Highlights from Recent Cancer Literature

Releasing Pressure in Tumors: What Do We Know So Far and Where Do We Go from Here? A Review

Chemotherapeutic Targeting of Cancer-Induced Immunosuppressive Cells

BCR-ABL-Induced Deregulation of the IL-33/ST2 Pathway in CD34(+) Progenitors from Chronic Myeloid Leukemia Patients

CHD7 Expression Predicts Survival Outcomes in Patients with Resected Pancreatic Cancer

Distinguishing between Benign and Malignant Melanocytic Nevi by In Vivo Multiphoton Microscopy

Cancer Stem-like Cells Derived from Chemoresistant Tumors Have a Unique Capacity to Prime Tumorigenic Myeloid Cells

Elimination of IL-10–Inducing T-Helper Epitopes from an IGFBP-2 Vaccine Ensures Potent Antitumor Activity

Human Rhomboid Family-1 Suppresses Oxygen-Independent Degradation of Hypoxia-Inducible Factor-1α in Breast Cancer

These findings support a role for the IL-33/ST2 alarmin pathway in CML maintenance and therapeutic resistance, suggesting a tractable route to degrade resistance and extend survival in relapsed patients.

Selection of particular portions of a tumor antigen that can stimulate T cells without generating immunosuppressive responses provides a capability to design vaccines displaying a more effective antitumor response.

A rationale-driven strategy and drug sensitivity screen identified a novel candidate biomarker that may be clinically useful to better individualize treatment of patients with pancreatic cancer.
2731  Tumor Endothelial Markers Define Novel Subsets of Cancer-Specific Circulating Endothelial Cells Associated with Antitumor Efficacy
Reza Mehran, Monique Nilsson, Mehrdad Khajavi, Zhiqiang Du, Tina Caxone, Hua Kang Wu, Andrea Cortes, Li Xu, Amado Zurita, Robert Schier, Bernhard Riedel, Randa El-Zein, and John V. Heymach

Précis: This report describes a blood-based surrogate marker to assess the presence of tumor vasculature and antiangiogenic drug activity.

2742  Biallelic DICER1 Mutations in Sporadic Pleuropulmonary Blastoma
Masafumi Seki, Kenichi Yoshida, Yuichi Shiraishi, Tepppei Shimamura, Yusuke Sato, Riki Nishimura, Yusuke Okuno, Kenichi Chiba, Hiroko Tanaka, Keisuke Kato, Motohiro Kato, Ryuji Hanada, Yuko Nomura, Myoung-Ja Park, Toshiaki Ishida, Akira Oka, Takashi Igarashi, Satoru Miyano, Yasuhide Hayashi, Seishi Ogawa, and Junko Takita

Précis: A rare pediatric tumor with poorly understood pathogenesis is found to be characterized by nearly universal biallelic mutations in the microRNA processing enzyme DICER1, with an obligatory somatic RNase IIIb domain mutation, along with less frequent but still common mutations in p53.

2750  HNRNPAB Induces Epithelial–Mesenchymal Transition and Promotes Metastasis of Hepatocellular Carcinoma by Transcriptionally Activating SNAIL
Zheng-Jun Zhou, Zhi Dai, Shao-Lai Zhou, Zhi-Qiang Hu, Qing Chen, Yi-Ming Zhao, Ying-Hong Shi, Qiang Gao, Wei-Zhong Wu, Shuang-Jian Qiu, Jian Zhou, and Jia Fan

Précis: Overexpression of a ribonuclear protein that transcriptionally activates the EMT regulator Snail confers metastatic properties and poor prognosis in liver cancer, a pathway that may have broader relevance in human cancer.

2763  NF-κB Gene Signature Predicts Prostate Cancer Progression
Renjie Jin, Yajun Yi, Fiona E. Yull, Timothy S. Blackwell, Peter E. Clark, Tatsuki Koyama, Joseph A. Smith Jr, and Robert J. Matusik

Précis: An expression signature generated in an NF-κB-activated mouse model of prostatic hyperplasia successfully predicts disease-specific survival and distant metastasis-free survival in prostate cancer patients.

2773  BRCA1 Deficiency Exacerbates Estrogen-Induced DNA Damage and Genomic Instability

Précis: This study provides pivotal new insights into the long-standing question of why BRCA1 mutation drives the formation of estrogen-regulated tissues, despite the general role of BRCA1 in DNA repair in all cell types, with implications for how to prevent breast cancer in BRCA1 carriers.

2785  CLPTM1L Promotes Growth and Enhances Aneuploidy in Pancreatic Cancer Cells

Précis: A gene that lies at human chromosome 5p15.33 and harbors germline risk variants for multiple cancers is a plausible candidate for an important pancreatic cancer susceptibility allele.
Sphingosine Kinase 2 Promotes Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia by Enhancing MYC Expression
Craig T. Wallington-Beddoe, Jason A. Powell, Daochen Tong, Stuart M. Pitson, Kenneth F. Bradstock, and Linda J. Bendall

Précis: This study offers a tractable approach to target MYC expression in human cancer where it may be a universal therapeutic target, addressing the long-standing but mainly intractable problem of how to selectively block MYC function in the disease setting.

Transient Antiangiogenic Treatment Improves Delivery of Cytotoxic Compounds and Therapeutic Outcome in Lung Cancer
Sampurna Chatterjee, Caroline Wieczorek, Jakob Schottle, Maike Siobal, Yvonne Hinze, Thomas Franz, Alexandra Florin, Joanna Adamczak, Lukas C. Heukamp, Bernd Neumaier, and Roland T. Ullrich

Précis: These findings offer compelling preclinical evidence that short-term antiangiogenic therapy can promote a transient normalization of tumor vessels that improves the delivery and efficacy of cytotoxic drugs, with clinical implications for how to properly schedule the most effective use of antiangiogenic drugs in patients.

EGFR-Mediated Chromatin Condensation Protects KRAS-Mutant Cancer Cells against Ionizing Radiation
Meng Wang, Ashley M. Kern, Marieke Huiskötter, Patricia Greminger, Anurag Singh, Yunfeng Pan, Dipanjan Chowdhury, Mechthild Krause, Michael Baumann, Cyril H. Benes, Jason A. Efstathiou, Jeff Settleman, and Henning Willers

Précis: These findings challenge a paradigm for understanding the resistance of KRAS-mutant cancers to EGFR inhibitors, with implications for treating lung cancer in particular.

ATR Pathway Inhibition Is Synthetically Lethal in Cancer Cells with ERCC1 Deficiency
Kareem N. Mohni, Gina M. Kavanaugh, and David Cortez

Précis: Drugs that target the ATR pathway of DNA damage repair may offer particular utility in cancers with reduced ATR pathway function or reduced levels of ERCC4 activity, with implications for treatment of a broad array of aggressive tumors such as triple-negative breast cancers and lung cancers.

Rapamycin Rescues ABT-737 Efficacy in Small Cell Lung Cancer
Eric E. Gardner, Nick Connis, John T. Poirier, Leslie Cope, Irina Dobromilskaya, Gary L. Gallia, Charles M. Rudin, and Christine L. Hann

Précis: This work provides support for rational combination therapy with mTOR and Bcl-2 inhibitors for the treatment of small-cell lung cancer.

Differential Effects of RUNX2 on the Androgen Receptor in Prostate Cancer: Synergistic Stimulation of a Gene Set Exemplified by SNAI2 and Subsequent Invasiveness
Gillian H. Little, Sanjeev K. Baniwal, Helty Adisetiyo, Susan Groszen, Nyam-Osor Chimge, Sun Young Kim, Omar Khalid, Debra Hawes, Jeremy O. Jones, Jacek Pinski, Dustin E. Schones, and Baruch Frenkel

Précis: A prostate cancer–associated transcription factor known to inhibit androgen-dependent gene expression was found to activate certain genes that drive invasion, with implications for prognosis and individualized therapy.

Endothelial Cell-Secreted EGF Induces Epithelial to Mesenchymal Transition and Endows Head and Neck Cancer Cells with Stem-like Phenotype
Zhaocheng Zhang, Zhihong Dong, Isabel S. Lauxen, Manoel Sant’Ana Filho, and Jacques E. Nör

Précis: These findings suggest that vascular endothelial cells contribute to dissemination of carcinomas by secreting factors that endow carcinoma cells with enhanced motility and stemness.

KLF5 Regulates the Integrity and Oncogenicity of Intestinal Stem Cells
Takeo Nakaya, Seishi Ogawa, Ichiro Manabe, Masami Tanaka, Masashi Sanada, Toshiro Sato, Makoto M. Takeo, Kazuki Nakao, Hans Clevers, Masashi Fukayama, Masahiko Kuroda, and Ryozo Nagai

Précis: This study offers a genetic proof of concept in the mouse that the stem cell integrity gene KLF5 acts as a core regulator of intestinal oncogenesis at the stem cell level, and it further suggests KLF5 targeting may offer a therapeutic strategy to eradicate stem-like cells in colorectal cancer.
A Meta-analysis of Lung Cancer Gene Expression Identifies PTK7 as a Survival Gene in Lung Adenocarcinoma

Ron Chen, Purvesh Khatri, Pawel K. Mazur, Melanie Polin, Yanyan Zheng, Dedeepya Vaka, Chuong D. Hoang, Joseph Shrager, Yue Xu, Silvestre Vicent, Atul J. Butte, and E. Alejandro Sweet-Cordero

Précis: These findings define a little-studied protein tyrosine kinase as a highly and specifically expressed gene and a potential therapeutic target in lung adenocarcinoma.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Lipid Metabolism Signatures in NASH-Associated HCC—Letter

Sonja M. Kessler, Stephan Laggai, Ahmad Barghash, Volkhard Helms, and Alexandra K. Kiemer

ABOUT THE COVER

The BH3 mimetics ABT-737/263 were developed to trigger programmed cell death (apoptosis) in tumors that express high levels of the antiapoptotic proteins BCL-2 and BCL-xL. Promising preclinical data in chronic lymphocytic leukemia (CLL) and small cell lung cancer (SCLC) warranted clinical investigation; however, single agent responses to ABT-263 in extensive-stage SCLC were minimal. Here, using patient-derived xenograft (PDX) models of SCLC, it was found that responses to single agent ABT-737 were acute in duration and accompanied by decreases in HIF-1α target genes. Using transcriptome signatures of ABT-737 responses, the authors identified that classes of PI3K/mTOR inhibitors were synergistic when combined with BH3 mimetics in vitro and provided durable tumor regressions in BCL-2-expressing PDX models of SCLC in vivo. Interestingly, the mTOR inhibitor rapamycin preserved levels of BAX protein, a requisite gateway for programmed cell death by ABT-737. These data add a new light on acute resistance mechanisms targeting antiapoptotic proteins. For details, see article by Gardner and colleagues on page 2846.