

This issue's topics



HPV testing is a relevant tool

HPV testing shows promise in cervical disease

Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) testing is a relevant tool to detect cervical disease, according to authors reporting in this issue. The Papanicolaou smear is widely recognised as being the most effective tool in preventing cervical disease and since its introduction mortality from cervical cancer has decreased, particularly in some high-risk countries. However, conventionally, the method suffers from a low sensitivity and poor reproducibility. Persistent infection with high-risk HPVs is thought to be important in the development of intra-epithelial and invasive cancer. Therefore, Dalstein and colleagues compared the results of different combinations of screening tests in identifying precancerous lesions in a hospital population ($n=3574$). HPV testing was more sensitive than cytology, while cytology was more specific. When both tests were combined, sensitivity reached 100%. The best way of combining cytology and HPV detection in screening programmes should be evaluated in large-scale studies, they said.

Breast-conserving therapy in the genetically predisposed patient

Hereditary breast cancer patients had a significantly higher 10-year rate of ipsilateral breast tumour recurrence (IBTR) following breast conservative therapy (BCT) compared with sporadic controls (30% versus 16%, respectively; $P=0.05$), authors report in this issue. Seynaeve and colleagues compared 87 hereditary breast cancer patients with 174 controls matched for age and year of diagnosis. An IBTR was detected in 19(22%) hereditary and 21(12%) sporadic patients. They suggest that their data should be taken into account when considering additional risk-reducing surgery after primary BCT. "BCT, with added prophylactic measures to reduce the risk of secondary malignancies of the ovaries and breast, remains a reasonable option for those genetically predisposed breast cancer patients desiring breast conservation" according to Drs. Haffty and Lannin who discuss this and other related studies in an accompanying Editorial. "Ultimately, the decision about lumpectomy or mastectomy is a very personal one and comes down to patient preference. . . Clearly, the data now emerging will help women make a more informed decision".

Increased serum folate is associated with reduced breast cancer risk

Increased serum concentrations of folate were associated with reduced risks of breast cancer, authors report in this issue. Beilby and colleagues compared serum folate concentrations in 141 breast cancer patients and 109 age-matched controls. Folate levels were significantly lower in the cases than the controls (geometric means of 5.7 versus 6.6 ug/l, respectively; $P=0.005$). Furthermore, comparing the highest and lowest quartiles of folate concentrations, a reduction in the breast cancer risk was observed- the Odds Ratio decreased by 0.23 (95% Confidence Interval 0.09, 0.54). The authors acknowledge there may have been some bias in the selection of the controls, but conclude that increased concentrations of serum folate were associated with a reduced risk of breast cancer.

Forthcoming papers

Editorial Comments

Controversial effect of epoetin in cancer: grounds for a translational research exercise?

G. Apolone

Review

Monoclonal antibodies in the treatment of colorectal cancer

M.L. Veronese, P.J. O'Dwyer

Original papers

Clinical

Angiogenesis of gastrointestinal tumours and their metastases: a target for intervention?

G. Garcea, T.D. Lloyd, A. Gescher, *et al.*

An open, multicentre comparative study of the efficacy, safety and tolerance of fluconazole and itraconazole in the treatment of cancer patients with oropharyngeal candidiasis

A.M.L. Oude Lashof, R. De Bock, R. Herbrecht, *et al.*

Bronchial associated lymphoid tissue lymphoma: A descriptive natural history of a rare disease

S. Ahmed, S.J. Kussick, A.K. Siddiqui, *et al.*

A phase II study of ET-743/trabectedin ('Yondelis') for patients with advanced gastrointestinal stromal tumours

J.-Y. Blay, A. Le Cesne, J. Verweij

RFS 2000 (9-nitrocamptothecin) in advanced small cell lung cancer, a phase II study of the EORTC New Drug Development Group (NDDG)

C.J.A. Punt, M.J.A. de Jonge, S. Monfardini, *et al.*

Paediatric

Economic evaluation of childhood cancer care

R.D. Barr, D. Feeny, W. Furlong

Acute neurotoxicity in children with advanced state B-non Hodgkin's lymphoma and B-acute lymphoblastic leukaemia treated with the UKCCSG 9002/9003 protocols

A. Atra, C.R. Pinkerton, E. Bouffet, *et al.*

Epidemiology and Cancer Prevention

Increasing incidence of childhood malignant diseases in Sweden during the time period 1960 to 1998

A.C. Dreifaldt, M. Carlberg, L. Hardell

Up-to-date long-term survival of cancer patients- an evaluation of period analysis on Swedish Cancer Registry data

M. Talback, M. Stenbeck, M. Rosen

Experimental

Shift of syndecan-1 expression from epithelial to stromal cells during progression of solid tumours

D. Mennerich, A. Vogel, I. Klamann, *et al.*

Actin-dependent tumour cell adhesion after short term exposure to the antimetastasis ruthenium complex NAMI-A

G. Sava, F. Frausin, M. Cocchietto, *et al.*

Suppression of hepatocellular carcinoma growth in mice by the alkaloid coccidiostat halofuginone

A. Nagler, M. Ohana, O. Shibolet, *et al.*

Prostate intraepithelial neoplasia in noble rats, a potential intermediate endpoint for chemoprevention studies

K. Christov, R. Moon, D. Lantvit, C. Boone, G. Kelloff, V. Steele, R. Lubet, J. Pezzuto

Tumour burden and interleukin-2 (IL2) dose affect the synergism between low-dose total body irradiation and interleukin-2

Safwat, N. Aggerholm, I. Roitt, *et al.*

Transferrin receptor is a marker of malignant phenotype in human pancreatic cancer and in neuroendocrine carcinoma of the pancreas

E. Ryschich, G. Huszty, H. Knaebel, *et al.*

Disturbed melanin synthesis and chronic oxidative stress in dysplastic naevi

S. Pavel, H. van der Meulen, F. van Nieuwpoort, *et al.*

Tumour seeding in peritoneal wound sites in relation to growth factor expression in early granulation tissue

S. Zeamari, E. Roos, F. Stewart

Sodium butyrate induces apoptosis in human hepatoma cells by a mitochondria/caspase pathway associated with degradation of beta-catenin, pRb and Bcl-X

S. Emanuele, A. D'Anneo, G. Bellavia, *et al.*

Letters

Letter to the Editor

A.L. Appleton

Letter to the Editor: Unknown primary melanoma

V. de Giorgi, M. Stante, P. Carli

Imatinib in patients with metastatic gastrointestinal stromal tumour relapsing after hepatic transplantation

E. Bompas, O. Boillot, P.-P. Bringuier, *et al.*