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In Response: Although important, the tumors' chromosomal instability/microsatellite instability (MSI) characterization suggested by Speetjens and Kuppen was beyond the scope of our study. Our primary goal was to investigate (through an immunologic perspective) the reasons why some of the patients diagnosed with primary colorectal cancer (CRC) experience concomitant lymph node or distant metastases (1). We indeed uncovered distinct immunologic functional patterns that could account for the differences in the metastatic status of the patients.

MSI-H tumors account for ~17% (median) of CRCs (2). In an earlier study, we showed that a majority (50%) of the CRCs have high levels of T-cell infiltrates (3). Although it is very much possible that some of these CRCs with high levels of T-cell infiltrates are MSI-H, they could not have been the majority of the tumors. Nonetheless, we agree with Speetjens and Kuppen that the CpG island methylator phenotype and MSI states of the tumors (among others) may also be important factors involved in host-immune reaction. In the future, we intend to integrate the tumor's CpG island methylator phenotype/MSI status with other variables related to the tumor and its microenvironment to decipher the complex dialogue between the tumor and the host that shapes the immune response.

Matthieu Camus
Franck Pagès
Jérôme Galon
Integrative Cancer Immunology
INSERM AVENIR Team 15,
INSERM U872,
Paris, France

Disclosure of Potential Conflicts of Interest

No potential conflicts of interest were disclosed.

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Matthieu Camus, Franck Pagès and Jérôme Galon

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