

This issue's topics



Trends in mortality in the EU

Trends in mortality from lung cancer in the European Union vary by age, country and gender

Recent trends in lung cancer mortality rates in the 15 European Union (EU) countries are examined by Bray and colleagues in this issue. The trends in mortality vary by age, gender and country. For men, they are mostly in the downward direction and this was also observed in younger men reflecting changes in smoking habits. Portugal is the exception, where increases in mortality were observed in both age groups examined (<65 years and 65 years and over). In women, the reverse picture is observed, with most countries showing increases in mortality rates. The United Kingdom and Ireland are the exceptions to this trend, where rates are declining in younger women and stabilising in older women. "It is imperative that anti-tobacco strategies urgently target women living in the EU, in order to halt their rapidly increasing risk of lung cancer, and prevent unnecessary, premature deaths among future generations of women," they said.

A role for trastuzumab in transitional cell bladder cancer (TCC)?

Only 5% of G3 pT2 TCCs showed *HER2/neu* amplification and protein overexpression in a study of 75 patients reported in this issue. In breast cancer, only tumours with this amplification/overexpression status are expected to show a response to trastuzumab (HerceptinTM) therapy. This suggests any role for the drug in TCCs may be limited. However, polysomy 17, increased *HER2/neu* copy number and *HER2/neu* protein overexpression (assessed by fluorescent *in situ* hybridisation and immunohistochemistry) were common (97, 92 and 57%, respectively). Latif and colleagues conclude that these results suggest that *HER2/neu* is important in TCCs, but its role needs to be defined further.

Confirmation of TIMP-1 as a prognostic factor in rectal cancer?

High preoperative tissue inhibitor of metalloproteinases 1 (TIMP-1) levels were associated with a poorer survival in rectal cancer patients, authors report in this issue. In their confirmatory study including 352 rectal cancer patients, Holten-Andersen and colleagues measured preoperative TIMP-1 levels using an immunoassay with a good reproducibility. Dukes' D patients had significantly higher levels than Dukes' A, B or C patients, although these high levels were not restricted to those with advanced disease. Furthermore, patients with higher levels had a poorer survival. Plasma TIMP-1 was confirmed as an independent prognostic marker.

Forthcoming papers

Editorial Comment

Behavioural and social science research in cancer: time for action

D. Weller

Debate: the role of sentinel node biopsy in breast cancer?

Preoperative ultrasound-guided node biopsy and sentinel node augmented node sample is best practice

R.D. Macmillan, R.S. Rampaul, S. Lewis, R.W. Blamey

Implications of lymphatic mapping for staging and adjuvant treatment of patients with breast cancer

O.E. Nieweg, H. Bartelink

Sentinel node procedure in breast carcinoma: a valid tool to omit unnecessary axillary treatment?

E.T.J. Rutgers

Current Perspective

Research in the behavioural and social sciences to improve cancer control and care: a strategy for development

D. Everad

Original Papers

Clinical

Guideline adherence and the effects of a quality programme, a breast cancer guideline study

P.B. Ottevanger, P.H.M. De Mulder, R.P.T.M. Grol, *et al.*

Comparative value of SBR grade, hormonal receptors, Ki67, HER-2 and topoisomerase II alpha status as predictive markers in breast cancer patients treated with neoadjuvant anthracycline-based chemotherapy

T. Petit, M. Wilt, M. Veltern, *et al.*

Wide metastatic spreading in infiltrating lobular carcinoma of the breast

S. Ferlicot, A. Vincent-Salomon, J. Medioni

Patients with lymphatic metastasis of cutaneous malignant melanoma benefit from sentinel lymphonodectomy and early excision of their nodal disease

L. Kretschmer, R. Hilgers, M. Mohrle, *et al.*

The poor responsiveness of infiltrating lobular breast carcinomas to neoadjuvant chemotherapy can be explained by their biological profile

M.C. Mathieu, R. Rouzier, A. Llombart-Cussac, *et al.*

Weekly paclitaxel as first-line chemotherapy for elderly patients with metastatic breast cancer. A multicentre phase II trial

A.J. ten Tije, C.H. Smorenburg, C. Seynaeve, *et al.*

Selective immunohistochemical staining shows independent prognostic influence of lymphatic and blood vessels in patients with malignant melanoma

J. Valencak, E. Heere-Ress, T. Kopp, *et al.*

Preoperative psychological reactions and quality of life among women with increased risk of breast cancer considering prophylactic mastectomy

Y. Brandberg, B. Arver, A. Lindblom, *et al.*

Paediatric

Predicting cisplatin ototoxicity in children: the influence of age and cumulative dose

U. Li, R.B. Womer, J.H. Silber

Epidemiology and Cancer Prevention

Predictive value of rectal bleeding for distal colonic neoplastic lesions in a screening population

R. Ferraris, C. Senore, M. Fracchia, *et al.*

Association of brain tumours with other neoplasms in families

K. Hemminki, X. Li

Cancer aggregation and complex segregation analysis of families with female non-smoking lung cancer probands in Taiwan

Wu Pen-Fen, Lee Chien-Hung, Wang Mei-Jun, *et al.*

Medically recorded allergies and the risk of childhood acute lymphoblastic leukaemia

L. Spector, F. Groves, F. DeStefano *et al.*

Experimental

Amad2 suppresses growth of Mv1Lu cells subcutaneously inoculated in mice

T Sjoblom, I Yakymovych, C-H Heldin *et al*

Prevalence of liver tumours in HIV-1 tat-transgenic mice treated with urethane

G. Altavilla, A. Caputo, C. Trabanelli, *et al.*

Combretastatin A-4 phosphate enhances CPT-11 activity independently of the administration sequence

Wildiers H, Ahmed B, Guetens G *et al*