Research for public health
The Istituto Superiore di Sanità is the leading technical and scientific body of the Italian National Health Service. Its activities include research, clinical trials, control and training in public health; it also serves as a major national clearing-house for technical and scientific information on public health issues.

The Institute is involved in collaboration and consultation with other institutions responsible for public health, including the Ministry of Health, regional health authorities, local health agencies and hospitals. It cooperates with those responsible for the design and implementation of health and scientific programmes at local and national level and also plays a leading role in several major international research projects.
Research and Trial

The Institute conducts scientific research in a wide variety of fields, from cutting-edge molecular and genetic research to population-based studies of risk factors for disease and disability. Research priorities are based on those set forth in the National Health Plan. The Institute is also involved in several major clinical trials, which are frequently conducted in cooperation with the Scientific Institutes for Research and Care (IRCCS) network and Hospitals.
Inspection, Monitoring and Certification

An important activity of the Institute, which is mandated by the Minister of Health or the Regions, is certification of the chemical and biological purity of drugs and vaccines, as well as the inspection and quality control of medical and diagnostic devices and equipment, food products and packaging. The Institute monitors trends in disease, mortality and other health factors and provides technical support for health-related environmental surveys and for investigations of epidemics and other public health problems at national, regional and local level. It also supervises the laboratories engaged in the testing of prohibited substances in sport and the national veterinary institutes. Finally, it has an important role in monitoring and coordinating blood transfusion services and plasma production in Italy.
Documentation, Information and Publications

The Institute serves as a major source of information relating to public health and biomedicine in Italy through online connections to national and international scientific databases and data banks. It also serves as the national reference centre for MEDLARS (MEDical Literature Analysis and Retrieval System), a comprehensive international data bank coordinated by the US National Library of Medicine (NLM).

The Institute produces numerous publications, including a quarterly peer-reviewed journal (Annali), a monthly newsletter describing major research activities and services (Notiziario), and different series of technical reports.
Training and Scientific Meetings

The Institute plans, develops and organises courses on health education and training activities in the field of public health for the personnel of the National Health Service (NHS), with particular respect to the educational objectives set by the Ministry of Health through the Continuing Medical Education (CEM) project. It develops and tests innovative training methods particularly in the area of web-based distance learning. The topics addressed include: health service management and evaluation of health services, epidemiology and biostatistics, health economics, management of human resources, instructional methods for training of trainers; health promotion.

The Institute also organises congresses, conferences, workshops and seminars on important public health issues addressed to a wide national and international audience.
International Activities

The Institute plans, implements and evaluates international public health projects, ranging from collaborations on research and development projects to humanitarian assistance. It actively promotes cooperation at three different levels: scientific partnerships with industrialised countries, scientific and development projects in partnership with economies in transition, development partnerships in Africa and with countries suffering natural emergencies or war situations. Current projects relate to the following fields: HIV/AIDS control and poverty-related diseases; capacity-building for central health administrations; technology transfer in public health management; technical support for national public health authorities, particularly within the context of health care reform; application of telematics to health issues.
Department

Cell Biology and Neurosciences

Director: Filippo Belardelli
Tel: +39 064990 3290
E-mail: filippo.belardelli@iss.it

Mission
To study genetic, endocrine-metabolic and neurological diseases - with a special focus on rare diseases - and new immunotherapies

Units
Behavioural neurosciences
Biochemistry
Degenerative and inflammatory neurological diseases
Experimental immunotherapy
Free radical pathophysiology
Gene and cell therapy
Immunoregulation
Metabolism and molecular and cellular endocrinology
Molecular and cellular imaging
Molecular neurobiology
Rare diseases
Environment and Primary Prevention

Director: Luciana Gramiccioni
Tel: +39 064990 3340-1
E-mail: luciana.gramiccioni@iss.it

Mission

To protect the human population through the definition and control of types and sources of chemical and biological risks, especially of environmental origin (water, air, soil)

Units

Air hygiene
Bioelements and health
Dangerous substances and preparations
Environment and trauma
Environmental epidemiology
Experimental and computational carcinogenesis
Exposure and risk from materials
Fish farm and environmental quality
Genetic toxicology
Indoor environmental hygiene
Inland water hygiene
Mechanisms of toxicity
Molecular epidemiology
Pesticide
Quality of aquatic environments and bathing waters
Soil and waste
Toxicological chemistry
Food Safety and Veterinary Public Health

Director: Agostino Macrì
Tel: +39 064990 2330
E-mail: agostino.macri@iss.it

Mission
To protect human health and welfare through the development of knowledge, tools and strategies for preventing and controlling animal diseases and improving food safety

Units
Chemical risk in the chain of production and control quality
Control of bacterial zoonoses and animal hygiene
Food science human nutrition and health
Foodborne zoonoses and veterinary epidemiology
Transmissible spongiform encephalopathies and emerging infectious diseases of animals
Haematology, Oncology and Molecular Medicine

Director: Cesare Peschle
Tel: +39 064990 3393
E-mail: cesare.peschle@iss.it

Mission
To study the molecular and cellular mechanisms underlying diseases in the haematological, oncological, cardiovascular and genetic areas.
To develop new therapies for haematological, oncological and other molecular-based diseases with particular focus on conditions of significant public health impact.
To evaluate the safety and efficacy of innovative drugs for clinical use in the aforementioned areas

Units
Clinical biochemistry and molecular biology
Hemoglobinopathies and hematopoiesis
Lipids and arteriosclerosis
Medical oncology
Molecular oncology
Oncological and hematological biotechnologies
Physiopathology of genetic diseases
Physiopathology of renal diseases and correlated pathologies
Stem cells and endothelium
Tranfusion methodologies
Infectious, Parasitic and Immune-Mediated Diseases

Director: Antonio Cassone
Tel: +39 064938 3332
E-mail: antonio.cassone@iss.it

Mission
To protect the human population from diseases caused by pathogenic micro-organisms, viruses and parasites, and to study the mechanisms of immune-mediated diseases

Units
Anti-infectious immunity
Bacterial vaccines
Biologicals
Epidemiology
Gastroenteric and neurologic bacterial diseases
Gastroenteric and tissue parasitic diseases
Immune-mediated diseases
Molecular pathogenesis
Respiratory and systemic bacterial diseases
Superficial and systemic mycoses
Vector-borne diseases and international health
Viral diseases and inactivated viral vaccines
Viral diseases and live attenuated viral vaccines
Viral hepatitis
Department

Technology and Health

Director: Giovanni Alfredo Zapponi
Tel: +39 064990 2915-2231
E-mail: alfredo.zapponi@iss.it

Mission
To develop and assess new biomedical techniques and to apply procedures, methods and tools for the improvement of public health

Units
Biomaterials and biosystems
Biomechanics and rehabilitation technologies
Biomedical technology assessment and quality
Cardiovascular bioengineering
Complex systems
Ionising radiation biophysics and biomedical physics
Non ionizing radiation
Nuclear physics and technology for health
Radiation dosimetry and radiation induced defects
Radioactivity and its health effects
Ultrastructural infectious pathology
Ultrastructural methods for innovative anticancer therapies
Ultrastructure of pollutants and materials
Department

Therapeutic Research and Medicines Evaluation

Director: Stefano Vella
Tel: +39 064990 3229-3230
E-mail: stefano.vella@iss.it

Mission
To contribute to public health by controlling the quality, efficacy and safety of drugs and through research into new drugs and treatments for human diseases

Units
Biochemical pharmacology and technical-scientific advice coordination unit
Cell aging and degeneration
Central nervous system pharmacology
Clinic research
Complementary, natural and traditional medicine. Cosmetic products safety
Drug dependence and doping
Drugs and health for the child and the woman
Molecular and cellular pharmacology
Pharmacogenetics, drug resistance and experimental therapeutics
Pharmacology and therapy of viral diseases
Pharmacopoeia and drug quality
Pre-clinical pharmacology
Quality of chemical drugs
National AIDs Centre

Director: Barbara Ensoli
Tel: +39 064990 3207-3209
E-mail: barbara.ensoli@iss.it

Mission
Fight against HIV/AIDS and associated syndromes through the development of vaccines and innovative therapeutic approaches

Units
Clinical trials (immunology and virology core-lab)
Experimental retrovirology and non-human primate models (virology core-lab)
Pathogenesis and retroviruses
Retrovirus infections in developing countries
Virus-host interaction (immunology core-lab)
National Centre

National Centre for Epidemiology, Surveillance and Health Promotion

Director: Stefania Salmaso
Tel: +39 064990 4010
E-mail: stefania.salmaso@iss.it

Mission
To develop and apply epidemiological and biostatistical methods to monitor and protect human health and to evaluate health services

Units
Bureau of statistics
Cancer epidemiology
Clinical epidemiology and guidelines
Communicable disease epidemiology
Epidemiology of cerebro and cardiovascular disease
Genetic epidemiology
Mental health
Pharmacoepidemiology
Population health and health determinants
Woman, child and adolescent health
National Centre

National Centre for Food Quality and Risk Assessment

Director: Paolo Aureli
Tel: +39 064990 3420-3419
E-mail: paolo.aureli@iss.it

Mission
To ensure food safety and nutritional value.
To evaluate the risk of adverse health effects due to contaminated food
and to provide information to the public on food, food safety and nutrition

Units
Additives, flavouring, dyes and food quality
Chemical contaminants
Dietetics
GMOs and mycotoxins
Microbiological foodborne hazards
Nutrition
Relations with the European Community and public health
National Centre

National Transplant Centre

Director: Alessandro Nanni Costa
Tel: +39 064990 4040
E-mail: cnt@iss.it

Mission
To organise and manage the activities of organ donation, procurement and transplants throughout Italy

Areas
Organisation, communication and institutional relationships
Statistical analysis and survival reporting
Transplant activity management
Transplant information system
Technical Service

Service for Biotechnology and Animal Welfare

Director: Rodolfo Lorenzini
Tel: +39 064990 2844
E-mail: rodolfo.lorenzini@iss.it

Mission
To produce, manage and preserve microbiological cultures for experimental purposes.
To monitor the housing, health and welfare of the animals used by the Institute for research purposes

Sectors
Biotechnology
Quality and safety of animal testing
Data Management, Documentation, Library and Publishing Activities

Director: Claudio Di Benedetto
Tel: +39 064990 3372
E-mail: claudio.dibenedetto@iss.it

Mission
To support institutional activities through:
collection, processing and automation
of health and technical-scientific data;
management of database consultation systems;
provision of library and information services;
editing, printing, and dissemination of the Institute’s publications

Sectors
Data management
Documentation service
Library
Publishing activities
Governing Bodies
President: Enrico Garaci
Director General: Silvio Natoli
Board of Directors
Scientific Committee
Board of Auditors

Office of the President
Secretariat of the President
Technical Secretariat
External Relations
Corporate Bodies
Press Office
Evaluation and Strategic Control Service

Departments
Cell Biology and Neurosciences
Environment and Primary Prevention
Food Safety and Veterinary Public Health
Haematology, Oncology and Molecular Medicine
Infectious, Parasitic and Immuno-Mediated Diseases
Technology and Health
Therapeutic Research and Medicines Evaluation

National Centres
National AIDS Centre
National Centre for Epidemiology, Surveillance and Health Promotion
National Centre for Food Quality and Risk Assessment
National Transplant Centre

Technical-Scientific Services
Biotechnology and Animal Welfare
Data Management, Documentation, Library and Publishing Activities
Office of the Director-General
Secretariat of the Director-General

Central Directorate
Human Resources and General Affairs

Legal Affairs
General Affairs, Trade Union Relations and Internal Services
Personnel Management: Regulations and Disciplinary Measures
Personnel Management: Remuneration, Welfare and Pensions
Personnel: Training
Personnel: Recruitment and Grants
Personnel: Organization

Central Directorate
Administrative Affairs and Financial Resources

Accounts and Budget
Management Planning and Control
Tax Affairs
Contracts, Ordinary Services and Expenses
Patents, Foreign Contracts, Consortia, Foundation, Company Holdings, Outsourcing
Data Processing
Administrative Affairs and Public Relations
Building and Equipment Maintenance

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