

study, Xu and colleagues investigated whether there was a link between CD59 expression and prostate cancer disease progression.

Prostatectomy specimens from patients with adenocarcinomas were obtained and CD59 expression was assessed by immunostaining with an anti-CD59 monoclonal antibody. Both normal and neoplastic prostatic tissues expressed CD59 and the intensity of staining varied from sample to sample: 51.2% of prostate cancer samples expressed a higher level of CD59 than adjacent normal tissue, 37.2% expressed CD59 at a similar level and 11.6% showed a lower level of CD59 expression than normal tissue.

Next the authors asked whether the immunohistological findings correlated with clinicopathological parameters. Upregulation of CD59 expression (moderate or strong cytoplasmic staining occurring at a higher rate than in normal adjacent tissue), as seen in 36% of prostate cancer cases in this study, was significantly associated with higher tumor grades, according to Gleason scores, higher pT stages and earlier biochemical relapse.

These results indicate that CD59 could act as a prognostic marker for more aggressive forms of prostate cancer and could, therefore, play a diagnostic role in prostate cancer management.

Original article Xu C *et al.* (2005) Increased CD59 protein expression predicts a PSA relapse in patients after radical prostatectomy. *Prostate* 62: 224–232

Inguinal hernia and sexual function

Inguinal hernia repair is a common surgical procedure but little is known about its effects on sexual function, despite the proximity of the inguinal region to the sexual organs and the high frequency of hernia-related sexual dysfunction. Zieren and colleagues have carried out a prospective study, to compare preoperative and postoperative sexual function in men and women undergoing mesh repair of inguinal hernia at a surgical center in Berlin.

The study included 210 men and 14 women of a mean age of 53 ± 17 years. Using an anonymous questionnaire, all patients provided details of their sexual function before undergoing a standardized plug-and-patch

technique for hernia repair. Postoperative questionnaires were completed 3 months after surgery and then every 6 months during follow-up.

Fifty-two patients (23.2%) reported problems with potency, erection or orgasm before surgery; they attributed these difficulties to groin pain or feelings of pressure or tension caused by their hernia. Most of these preoperative complaints were reduced postoperatively; 36 (16%) patients reported postoperative potency or orgasm disorders, but these appeared to resolve within a few months of surgery. None of the male patients reported problems with erection or ejaculation as a result of the surgery.

Zieren *et al.* conclude that hernia repair can bring about the recovery of sexual function in patients with hernia-related sexual dysfunction. Furthermore, the technique employed did not appear to disrupt sexual function in those with no such problems.

Original article Zieren J *et al.* (2005) Sexual function before and after mesh repair of inguinal hernia. *Int J Urol* 12: 35–38

Management of chronic scrotal pain

Chronic scrotal pain syndrome is a clinically challenging condition and evidence-based guidelines for its management are lacking. Strebel and colleagues from Zurich have surveyed the members of the Swiss Society of Urology in an attempt to understand current practice.

All 164 members of the society were sent a questionnaire covering their practice setting and the incidence, etiology, diagnostic work-up, therapy for and success rate of treating chronic scrotal pain. Of 103 responders (63%), all but 2 of the practitioners reported seeing patients with this condition, with a mean rate of 6.5 new patients per month. Thus the crude incidence was calculated as ~400 cases per 100,000 men in Switzerland.

The majority (79%) of responders considered the condition to be infectious or post-infectious in etiology; non-steroidal anti-inflammatory agents and antibiotics were the most common first-line treatments. Urinalysis and ultrasound were the most common examinations, reported by 96% and 93% of