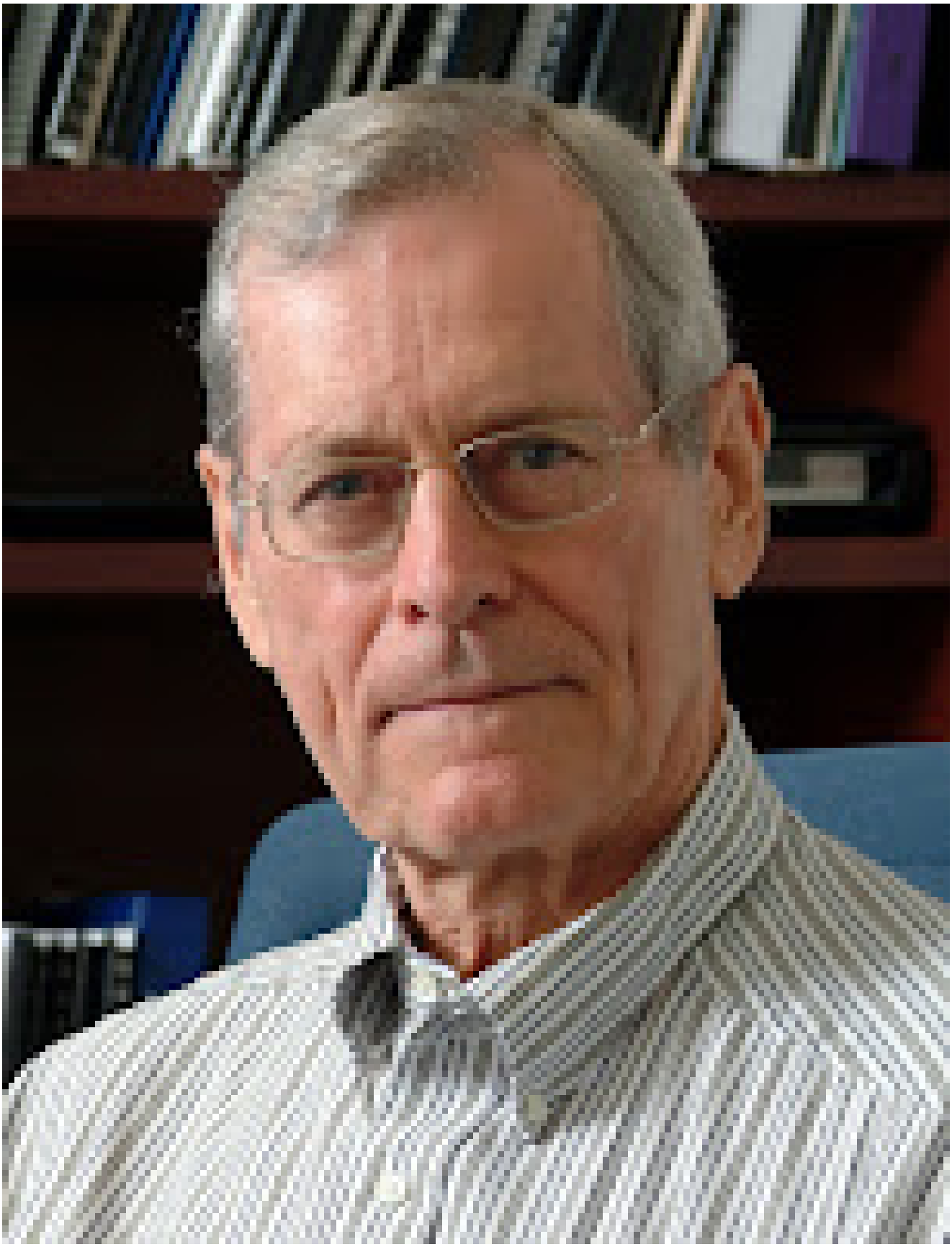
Twitter has been referred to as “microblogging." It is about sending short messages to the world. Twitter messages or posts have to be short and concise. In order to use Twitter you need to create an account, click the new tweet button on the top of your screen and compose a tweet that is up to 280 characters (Twitter increased the length of tweets in 2017). If you are using a link that will take space from your 280 characters, you should include a hashtag # so other users can find your tweet. There are many tutorials and advice articles online, but the easiest way is to set up an account and start using it. James Till published last December a very useful guide on how to find tweets about Cancer Stem Cells that can be applied to any topic. http://bit.ly/2q6GW9C

order to share information of common interest to others in the same field. Twitter is a useful source of information about recent contributions to the areas of Open Access and Regenerative Medicine.”

Twitter is the fastest and easiest platform to get news. As scientists, our time is always limited but we also have the need to stay updated on the literature, scientific events and even to give our personal opinion on scientific discoveries or legislation that affect science. Twitter is the perfect tool for this.

We use multiple social media platforms to spread the word about ISEH, including Twitter, which we use to follow our annual meeting and to highlight news and papers from our community, with a special focus to what is being published in our journal, *Experimental Hematology*. Keep an eye out for the Twitter abstracts from #ExpHem . This year one of our goals is to encourage more of the ISEH community to get engaged in using Twitter to promote science and the society. We will be tweeting about exciting scientific discoveries from the field, and news from the society **@ISEHSociety**. Be sure to follow our feed and retweet the content!

New to Twitter? This blog offers our opinions on why you should use Twitter and how best to avoid some of its pitfalls.



One key for successful Twitter use is to select who to follow and be careful not to overwhelm with too many topics. James Till suggests that “A scientist can join Twitter in order to share

information of common interest to others in the same field. However, one must be careful about how many people one follows, and who those people are. Following too many people can quickly lead to an overwhelming number of tweets being received.”

Here are some of our suggestions about who to follow:

Why should a scientist use Twitter?

Finding the right time and following the right crowd

Twitter is charge free and it can be a useful tool to stay connected as a society, so we invite you to give it a try!

@ISEHSociety
@JimTill
@leonard_zon
@Cancer_Cell
@rosslevinemd
@Hema_News
@cancerscnews

Twitter often gets a “bad rep” as a medium that is primarily used by celebrities and politicians. The truth is that Twitter is neither good nor bad per se; it depends on you and how you use it. We are facing challenging times where social media has been used to spread opinions as facts, and the results have been so damaging in many areas. As scientists we have the responsibility to help spread facts. We can use Twitter, as James Till does, to support open access and scientific transparency. We can also use it to let the society know about our findings or ask for their support to fight for grant money or better conditions for our students. Twitter can also be a great way to raise awareness about the research you are doing, and form communities of scientists, physicians and even patients that may otherwise not have interacted. For example, the rare hematological malignancy Blastic Plasmacytoid Dendritic Cell Neoplasm is regularly used after scientists started promoting the hashtag #BPDCN (https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/29064025).

Think Twitter will take up too much of your already limited time? It really doesn’t have to. You can use Twitter at your own time and as often as you want to. Kena uses Twitter at evenings, as she stated “most of my posts are during evenings, once my kids are in bed and I am relaxing with a cup of tea, I grab my smartphone and read the “news”. It is my hobby/relaxation/work.” Peter uses Twitter in a similar way: “Keeping up with scientific progress is always a challenge. Twitter provides another, more relaxing avenue to get updates from journals and fellow scientists. Your timeline can also be mixed with news sources and hobbies, making it more suitable for downtime than searching Pubmed.” Konstantinos is new in Twitter and finds it "a concise way to daily keep up not only with science-related news but also sports and politics."

James Till added, “I'm retired, so Twitter is one of my retirement projects. My main challenge is to identify information that seems sufficiently interesting to merit a post.” Overall, Twitter is actually quite an efficient way to stay abreast of important science news, as long as you follow some good guidelines and avoid pitfalls.

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