

This issue's topics

new

NEW



New techniques under construction

Liver ablation techniques in patients with primary or secondary liver disease

In this issue, Garcea and colleagues review the advantages and disadvantages of various liver ablation techniques used in the treatment of patients with hepatocellular carcinoma or metastatic liver disease. Although only 20% of patients are currently suitable for resection of their primary or secondary liver tumours, these techniques are of great interest. Techniques evaluated in their paper included percutaneous ethanol injection, cryotherapy, microwave coagulation therapy, radiofrequency ablation, interstitial laser photocoagulation, focused high-intensity ultrasound, hot saline injection, electrolysis and acetic acid injection. "Ablative techniques offer a promising therapeutic modality to treat unresectable tumours. Large scale randomised controlled trials are required before widespread acceptance of these techniques can occur," they said.

New therapeutic target in oesophageal squamous cell carcinoma?

The peroxisome proliferator-activated receptor gamma (PPARgamma)/retinoid X receptor alpha (RXRalpha) heterodimer may be a new therapeutic target in oesophageal squamous cell carcinoma (OSCC), Hashimoto and colleagues report in this issue. They found that two ligands of these receptors could inhibit the growth of all the OSCC cell lines they tested and that the combination of the two ligands had the greatest effect on growth. The percentage of apoptotic cell death also increased following treatment with ligand alone and was particularly noted following combined ligand treatment. Apoptosis was likely mediated through the caspase pathway. The PPAR ligand showed significant inhibition of implanted tumours in nude mice, suggesting that these results may be transferable to the *in vivo* setting.

Suicide risk in cancer patients in Estonia

Male cancer patients have an increased suicide risk, whilst females have a reduced risk, a study reports in this issue. Using population-based data from 1983 to 2000, Innos and colleagues found an almost 2-fold increased risk of suicides in male patients and a 50% decrease in risk in women, compared with that expected in the general population. The higher risk in men was particularly noted for cancers of the pancreas, lung and upper digestive tract and occurred soon after diagnosis, often within 6 months. Women with lung cancer also had an increased risk. Although the authors feel the reduced risk observed for women may be due to chance, in men "this study provides further evidence that cancer is a risk factor for suicide", they said.

Forthcoming papers

Editorial Comment

Is research in human tissues at a crossroads?

J.F. Hair, A.M. McNicol, B.A. Gusterson

Position Papers

Human tissue research: EORTC recommendations on its practical consequences

I. Teodorovic, P. Therasse, A. Spatz, *et al.*

EORTC guidelines for the use of colony-stimulating factors in elderly patients with cancer

L. Repetto, L. Biganzoli, C.H. Koehne, *et al.*

Current Perspective

The current position of complementary/alternative medicine in cancer

E. Ernst

Reviews

Randomised trials comparing chemotherapy regimens for advanced non-small cell lung cancer: biases and evolution over time

J.P.A. Ionnidis, A. Polycarpou, C. Ntais, N. Pavlidis

Neuropsychological functioning following systemic treatment in women treated for breast cancer: a review

R. Morse, J. Rodgers, M. Verrill, K. Kendall

Original Papers

Clinical

Frequent methylation of *p16INK4A* and *p14ARF* genes implicated in the evolution of chronic myeloid leukaemia from its chronic phase to acceleration

E. Nagy, Z. Beck, A. Kiss, *et al.*

Gene promoter hypermethylation in the oral rinse of leucoplakia patients

M. Lopez, J.M. Aguirre, N. Cuevas, *et al.*

Efficacy of tamoxifen following anastrozole ('Arimidex') compared with anastrozole following tamoxifen as first-line treatment for advanced breast cancer in postmenopausal women

B. Thurlimann, J.F.R. Robertson, J.M. Nabholz, *et al.*

An open randomised trial of second-line endocrine therapy in advanced breast cancer: comparison of the aromatase inhibitors letrozole and anastrozole

C. Rose, O. Vtoraya, A. Pluzanska *et al.*

A phase I study of S-1 combined with weekly cisplatin for metastatic gastric cancer in an outpatient setting

I. Hyodo, T. Nishina, T. Moriwaki, *et al.*

Glufosfamide administered by 1-hour infusion as a first-line treatment for advanced pancreatic cancer. A phase II trial of the EORTC-New Drug Development Group

E. Briasoulis, N. Pavlidis, C. Terret, *et al.*

Paediatric

Langerhans cell histiocytosis in adults

M. Arico, M. Girschikofsky, T. Genereau, *et al.*

Epidemiology and Cancer Prevention

Cause of death and long-term survival in patients with neuro-epithelial brain tumours. A population-based study

T.B. Johannesen, F. Langmark, K. Lote

Medical and non-medical determinants of prostate cancer management: a population-based study

E. Bauvin, M. Soulie, F. Menegoz, *et al.*

Impact of vaccinations and infectious diseases on melanoma risk- results of an EORTC case-control-study

B. Krone, K.F. Kolmel, J.M. Grange, *et al.*

Radiation dose as a risk factor for malignant melanoma following childhood cancer

S. Guerin, A. Dupuy, H. Anderson, *et al.*

Experimental

Superior anti-tumour activity of S-1 in tumours with high dihydropyrimidine dehydrogenase activity

H. Fujiwara, M. Terashima, T. Irinoda, *et al.*

Acquisition of anoikis resistance in human osteosarcoma cells

C.M. Diaz-Montero, B.W. McIntyre

Anti-tumour activity of the silybin-phosphatidylcholine complex, IdB 1016, against human ovarian cancer

D. Gallo, S. Giacomelli, C. Ferlini, *et al.*