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NEW THERAPIES

BENDAMUSTINE (Treanda) has been approved for the treatment of patients with chronic lymphocytic leukemia. In a randomized study of 301 treatment-naïve patients, patients assigned to bendamustine had better clinical outcomes compared with patients treated with chlorambucil. The drug was also approved for the treatment of relapsed indolent NHL in November 2008.

ROMIPLOSTIM (NPlate) is a second-generation thrombopoietin analog that stimulates platelet production by binding to and activating the thrombopoietin receptors. It has been approved for the treatment of patients with chronic, refractory ITP.

ISSUES IN CANCER SCREENING AND PREVENTION

Colorectal Cancer screening has been deemed unnecessary beyond 75 years. An analysis conducted by the USPSTF found little cost benefit for conducting periodic screening in patients aged above 75 years. The authors noted that half of the eligible patients are still failing to receive recommended screenings.

Should patients older than 75 be screened for prostate cancer? The U.S. Preventative Services Task Force reviewed evidence-based literature and concluded that the risks of screening and therapy in this age group outweighed the benefits, and therefore it does not recommend screening of this age group.

Vitamin D deficiency linked to worse prognosis in breast cancer. Canadian researchers found for the first time that women with vitamin D deficiency at the time of breast cancer diagnosis were more likely to experience metastasis of their cancer, and more likely to die, compared with women with adequate vitamin D levels. They were also more likely to have high-grade cancers. This data is preliminary, and it is too early to conclude whether the association is causal.

NEW TECHNOLOGIES-NEW HOPE

BSGI– BREAST SPECIFIC GAMMA IMAGING relies on the use of radiotracer to detect cancer cells. When 159 women who'd been found to have a suspicious lesion after mammography underwent BSGI scanning, an additional suspicious lesion was found in 29 percent of the women. Of these, another third were found to be cancerous. At this time, BSGI is an adjunct to mammography that remains the mainstay of breast cancer screening

CIRCULATING TUMOR CELL TECHNOLOGY. Veridex LLC markets the CTC measurement technology known as CellSearch System. It is FDA approved as a tool to predict PFS and overall survival in patients with metastatic breast, colorectal, or prostate cancer.

ADVANCES IN PERSONALIZED THERAPY

KRAS MUTATION was linked to ineffectiveness of cetuximab in colorectal cancer. A retrospective analysis of the CRYSTAL trial patients showed 65% of them were KRAS wild-type (normal), and 35% were KRAS mutated. The one year progression-free survival for those who received cetuximab and FOLFIRI was 43% vs. 25% for those who received FOLFIRI alone. The response rate in the KRAS wild-type population was 59% for cetuximab containing regimen vs. 43% for chemotherapy alone.

CYP2D6 GENOTYPING. Decreases in CYP2D6 activity can reduce concentrations of tamoxifen's active metabolites. Clinical studies demonstrate that breast cancer patients treated with adjuvant tamoxifen who have decreased CYP2D6 may have an increased risk of recurrence and reductions in disease-free survival. Therapeutic alternatives should be considered in poor metabolizers.

DEFICIENT MISMATCH REPAIR (dMMR) patients with colon cancer did not benefit from fluorouracil-based chemotherapy, compared with patients with proficient mismatch repair, who were more likely to benefit. These results, derived from a pooled reanalysis of randomized chemotherapy trials, suggest that mismatch repair status should be considered when choosing therapy for patients with colon cancer.

Services provided by OVHOMG:

Cancer screening and prevention

Second opinions

Genetic testing and counseling

Chemotherapy

Infusion Therapy

Palliative care

DVT prevention/management

Cancer Support group

Hospice care