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**OCEAN VIEW HEMATOLOGY/ ONCOLOGY MEDICAL
GROUP
NEWSLETTER**

**NEW STRATEGIES/THERAPIES-NEW HOPE IN THE WAR AGAINST
CANCER**

NIVOLUMAB (Opdivo) approved in NSCLC.

The FDA has approved the anti-PD-1 agent for the treatment of patients with advanced squamous non-small cell cancer (NSCLC) who have progressed on or after platinum-based chemotherapy. The approval was based on data from the phase III CheckMate-017 trial in which nivolumab improved overall survival (OS) by 3.2 months versus docetaxel. The study involved 272 previously treated patients who were randomized to the fully human IgG4 monoclonal antibody nivolumab at 3 mg/kg iv every 2 weeks or docetaxel at 75 mg/m² iv every 3 weeks. Treatment with nivolumab improved OS by 41% versus docetaxel (9.2 vs 6.0 months). Data from the phase II trial of nivolumab in NSCLC showed at 11 months' follow-up ORR of 15%, with a median duration of response that was not yet reached. The durability of response is one of the most promising aspects of this type of immunotherapy

“UNPRECEDENTED” survival benefit in Prostate Cancer: practice-changing data from the randomized phase III ECOG E3805 trial showed that adding docetaxel to the initial hormonal therapy in men with metastatic, hormone-sensitive prostate cancer, can extend overall survival by more than a year (57.6 months vs. 44 months). This magnitude of survival is quite unprecedented in patients with an adult, node-metastatic solid tumor. The survival benefit was observed mainly in men with more extensive/high volume metastatic disease.

ISSUES IN CANCER SCREENING AND PREVENTION

LUNG CANCER screening can save lives, and is covered by insurance now. USPSTF/ACS is now recommending annual screening with LDCT in adults 55 to 80 years who have a 30 pack-year smoking history- or 20 pack-year + one additional

risk factor-, and currently smoke or have quit within the past 15 years=high risk category).

It is important to discuss the potential benefits and harms, including non-definitive findings, which can be associated with increased anxiety, with the patient. Also important is for testing to take place in settings with multidisciplinary expertise in diagnostic workup and treatment.

VITAMIN D deficiency linked to worse prognosis in 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. Similarly, studies have shown decreased risk for CRC, and significantly better survival for patients with CRC with higher vitamin D levels. This data is preliminary, and it is too early to conclude whether the association is causal, but Vitamin D is known to inhibit cell proliferation and angiogenesis, induce cell differentiation and apoptosis, and also have anti-inflammatory effects.

NEW TECHNOLOGIES-NEW HOPE

3-D MAMMOGRAPHY for breast cancer detection.

A large multicenter trial comparing tomosynthesis (3D mammography) with traditional mammography for the detection of breast cancer concluded that the addition of tomosyntheses improves substantially the detection of breast cancer, while the recall rate has decreased. The results showed a 41% relative increase in the invasive cancer detection rate for combined tomosyntheses and digital mammography, compared with digital mammography alone. This makes sense because 3-D mammography provides many more images, each sliced at one-millimeter intervals throughout the breast.

ADVANCES IN PERSONALIZED THERAPY

CRIZOTINIB (Xalkori), ALK- Targeted therapy previously approved for lung cancer, proved effective in ALK-positive anaplastic large cell lymphoma. In recent studies, Crizotinib exerted potent antitumor activity, and achieved durable responses in heavily pretreated patients. These studies support the concept of targeting the tumor abnormality, i.e., the oncogenic driver, as an important strategy, not just focusing on the type of cancer.

PROLARIS: by Myriad Genetics, Inc. The updated NCCN guidelines include the use of the Prolaris genetic test to help patients better assess their risk of disease specific mortality and biochemical recurrence. Prolaris is an important prognostic test to help inform men with localized prostate cancer about the aggressiveness of their disease and to help their physicians tailor therapy based on more accurate

assessment of risk. This molecular profiling provides prognostic information independent of Gleason grade and PSA levels. Low gene expression is associated with a low risk of disease progression, thus identifying men who can safely forgo initial surgery or radiation, and be candidates for active surveillance.

PERTUZUMAB (Perjeta) showing dramatic survival boost in patients with HER-2 positive breast cancer. In phase 3 CLEOPATRA study, after a four-year follow-up, adding a second monoclonal antibody-Perjeta- to Herceptin and chemotherapy, extended survival by nearly 16 months over the standard treatment of Herceptin and chemotherapy.

‘DAWN OF A NEW AGE’?

IDELALISIB plus rituximab improved progression-free survival by >80%, and overall survival compared with rituximab alone in heavily pretreated patients with relapsed chronic lymphocytic leukemia (CLL). Idelalisib is a targeted, highly selective, orally administered inhibitor of the delta isoform of the PI3K enzyme, which is found exclusively in hematopoietic cells, and is essential to survival of CLL cells. With drugs like idelalisib, we have a great opportunity to eliminate chemotherapy from the treatment paradigm.

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