Breaking Advances

Highlights from Recent Cancer Literature

Reviews

Tumor–Stroma Interaction: Revealing Fibroblast-Secreted Exosomes as Potent Regulators of Wnt-Planar Cell Polarity Signaling in Cancer Metastasis
Valbona Luga and Jeffrey L. Wrana

The Role of Polo-like Kinase 1 in Carcinogenesis: Cause or Consequence?
Brian D. Chołewa, Xiaoqi Liu, and Nihal Ahmad

Priority Report

D538G Mutation in Estrogen Receptor-α: A Novel Mechanism for Acquired Endocrine Resistance in Breast Cancer
Keren Merenbaum-Lamin, Noa Ben-Baruch, Adva Yeheskel, Addie Dvir, Lior Soussan-Gutman, Rinath Jeselsohn, Roman Yelensky, Myles Brown, Vincent A. Miller, David Sarid, Shulamith Rizel, Baruch Klein, Tami Rubinek, and Ido Wolf

Precis: The identification of a novel mechanism of acquired endocrine resistance in metastatic breast cancer suggests a novel druggable target in this setting.

Integrated Systems and Technologies

Free Somatostatin Receptor Fraction Predicts the Antiproliferative Effect of Octreotide in a Neuroendocrine Tumor Model: Implications for Dose Optimization
Pedram Heidari, Eric Wehrenberg-Klee, Peiman Habibollahi, Daniel Yokell, Matthew Kulke, and Umar Mahmood

Precis: A novel noninvasive imaging method may be clinically useful to optimize the individualized dose of a drug used to treat neuroendocrine tumors, providing a basis for personalized, risk-tailored therapy.

Microenvironment and Immunology

A Novel Model of Dormancy for Bone Metastatic Breast Cancer Cells
Rebecca Marlow, Gabriella Honeth, Sara Lombardi, Massimiliano Cariati, Sonya Hessey, Alkaterini Pipili, Veronica Mariotti, Bharath Buchupalli, Katie Foster, Dominique Bonnet, Agamemnon Grigoriadis, Pranela Rameshwar, Anand Purushotham, Andrew Tutt, and Gabriela Dontu

Precis: This study presents novel experimental systems for investigating cancer cell dormancy, a phenomenon of high clinical relevance that is largely under-investigated due to lack of appropriate models.

Therapeutic PD-1 Pathway Blockade Augments with Other Modalities of Immunotherapy T-Cell Function to Prevent Immune Decline in Ovarian Cancer
Jaikumar Duraiswamy, Gordon J. Freeman, and George Coukos

Precis: Immune escape, a core hallmark of advanced cancer, can be reversed by strategies that block a central pathway of T-cell exhaustion activated in the microenvironment of many solid tumors.

Senescent Fibroblasts in Melanoma Initiation and Progression: An Integrated Theoretical, Experimental, and Clinical Approach
Eunjung Kim, Vito Rebecchi, Inna V. Fedorenko, Jane L. Messina, Rahel Mathew, Silvia S. Marta-Engles, David Basanta, Keiran S.M. Smalley, and Alexander R.A. Anderson

Precis: These findings developed by in silico modeling reinforce an alternative perspective on cancer, in which senescent fibroblasts create the core conditions required to license the ability of cancer cell mutations to promote malignancy, reinforcing a greater therapeutic focus on the tumor microenvironment as a cause of cancer.

Contents
Low PIP4K2B Expression in Human Breast Tumors Correlates with Reduced Patient Survival: A Role for PIP4K2B in the Regulation of E-Cadherin Expression

Précis: An enzyme that regulates second messengers in lipid signaling impacts the survival of breast cancer patients by modifying a pivotal tumor suppressor function.

Skin Tumorigenesis Stimulated by Raf Inhibitors Relies Upon Raf Functions That Are Dependent and Independent of ERK

Précis: Provocative preclinical results suggest that B-Raf inhibitors being used currently in the clinic to treat melanoma may not only trigger development of cutaneous skin tumors, a known side effect, but also gastric tumors, which are far less manageable.

TRAF4 Is a Critical Molecule for Akt Activation in Lung Cancer

Précis: These findings reveal a pivotal role for a ubiquitination enzyme in Akt control and lung cancer pathophysiology, suggesting its role as a candidate molecular target for lung cancer prevention and therapy.

SHON Is a Novel Estrogen-Regulated Oncogene in Mammary Carcinoma That Predicts Patient Response to Endocrine Therapy

Précis: These findings identify a human oncogene that may serve as a simple biomarker to predict the therapeutic efficacy of antiestrogen therapy in ER+ breast tumors.

Androgen Glucuronidation: An Unexpected Target for Androgen Deprivation Therapy, with Prognosis and Diagnostic Implications

Précis: These findings reveal a local pathway of androgen metabolism in prostate cells that can antagonize the effects of androgen deprivation therapy in prostate cancer.

miRNA-95 Mediates Radioresistance in Tumors by Targeting the Sphingolipid Phosphatase SGPP1

Précis: This seminal report identifies a little-studied microRNA as a major mediator of radiation resistance in tumors, also showing how resistance can be reversed with a clinically approved inhibitor of sphingosine-1-phosphate signaling.

Supramolecular Nanoparticles That Target Phosphoinositide-3-Kinase Overcome Insulin Resistance and Exert Pronounced Antitumor Efficacy

Précis: This study provides a preclinical foundation for the use of supramolecular nanochemistry to overcome current challenges associated with PI3K inhibitors and also offers a more general paradigm for the development of molecular targeted therapeutics for cancer treatment.

Contribution of Bcl-2 Phosphorylation to Bak Binding and Drug Resistance

Précis: These findings offer a mechanistic basis to understand the enhanced antiapoptotic activity of phosphorylated Bcl-2, along with the ability of BH3 mimetics to enhance cancer cell sensitivity to taxanes.
Carbon Monoxide Expedites Metabolic Exhaustion to Inhibit Tumor Growth
Barbara Wegiel, David Gallo, Eva Czismadia, Clair Harris, John Belcher,
Gregory M. Vercellotti, Nuno Penacho, Pankaj Seth, Vikas Sukhatme, Asif Ahmed,
Pier Paolo Pandolfi, Leszek Helczynski, Anders Bjartell, Jenny Liao Persson, and
Leo E. Otterbein
Précis: Clinical trials of carbon monoxide that are being conducted as a strategy for chemosensitization may benefit from mechanistic insights into CO-induced cancer cell death provided in this study.

The HSP90 Inhibitor Ganetespib Synergizes with the MET Kinase Inhibitor Crizotinib in both Crizotinib-Sensitive and -Resistant MET-Driven Tumor Models
Naoto Miyajima, Shinji Tsutsumi, Carole Sourbier, Kristin Beebe, Mehdi Mollapour, Candy Rivas, Soichiro Yoshida, Jane B. Trepel, Ying Huang, Manabu Tatokoro, Nobuo Shinohara, Katsuya Nonomura, and Len Neckers
Précis: Hsp90 inhibition synergizes with MET tyrosine kinase inhibition and restores sensitivity to drug-resistant MET mutants.

PTEN Loss Mitigates the Response of Medulloblastoma to Hedgehog Pathway Inhibition
Précis: This study offers new insights into the potential efficacy of Hedgehog pathway inhibitors being tested clinically against a common pediatric cancer.

Antitumor Activity of the Selective Pan-RAF Inhibitor TAK-632 in BRAF Inhibitor-Resistant Melanoma
Akito Nakamura, Takeo Arita, Shuntarou Tsuchiya, Jill Donelan, Jouharah Chouitari, Elizabeth Carideo, Katherine Galvin, Masanori Okaniwa, Tomoyasu Ishikawa, and Sei Yoshida
Précis: This pan-RAF inhibitor may offer needed therapeutic options for patients with NRAS- or BRAF-driven melanomas that are refractory to BRAF inhibitor treatment.
In Vivo MAPK Reporting Reveals the Heterogeneity in Tumoral Selection of Resistance to RAF Inhibitors
Kevin J. Basile, Ethan V. Abel, Neda Dadpey, Edward J. Hartsough, Paolo Fortina, and Andrew E. Aplin

Précis: This article describes a novel in vivo system for noninvasive evaluation of a kinase-mediated mechanism of acquired resistance to BRAF-targeting drugs, an area of present clinical challenge for treating metastatic melanoma.

Neuropilin-2 Is Upregulated in Lung Cancer Cells during TGF-β1–Induced Epithelial–Mesenchymal Transition
Patrick Nasarre, Robert M. Gemmill, Vincent A. Potiron, Joëlle Roche, Xian Lu, Anna E. Barón, Christopher Korch, Elizabeth Garrett-Mayer, Alessandro Lagana, Philip H. Howe, and Harry A. Drabkin

Précis: These findings provide insights into how TGF-β1 mediates invasion and tumorigenesis and identify a novel therapeutic target that may prevent or reverse EMT associated with metastatic progression.

BCCIP Suppresses Tumor Initiation but Is Required for Tumor Progression
Yi-Yuan Huang, Li Dai, Dakim Gaines, Roberto Droz-Rosario, Huimei Lu, Jingmei Liu, and Zhiyuan Shen

Précis: This study describes a paradoxical tumor suppressor that can also promote cancer progression, serving as a prototype for a class of suppressors that does not need to be permanently inactivated to trigger tumorigenesis.

Molecular Profiling of Tumor Cells in Cerebrospinal Fluid and Matched Primary Tumors from Metastatic Breast Cancer Patients with Leptomeningeal Carcinomatosis
Mark Jesus M. Magbanua, Michelle Melisko, Ritu Roy, Eduardo V. Sosa, Louai Hauranieh, Andrea Kablanian, Lauren E. Eisenbud, Artem Byzantsev, Alfred Au, Janet H. Scott, and John W. Park

Précis: This study describes a method for molecular analysis of tumor cells isolated from cerebrospinal fluid, shedding light on their molecular characteristics and suggesting candidate biomarkers and therapeutic targets relevant to metastatic spread in the central nervous system.

Benefits of Vascular Normalization Are Dose and Time Dependent—Letter
Yuhui Huang, Triantafyllos Stylianopoulos, Dan G. Duda, Dai Fukumura, and Rakesh K. Jain

Bevacizumab-Induced Vessel Normalization Hampers Tumor Uptake of Antibodies—Response
Marlous Arjaans, Sjoukje F. Oosting, Carolina P. Schröder, and Elisabeth G.E. de Vries

ABOUT THE COVER
Carbon monoxide (CO) at therapeutic concentrations induces growth arrest of lung and prostate cancer cell lines and tumors. CO is generated endogenously as a bioactive signaling molecule by the cytoprotective gene heme oxygenase-1 (HO-1). In cancer cells, HO-1 activity, and thus endogenous CO levels, is decreased and can be rescued by delivery of exogenous CO. Astonishingly, CO sensitizes cancer cells to chemotherapeutic agents while simultaneously protecting normal cells from genotoxin-induced cell death. The mechanism of CO involves its propensity to bind to heme-containing oxidases in mitochondria. Shown here are prostate cancer cells (PC3) exposed to CO in the presence of the genotoxin doxorubicin, which resulted in a dramatic shift in mitochondrial membrane potential and metabolic collapse driven by an anti-Warburg effect. Using MitoTracker Red CMXRos staining (red), which fluoresces when a cell is actively respiring, Wegiel and colleagues observed that CO decreased respiration and mitochondrial membrane potential, indicative of mitochondrial failure. Nuclei were stained with Hoechst (blue). For details, see article by Wegiel and colleagues on page 7009.