

This issue's topics



Calculating the risks of treating the elderly with cancer

Despite an increasingly ageing population, older patients with cancer are often not offered participation in clinical trials. This may be because the cellular and molecular mechanisms regulating the 'process of ageing' are still far from understood. The relationship between ageing and the risk of cancer is also difficult to determine and interindividual variations are difficult to quantify. In this issue, Repetto and colleagues review these problems and some of the recent advances such as the stratification of older patients that might require different clinical approaches through the use of the Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment. "Treatment guidelines are clearly needed," they state, but the difficulty at present is the lack of available data from clinical trials to help in guiding the management and treatment of these older patients.

Chromosomal imbalances and resistance to fluoropyrimidines

As the underlying mechanisms for acquired resistance to fluoropyrimidines in colorectal cells have not yet been identified, Hidaka and colleagues have investigated the genomic changes that occur when comparing a parental human colorectal cancer cell line with cell lines resistant to 5-fluorouracil (5-FU) and 5-fluoro-2'-deoxyuridine (FdUrd). Using a Comparative Genomic Hybridisation analysis, losses of 3p and 3q were observed in both resistant cell lines, but not in the parental cell line. Both resistant cell lines also showed a reduced expression of orotate phosphoribosyl-transferase (OPRT), an enzyme involved in the activities of the bifunctional enzyme, uridine monophosphate (UMP) synthase, that is located on 3q13. An amplification of 18p11.2-p11.3 containing the thymidine synthase (*TS*) gene was also observed in the FdUrd-resistant cell line, but not in the other resistant or parental cell lines. They suggest that the chromosomal changes identified provide some indication of the potential mechanisms involved in acquired fluoropyrimidine resistance.

Increase in kidney cancer incidence and mortality in Northern England

Although kidney cancer is rare, its incidence and mortality are rising worldwide. Tate and colleagues examined the incidence and mortality rates for 8741 cases derived from data extracted from the population-based Northern and Yorkshire Cancer Registry. The cases were diagnosed between 1978 and 1997. The age-standardised incidence rate for renal parenchymal carcinoma increased by 86% over the time period studied. This increase was observed for all age groups. The authors speculate that, although some of the increase may be due to improved diagnostics, aetiological causes—such as hypertension and obesity—are likely to be involved.

Forthcoming papers

Editorial Comments

Editorial comment on 'Reduction in the number of sentinel lymph node procedures by preoperative ultrasonography of the axilla in breast cancer' by Deurloo *et al.*

E. Cornford, A. Evans

Editorial: Sometimes size does matter

M. Muzi-Falconi, S. Sabbioneda, P. Plevani, M. Fioani

Editorial Comment on: Extended neoadjuvant chemotherapy in locally advanced breast cancer combined with GM-CSF: effect on tumour draining lymph node dendritic cells by Pinedo *et al.*

F. Nussey, M.L. Turner

Reviews

Molecular biomarkers of colorectal carcinogenesis and their role in surveillance and early intervention

G. Garcea, R.A. Sharma, A. Dennison, *et al.*

Improving cancer therapy by non-genotoxic activation of p53

S. Lain, D. Lane

Original Papers

Clinical

Extended neoadjuvant chemotherapy in locally advanced breast cancer combined with GM-CSF: effect on tumour draining lymph node dendritic cells

H.M. Pinedo, J. Buter, S.A. Luykx-de Bakker, *et al.*

Reduction of the number of sentinel lymph node procedures by preoperative ultrasonography of the axilla in breast cancer

E.E. Deurloo, P.J. Tanis, K.G.A. Gilhuijs, *et al.*

Differential involvement of neurotransmitters through the time course of cisplatin-induced emesis as revealed by therapy with specific receptor antagonists

P.J. Hesketh, S. Van Belle, M. Aapro, *et al.*

Acute toxicity of concurrent adjuvant radiotherapy and chemotherapy (CMF or AC) in breast cancer: a prospective comparative study

W.E. Fiets, R.P. van Helvoirt, J.W.R. Nortier, *et al.*

Prognostic factors for survival after neoadjuvant chemotherapy in operable breast cancer: the role of clinical response

J.-Y. Pierga, E. Mouret, V. Laurence, *et al.*

Phase I clinical and pharmacokinetic study of E7070, a novel sulfonamide given as a 5-day continuous infusion repeated every 3 weeks in patients with solid tumours. A study by the EORTC Early Clinical Study Group (ESCG)

C. Terret, S. Zanetta, H. Roche, *et al.*

Population pharmacokinetic modelling of unbound and total plasma concentrations of paclitaxel in cancer patients

A. Hanningsson, A. Sparreboom, N. Sandstrom, *et al.*

Bleomycin, vincristine, lomustine and dacarbazine (BOLD) in combination with recombinant interferon Alpha-2B for metastatic uveal melanoma: an EORTC Ocular Oncology Task Force Phase II Study 88941

S. Eskelin, S. Pyrhonen, M. Hahka-Kemppinen, *et al.*

A randomised study of protracted venous infusion of 5-fluorouracil (5-FU) with or without bolus mitomycin C (MMC) in patients with carcinoma of unknown primary

L. Assersohn, A.R. Norman, D. Cunningham, *et al.*

Lack of impact of platinum dose intensity on ovarian cancer patient outcome: 10-year results of a prospective randomised phase III study comparing carboplatin–cisplatin with cyclophosphamide–cisplatin

P. Sevela, Ch. Ditttrich, H. Salzer, *et al.*

Phase II study of fotemustine in patients with advanced ovarian carcinoma—a trial of the EORTC Gynecological Cancer Group

M.S. Aapro, F.H. van Wijk, M.E.L. van der Burg, *et al.*

Concurrent hypermethylation of gene promoters is associated with MSI-H phenotype and diploidy in gastric carcinomas

B. Carvalho, M. Pinto, L. Cirnes, *et al.*

Loss of hMLH1 expression correlates with improved survival in stage III-IV ovarian cancer patients

M. Scartozzi, M. de Nictolis, E. Galizia, *et al.*

Paediatric

Paediatric Update

Organisation of follow-up in paediatric oncology

N. von der Weid, H. Wagner

Commentary

M.B. Phillips

Epidemiology and Cancer Prevention

Cigarette smoking and the risk of invasive epithelial ovarian cancer in a prospective cohort study

P.D. Terry, A.B. Miller, J.G. Jones, T.E. Rohan

Experimental

Differential expression of inducible nitric oxide synthase and peroxisome proliferation activated receptor gamma in non-small cell lung carcinoma

T.W. Lee, C.G. Chen, H. Xu, *et al.*

Histone acetylation-mediated regulation of genes in leukaemic cells

A.E. Chambers, S. Banerjee, T. Chaplin, *et al.*

NF-kappa B activation *in vivo* in both host and tumour cells by the antivascular agent 5,6-dimethoxyxanthone-4-acetic acid (DMXAA)

S.-T. Woon, S. Zwain, M.A. Schooltink, *et al.*