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IN BRIEF

TRANSPLANTATION

Indirect pathway T-cell responses in transplant recipients

A spectrum of donor-specific indirect pathway T-cell responses that corresponds to immune responsiveness is present in renal transplant recipients, say researchers. Haynes *et al.* analyzed peripheral blood of 45 renal transplant recipients divided into five groups ranging from most tolerant to least tolerant: identical twins, clinically tolerant patients, patients on steroid monotherapy, patients on standard immunosuppression and patients with chronic allograft rejection. The antidonor indirect pathway was active in all but the twins. The indirect pathway T-effector response increased across patient groups, whereas the antidonor indirect pathway T-regulatory response decreased across the groups.

Original article Haynes, L. D. *et al.* Donor-specific indirect pathway analysis reveals a B-cell-independent signature which reflects outcomes in kidney transplant recipients. *Am. J. Transplant.* doi:10.1111/j.1600-6143.2011.03869.x

VASCULITIS

Glucocorticoid use and infection risk

Glucocorticoid use for >6 months reportedly does not improve outcomes and increases infection risk in patients with anti-neutrophil cytoplasmic autoantibody (ANCA) disease. Among 147 patients with ANCA disease, duration of glucocorticoid therapy did not influence time to relapse, relapse-free survival, risk of death or risk of end-stage renal disease, but use of these drugs for >6 months was associated with an increased risk of infection.

Original article McGregor, J. G. *et al.* Glucocorticoids and relapse and infection rates in anti-neutrophil cytoplasmic antibody disease. *Clin. J. Am. Soc. Nephrol.* doi:10.2215/CJN.05610611

BASIC RESEARCH

Mature podocytes can reversibly enter the cell cycle

Kidney podocytes are thought to lack much regenerative capacity. However, a new study reports that mature podocytes can reversibly enter the cell cycle and that the Wnt and telomerase pathways are crucial in podocyte proliferation and disease. Shkreli *et al.* came to these conclusions from studying mice in which the telomerase protein component TERT was conditionally expressed.

Original article Shkreli, M. *et al.* Reversible cell-cycle entry in adult kidney podocytes through regulated control of telomerase and Wnt signaling. *Nat. Med.* doi:10.1038/nm.2550

TRANSPLANTATION

Early withdrawal of corticosteroids reduces fracture risk

The risk of fracture after kidney transplantation decreases after withdrawal of corticosteroids in the early post-transplantation period, say researchers. Nikkel *et al.* evaluated data from 77,430 kidney transplant recipients in the United States Renal Data System database. Over a median follow-up of ~4 years, 2,395 patients had fractures. Transplant recipients discharged without corticosteroids had a 31% reduced risk of fracture compared with those on corticosteroids at discharge.

Original article Nikkel, L. E. *et al.* Reduced fracture risk with early corticosteroid withdrawal after kidney transplant. *Am. J. Transplant.* doi:10.1111/j.1600-6143.2011.03872.x