Results: The treatment of tumour cells with the various EMILIN2 deletion mutants led to the identification of the pro-apoptotic region of the molecule. This N-terminal fragment binds to death receptors, induces apoptosis and reduces the clonogenic potential of tumour cells. EMILIN2 and its deletion mutant displayed also an *in vivo* antitumourigenic effect which correlated with a higher activity of both caspase-8 and -3. Unexpectedly, tumours treated with EMILIN2 or the deletion mutant displayed a significant increase of tumour angiogenesis. In view of these findings the co-treatment of the growing tumours with an antiangiogenic drug, resulted in most cases in a complete regression of tumour growth.
Conclusions: Taken together these results unravel the possibility to employ EMILIN2 fragments or peptides in combination with angiogenesis inhibitors as potent antineoplastic tools for cancer treatment.

484 Rapid adherence to collagen IV enriches for tumour initiating cells

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Background: There is now evidence for the existence of cancer stem cells in many solid tumours, including oral squamous cell carcinoma. However, there is still a need to develop robust methods to enrich for cancer stem cells for studying their biological properties. Data from normal epithelia indicate that the rapid adherence to collagen IV is an efficient method to enrich for normal epithelial stem cells.
Objective: To investigate the rapid adherence to collagen IV as a method for enrichment for cancer stemm cells in human oral carcinomas and to characterize the cell populations obtained using this method in terms of their self renewal potential and electrophysiological properties.
Methods: Rapid adherent cells (RAC) and middle adherent cells (MAC) were isolated after 10 and respectively 60 minutes incubation on collagen IV-coated dishes in a panel of oral carcinoma cell lines (H357, DOK and CaLH3). The non-attached cells were designed as late adherent cells (LAC). Their clonogenic ability was investigated in vitro (single cell colony forming assay and 3D organotypic model).and their ability to initiate tumours was investigated in vivo (tongue xenograft NOD/SCID mouse model). The electrophysiological parameters of cells were determined non-invasively, using dielectrophoresis (DEP)-an electrostatic phenomenon defined as the motion of particles resulting from polarisation forces. Parameters such as cytoplasmic conductivity (which relates to the cytoplasm ionic strength), membrane conductance (indicates how well ions are transported across the membrane), and specific membrane capacitance (relates to membrane morphology) were extracted using the single-shell model.
Results: Significantly higher number of cells were found to initiate colonies ($p < 0.05$) and form spheres in vitro ($p < 0.01$) in both RAC and MAC when compared to LAC. MAC tumour formation was the fastest to occur, but both RAC and MAC induced tumour formation at earlier time points and at lower cell numbers than LAC after tongue xenotransplantation in NOD/SCID mice. No difference was observed in 3D cultures in terms of biomatrix invasion, but RAC and Mac gave rise to thicker cultures when compared to LAC. DEP analysis revealed that RAC and MAC exhibited a significantly higher membrane capacitance relative to LAC ($p < 0.001$), indicating a difference in the membrane morphology between these subpopulations of cells.
Conclusion: This study brings evidence for the use of rapid adherence to collagen IV for enriching in cells with increased clonogencity and tumour formation ability in oral cancer cell lines, and indicates that these properties are associated to differences in electrophysiological properties.

485 Checkpoint kinase 1 modulates sensitivity to chemotherapy in aneuploid cell lines

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Gastric cancer (GC) is one of the most frequent causes of death worldwide. Despite many advances in surgery and the diagnosis or the development of new regimens of chemotherapy (QT), after surgery most patients die of recurrent disease due to the presence of disseminated disease at the time of surgery. The main treatment of disseminated disease is chemotherapy, which only benefits a few and cause toxicity in the majority of patients. Therefore, it is necessary to improve the capability of selecting those patients most likely to have clinical benefit with a determined treatment. Our previous studies showed that SW620 cells showed higher BubR1 and Chk1 mRNA levels than control cells under normal conditions. These studies showed that these cells undergo synergistic cell death after spindle checkpoint activation (taxol treatment) followed by cisplatin treatment, suggesting a role of Chk1 in this checkpoint, very likely dependent on BubR1 protein. Importantly, Chk1-depleted SW620 cells lost this synergistic effect. In summary, we proposed that Chk1 could be used as a biomarker predictive of the efficacy of sequential chemotherapy across different types of tumours with aneuploidy. These results encouraged us to deeply study the role of Chk1 protein as a predictive factor of response to this combined chemotherapy in GC. A panel of cell lines derived from GC with and without aneuploidy, will be selected and treated with a combination of 5-Fluorouracil, cisplatin and taxane derivatives, in order to study the viability and the cross-talk between the activation of the checkpoint protein Chk1 and the spindle assembly checkpoint, as these are the main signaling pathways activated by these agents. The results of these studies will be reported at the Meeting.
This work is supported by FIS PS09/1988 and PI081485.

486 The sphingosine kinase-1 survival pathway is a molecular target for the tumour-suppressive tea and wine polyphenols in prostate cancer

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In vitro and *in vivo* studies have reported that dietary polyphenols can affect a wide array of signaling and molecular pathways resulting in cancer cell growth inhibition, apoptosis and inhibition of invasion, angiogenesis and metastasis. Here we provide the first evidence that dietary agents, namely epigallocatechin gallate (EGCg), trans-resveratrol (RV) or a mixture of polyphenols from green tea (Polyphenon E, PPE) or red wine (vineatrol) impede prostate cancer cell growth in vitro and in vivo by inhibiting the SphK1/S1P pathway, which is up-regulated in prostate cancer patients. Our results establish that SphK1 is a downtream effector of the ERK/Phospholipase D (PLD) signaling pathway inhibited by green tea and red wine polyphenols. Enforced expression of SphK1 in both PC-3 and C4−2B prostate cancer cells markedky impaired the efficacy of green tea and red wine polyphenols, as well as pharmacological inhibitors of PLD- and ERK, to induce apoptosis. The inhibitory effects of green tea and red wine polyphenols on tumour growth and the SphK1/S1P pathway were confirmed in an heterotopic PC-3 tumour in place model established in nude mice. SphK1-overexpressing PC-3 cells implanted in animals developed remarkably larger tumours and resistance to treatment with polyphenols. Furthermore, in an orthotopic PC-3/green fluorescent protein model, EGCg and PPE diet induced a marked SphK1 inhibition associated with a pronounced decrease in primary tumour volume and occurrence and number of metastases. These results provide the first demonstration that the SphK1/S1P pathway is a molecular target of dietary polyphenols in prostate cancer.

487 Prostaglandin E2 upregulates ErbB2 and enhances EGF-stimulated DNA synthesis in hepatocytes

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Background: Several G protein-coupled receptor (GPCR) agonists, including prostaglandin E_2 (PGE_2), act as comitogens in hepatocytes, by synergistically enhancing EGF-stimulated DNA synthesis. The underlying mechanism is not clear. In MH1C1 hepatoma cells PGE_2 transactivates the EGF receptor (EGFR), but in normal hepatocytes PGE_2 induces an upregulation of EGF-mediated phosphorylation of Erk and Akt independently of EGFR transactivation. EGFR belongs to the ErbB family, and one factor that may contribute to the diversity of EGFR signaling is the availability of other ErbB members that can engage in heterodimerization with EGFR. In this study we examined the role of PGE_2 on the expression of ErbB2 and ErbB3, and their role in the comitogenic effect.
Methods: Rat hepatocytes were cultured as primary monolayers in a defined medium. Expression and phosphorylation of signalling proteins, including EGFR, ErbB2, ErbB3, Erk, Akt, and cyclin D1, were assessed by Western blotting. ErbB2 and ErbB3 mRNA was measured by quantitative real time PCR. DNA synthesis was determined by incorporation of ^{3}H-thymidine. Transfection with small interfering RNA (siRNA) was used to block the expression of ErbB2.
Results: At plating, the cells expressed EGFR (ErbB1) and ErbB3, but not ErbB2. As they were cultured, traversing G1 with relatively high synchrony, ErbB3 expression decreased, while ErbB2 expression, in contrast, appeared and then increased up to a point in mid/late G1 where the cells are optimally sensitive to EGF. Pretreatment with PGE_2 increased ErbB2 expression and reduced ErbB3 expression. PGE_2 also enhanced and hastened EGF-stimulated cyclin D1 expression and DNA synthesis. Also, blocking of the