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IN BRIEF

HAEMATOLOGICAL CANCER

New gold standard for Hodgkin lymphoma?

The optimal treatment strategy for patients with advanced-stage Hodgkin lymphoma is increasingly under discussion. In the recent HD15 trial, 2,182 patients with Hodgkin lymphoma were randomly assigned to eight cycles of BEACOPP given in 14-day intervals, eight cycles of escalated BEACOPP (B_{esc}), or six cycles of B_{esc}. All patients were monitored using PET imaging. Non-inferiority was achieved for all therapies and the six cycles of B_{esc} was recommended as the new standard therapy by the authors owing to reduced toxicity.

Original article Engert, A. *et al.* Reduced-intensity chemotherapy and PET-guided radiotherapy in patients with advanced stage Hodgkin's lymphoma (HD15 trial): a randomised, open-label, phase 3 non-inferiority trial. *Lancet* doi:10.1016/S0140-6736(11)61940-5

SKIN CANCER

Two-faced role of metformin in *BRAF*-mutant melanoma

The antidiabetes drug metformin inhibits the growth of most tumour cell types. However, a new study now shows that metformin accelerates the growth of *BRAF*-mutant melanoma cells *in vitro* through an RSK-mediated mechanism. Intriguingly, combination of metformin with VEGF inhibitors suppressed the growth of these cells *in vivo*. These data suggest that combination treatment with metformin and VEGF inhibitors could be an alternative treatment for patients with *BRAF*-mutant melanoma who become resistant to *BRAF* inhibitors.

Original article Martin, M. J. *et al.* Metformin accelerates the growth of *BRAF*^{V600E}-driven melanoma by upregulating VEGF-A. *Cancer Discov.* doi:10.1158/2159-8290.CD-11-0280

IMMUNOTHERAPY

Cixutumumab and mTOR blockade well tolerated in EWS

A small study of (*n* = 20) has found that patients with refractory Ewing's Sarcoma (EWS) or desmoplastic small-round cell tumour responded well when treated with cixutumumab (a monoclonal antibody against insulin growth factor-1) and the mTOR inhibitor temsirolimus. The combined therapy achieved tumour regression in 29% of patients with EWS, and complete remission or prolonged (>5 months) stable disease was observed in 35% of patients. The adverse effects (including hyperglycaemia) were well controlled.

Original article Naing, A. *et al.* Insulin growth factor-receptor (IGF-1R) antibody cixutumumab combined with the mTOR inhibitor temsirolimus in patients with refractory Ewing's sarcoma family tumors. *Clin. Cancer Res.* doi:10.1158/1078-0432.CCR-12-0061

GYNAECOLOGICAL CANCER

Olaparib as maintenance therapy for ovarian cancer

The PARP inhibitor olaparib has antitumour efficacy in women with high-grade ovarian cancer. A randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled phase II trial was conducted in 265 women with platinum-sensitive, high-grade ovarian cancer who had previously received two or more platinum-based regimens and had a partial or complete response to their most recent treatment. Maintenance therapy with olaparib significantly improved progression-free survival. Overall survival and correlation with *BRCA* germline mutations or the *BRCA*ness phenotype will be assessed in the final analysis.

Original article Ledermann, J. *et al.* Olaparib maintenance therapy in platinum-sensitive relapsed ovarian cancer. *N. Engl. J. Med.* doi: 10.1056/NEJMoa1105535