LA JOLLA, CA March 31, 1989 -- Scientists at the Research Institute of Scripps Clinic (RISC) have been awarded $13 million from the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute to investigate the formation and breakdown of blood clots in the human circulation.

The grant is a five-year renewal of a research program which began in 1984, and is the largest NIH grant ever received by the Research Institute for studies in this field, according to the study's principal investigator John H. Griffin, Ph.D., of the RISC Department of Immunology.

"A decade ago," Griffin explained, "many scientists and physicians did not think blood clots were particularly important factors in heart attacks. Now, of course, there is no longer any doubt about the harmful role of clots; many lives are being saved by dissolving clots and preventing them from recurring in coronary patients."

Griffin added that "we believe these treatments could be made even safer and more effective if more is known about
thrombosis. That is the purpose of our basic research program."

RISC is part of Scripps Clinic and Research Foundation, the largest private, biomedical institute in the United States, dedicated to patient care, biomedical research and continuing medical education.

The new $13 million grant will support the work of seven separate laboratories, each investigating a particular aspect of thrombosis, or the clotting process. The common goal of these projects will be to gain greater insight into the molecular events involved in thrombosis, including the regulation of clot formation and breakdown, the interaction of clotting proteins with one another and with blood platelets, and the effects of blood pressure, flow-rate, and turbulence on clotting.

Based on this knowledge, the RISC investigators hope to design new tests and strategies for detecting and controlling blood clots in both normal individuals and in patients with cardiovascular disease.

In addition to Griffin, the project leaders include Carol Fulcher, Ph.D., Mark H. Ginsberg, M.D., Stephen R. Hanson, Ph.D., Laurence A. Harker, M.D., Richard Houghten, Ph.D., David J. Luskutoff, Ph.D., and Zaverio M. Ruggeri, M.D.

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