

Nature Reviews Gastroenterology & Hepatology 9, 488 (2012); published online 14 August 2012;
 doi:10.1038/nrgastro.2012.147;
 doi:10.1038/nrgastro.2012.148;
 doi:10.1038/nrgastro.2012.149;
 doi:10.1038/nrgastro.2012.150

IN BRIEF

ESOPHAGEAL CANCER

Potential prognostic marker and therapeutic target for oesophageal squamous cell carcinoma?

Huang *et al.* have shown that breast cancer anti-oestrogen resistance 1 (BCAR1) expression levels are significantly higher in oesophageal squamous cell carcinoma than adjacent normal tissue and are linked to tumour differentiation. High BCAR1 expression levels correlated with reduced survival times and BCAR1 expression levels were a significant and independent prognostic indicator. Elevated BCAR1 expression levels were associated with increased VEGF and p53 expression levels.

Original article Huang, W. *et al.* Expression of breast cancer anti-estrogen resistance 1 in relation to vascular endothelial growth factor, p53, and prognosis in esophageal squamous cell cancer. *Dis. Esophagus* doi:10.1111/j.1442-2050.2012.01376.x

GENETICS

Two new primary sclerosing cholangitis risk loci identified

A combined analysis of genome-wide association studies for primary sclerosing cholangitis (PSC) and ulcerative colitis has uncovered two new PSC risk loci with genome-wide significance—*GPR35* and *TCF4*. While *TCF4* is a risk loci for PSC alone, *GPR35* is a risk loci for both PSC and ulcerative colitis. The authors say “Both loci may represent previously unexplored aspects of PSC pathogenesis.”

Original article Ellinghaus, D. *et al.* Genome-wide association analysis in sclerosing cholangitis and ulcerative colitis identifies risk loci at *GPR35* and *TCF4*. *Hepatology* doi:10.1002/hep.25977

PANCREATIC CANCER

Dietary antioxidant intake and pancreatic cancer

Banim *et al.* have found that consuming a combination of the three highest quartiles (Q2–4) of vitamin C, vitamin E and selenium is associated with a decreased risk of pancreatic cancer. Threshold effects (Q2–4 versus Q1) were also found for selenium and vitamin E; serum measurements showed a decreased risk for vitamin C, but the threshold effect from 7-day food diaries was not significant. The authors estimate 1 in 12 cancers might be prevented by avoiding the lowest intakes of dietary antioxidants if the association is causal.

Original article Banim, P.J. R. *et al.* Dietary antioxidants and the aetiology of pancreatic cancer: a cohort study using data from food diaries and biomarkers. *Gut* doi:10.1136/gutjnl-2011-301908

LIVER

Dissecting the role of microRNA-122 in the liver

Two new mouse studies have contributed to our knowledge of the physiological role of miR-122, the most abundant liver microRNA. Tsai *et al.* found steatohepatitis, fibrosis and HCC-like tumours developed as a result of *Mir122a* deletion and that re-expression of miR-122a reduced both disease manifestation and tumour incidence. Similarly, Hsu *et al.* found that *Mir122* deletion resulted in hepatosteatosis, hepatitis and the development of HCC-like tumours and that tumorigenesis was inhibited by miR-122 given to a mouse model of HCC.

Original articles Tsai, W.-C. *et al.* MicroRNA-122 plays a critical role in liver homeostasis and hepatocarcinogenesis. *J. Clin. Invest.* doi:10.1172/JCI63455 | Hsu, S.-H. *et al.* Essential metabolic, anti-inflammatory, and anti-tumorigenic functions of miR-122 in liver. *J. Clin. Invest.* doi:10.1172/JCI63539