

This issue's topics

A current perspective of adjuvant treatment design for premenopausal breast cancer patients

In their Current Perspective, Jakesz and colleagues discuss the role of adjuvant chemotherapy and hormonal therapy for the treatment of premenopausal breast cancer patients. The authors examine recent data comparing chemotherapy versus ovarian ablation, versus tamoxifen, versus luteinising hormone-releasing hormone (LHRH) analogues and versus LHRH analogues and tamoxifen. They conclude that "various endocrine treatment modalities have been substantiated as equiefficient to polychemotherapy" and that "the selection of adjuvant systemic therapy for premenopausal breast cancer patients should be increasingly guided by knowledge of the steroid hormone receptor levels".

Patients prefer oral UFT/LV to intravenous FU/LV

Oral regimens have the advantages of convenience, reduced costs and are also often associated with reduced toxicity when compared with intravenous (i.v.) administrations. In this issue, Borner and colleagues examine using a prospective, randomised crossover trial, patients' preference for either an oral administration of UFT/leucovorin (LV) (300 mg/m²/day UFT and 90 mg/day LV for 28 days) or i.v. 5-fluorouracil (FU) and LV (20 mg/m²/day LV followed by 425 mg/m²/day FU for 5 days). Patients received both treatment options and then were asked their preference. A questionnaire before and after treatment was used to assess their preferences. Interestingly, before treatment, patients were most concerned about the possible side-effects of treatment, whereas after the treatment, the mode of administration became more important. 84% of the evaluable patients preferred the oral treatment, possibly in part due to the increased toxicity (stomatitis and haematological) seen with the i.v. regimen.

Do corresponding subscales of Quality of Life instruments measure similar aspects?

In this issue, Kuenstner and colleagues investigate this question using questionnaires received from 234 cancer patients. The questionnaires were sent in two waves; the first set comparing the European Organization for the Research and Treatment of Cancer (EORTC) Quality of Life Core Questionnaire (QLQ-C30) and SF-36 Quality of Life (QoL) instruments and the second set comparing the EORTC QLQ-C30 and the Functional Living Index Cancer (FLIC) QoL instruments. Seven dimensions were assessed using a multi-trait, multi-method analysis. In five of these seven dimensions, (physical functioning, emotional functioning, pain, fatigue/vitality and nausea and vomiting) convergent validity exceeded the corresponding correlations of discriminant validity. This infers that for these subscales the three instruments are measuring similar aspects of the patient's quality of life. In contrast, the data suggested that the overall health and social functioning subscales of the different instruments cannot be equated.

Forthcoming papers

Mémoire

Paediatrics in retrospect

J. Malpas

Current Perspective

Current perspectives in muscle invasive bladder cancer

C. Sternberg

Reviews

Treatment of paediatric Hodgkin's disease in childhood: a balance of risks

A.B. Thomson, W.H.B. Wallace

Efficacy, tolerability and management of raltitrexed (Tomudex) monotherapy in patients with advanced colorectal cancer: a review of phase II/III trials

D. Cunningham, J. Zalcberg, J. Maroun, *et al.*

Original Papers

Clinical

Symptom response after palliative radiotherapy for patients with brain metastases

A. Bezjak, J. Adam, R. Barton, *et al.*

Phase I pharmacokinetic and sequence finding study of the combination of docetaxel and methotrexate in patients with solid tumours

M. Louwerens, C. Smorenburg, A. Sparreboom, *et al.*

Effect of preoperative radiotherapy on *matrilysin* gene expression in rectal cancer

A. Kumar, H. Collins, J. Van Tam, *et al.*

Prognostic factors of cutaneous melanoma and a new staging system proposed by the American Joint Committee on Cancer (AJCC): validation in a COHORT of 1284 patients

S. Retsas, K. Henry, M.Q. Mohammed, K. MacRae

Testing a new staging system for cutaneous melanoma proposed by the American Joint Committee on Cancer

S. Merkel, T. Meyer, T. Papasopoulos, *et al.*

Predictive value of thymidylate synthase expression in resected metastases of colorectal cancer

D.C. Corsi, M. Ciaparrone, G. Zannoni, *et al.*

C-erb-2 expression does not predict response to docetaxel or sequential methotrexate and 5-fluorouracil in advanced breast cancer

J. Sjöström, J. Collan, K. von Boguslawski, *et al.*

Progression free rate as the principal end-point for phase II trials in soft tissue sarcomas

M. van Glabbeke, J. Verweij, I. Judson, *et al.*

Diagnostic strategies in non-palpable breast lesions

R.M. Pijnappel, P.H.M. Peeters, M. van den Donk, *et al.*

Gemcitabine in advanced adult soft-tissue sarcomas. Phase II study of the EORTC Soft Tissue and Bone Sarcoma Group

L. Svancarova, J.Y. Blay, I.R. Judson, *et al.*

Paediatric

Non-metastatic Ewing's sarcoma of the ribs: the French Society of Paediatric Oncology experience

N. Sirvent, J. Kanold, C. Levy, *et al.*

Epidemiology and Cancer Prevention

Assessment of the early impact of population-based breast cancer screening programme in Florence (Italy) using mortality and surrogate measures

P. Eugenio, D. Giorgi, S. Bianchi, *et al.*

Incidence of breast cancer on Crete, 1994–1995

I.G. Vlachonikolis, T.J. Aletra, V. Georgoulas

Primary breast cancer therapy in six regions of Germany

J. Engel, G. Nagel, E. Breuer, *et al.*

Experimental

Decreased telomerase is not a reliable indicator of chemosensitivity in testicular cancer cells

T.R. Cressey, M.J. Tilby, D.R. Newell

Therapeutic outcome and side-effects after radiotherapy, chemotherapy and/or hyperthermia treatment of head and neck tumour xenografts

A. Ressel, O. Schmitt, C. Weiss, T. Feyerabend

HPMA-hydrogels results in prolonged delivery of anticancer drugs and are a promising tool for the treatment of sensitive and multidrug resistant leukaemia

M. St'astny, D. Plocova, T. Etrych, *et al.*

Letter

Comment on "Extended-term effects of head and neck irradiation in a rodent model", R.M. Nagler, *European Journal of Cancer* 2001, **37**, 1938–1945

A.W.T. Konings, A. Vissink, R.P. Coppes