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Rogerio Lilenbaum, MD
Professor of Medicine
Yale Cancer Center
Chief Medical Officer
Smilow Cancer Hospital at Yale-New Haven
333 Cedar Street
P.O. Box 208028
New Haven, CT 06520-8028

RESEARCH IN THE NEWS

Yale scientists identify key defect in brain tumor cells

In a new study, Yale Cancer Center researchers identified a novel genetic defect that prevents brain tumor cells from repairing damaged DNA. They found that the defect is highly sensitive to an existing FDA-approved drug used to treat ovarian cancer - a discovery that challenges current practice for treatment of brain tumors and other cancers with the same genetic defect, said the scientists.

The researchers tested several existing cancer drugs on the mutated cell lines. They found that tumor cells with the mutant genes were particularly sensitive to a drug, olaparib, recently approved for the treatment of hereditary ovarian cancer. The drug caused a 50-fold increase in brain tumor cell death.

Visit bit.ly/2rACBeZ to learn more.

Clue to how cancer cells spread

In a second human case, a Yale-led research team has found that a melanoma cell and a white blood cell can fuse to form a hybrid with the ability to metastasize. The finding provides further insight into how melanoma and other cancers spread from solid tumors with implications for future treatment.

The research team analyzed tumor biopsies from a patient with malignant melanoma who had received a bone-marrow transplant before developing cancer. They compared DNA from the primary melanoma and from lymph nodes where the cancer had spread. In both sites, they found a mixture of patient and donor DNA. The presence of the mixed patient-donor DNA strongly suggests that white blood cells that normally attack cancer cells instead fused with them, forming a genetic hybrid that then spread.

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Lung cancer patients may benefit from delayed chemotherapy after surgery

A new Yale study suggests that patients with a common form of lung cancer may still benefit from delayed chemotherapy started up to four months after surgery, according to the researchers. While there is consensus regarding the use of chemotherapy after cancer surgery, the optimal timing is poorly defined. Many clinicians support starting chemotherapy within six to nine weeks after surgery. But factors such as postoperative complications may affect a patient’s ability to tolerate chemotherapy following surgery.

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Subtype of triple negative breast cancer responds better to chemotherapy

Researchers at Yale Cancer Center have identified a new subtype of triple negative breast cancer that shows significantly improved response to chemotherapy. Patients with the newly defined subtype - BRCA-deficient triple negative breast cancer - had significantly higher survival rates with chemotherapy.

Visit bit.ly/2sa19ID to learn more.

EVENTS

Join us at ASCO
June 4; 8:30 PM  |  Hilton Chicago
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Liver, Pancreas, and Biliary Symposium
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Ribbon cutting ceremony for our new Extended Care Clinic
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Cardio-Oncology Program

The Cardio-Oncology Program at Smilow Cancer Hospital is designed to help address the cardiotoxic side effects of treatment, as well as the management of coexisting cardiac disease and cancer. Led by Dr. Lauren Baldassare, the program provides presurgical and pretreatment cardiovascular evaluation for patients with cancer.

Several drugs used in the treatment of cancer have unanticipated cardiac side effects. Radiation is also known to cause cardiotoxicity. Prior to, during, or after treatment, the Cardio-Oncology Program is available to work with you on the prevention and management of this dire complication.

Contact: (203) 785-4708

CLINICAL TRIAL SUMMARIES

HIC# 1509016502

Principal Investigator: Jennifer Wahlmeier, MD
A Phase II Randomized, Multi-Center, Open-Label, Single-Arm study of Tocilizumab, a Monoclonal Antibody Against IL-6 for the Treatment of Glioblastoma Multiforme

HIC# 1607018037

Principal Investigator: Tara Sant, MD
Randomized Phase III Trial Evaluating the Role of Weight Loss in Adjuvant Treatment of Overweight and Obese Women with Early Breast Cancer

HIC# 1507016120

Principal Investigator: Roy Herbst, MD
An Open-Label, Multicenter, Phase I Study of Ramucirumab Plus Pembrolizumab in Patients with Locally Advanced or Metastatic Gastric or Gastroesophageal Junction Adenocarcinoma, Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer, or Transitional Cell Carcinoma of the Urethral Epithelium

HIC# 1603017493

Principal Investigator: Paul Elder, MD
An Open-Label, Multicenter, Dose Escalation and Expansion Phase IB Study to Evaluate the Safety, Pharmacokinetics and Therapeutic Activity of RO5530587 in Patients with Locally Advanced and/or Metastatic CEA-Positive Solid Tumors

HIC# 151016798

Principal Investigator: Patricia LoRusso, DO
A Phase 1 Trial of SL-801, a Novel Inhibitor of XPO1 Nuclear Export, in Patients with Advanced Solid Tumors

Visit bit.ly/2hEvJW to learn more.