Thursday, February 4, 2010

1900 – 2130  Registration and welcome reception

Friday, February 5, 2010

0700 – 1145  Registration

0700 – 0725  Breakfast

0725 – 0730  Opening remarks
Michael Smylie, Senior Medical Oncologist, Cross Cancer Institute; Associate Professor, Department of Oncology, University of Alberta

0730 – 0815  Genetics of melanoma
David Hogg, Professor, Departments of Medicine and Medical Biophysics, University of Toronto

Theme I: Basic Biology and Pathology
Session Chair: Scott Ernst, Head, Division of Medical Oncology, London Regional Cancer Program

0815 – 0845  Medicolegal aspects of melanoma diagnosis
Ken Alanen, Assistant Clinical Professor, Dermatology and Pathology, University of Alberta

0845 – 0915  Biomarkers and clinical oriented pathology
Alan Spatz, Professor of Pathology and Oncology, Department of Pathology, McGill University

0915 – 0945  A role for RNAi in melanoma
Victor Tron, Professor, Department of Pathology and Molecular Medicine, Queen's University, Faculty of Health Sciences

0945 – 1000  Discussion / Q & A

1000 – 1015  Refreshment Break

1015 – 1045  Throwing the PAX3 ‘switch’ in melanoma
Alan Underhill, Mary Johnston Melanoma Research Chair, Department of Medical Oncology, University of Alberta

Alan Spatz, Professor of Pathology and Oncology, Department of Pathology, McGill University

1115 – 1130  Discussion / Q & A

1130 – 1145  Clinical database: linking the country
Scott Ernst, Head, Division of Medical Oncology, London Regional Cancer Program

1145 – 1630  Free time
Friday, February 5, 2010 con’t
Chair: J. Gregory McKinnon, Professor of Surgery and Oncology, University of Calgary and Tom Baker Cancer Centre

1600 - 1930  Registration
1600 - 1630  Working Dinner
1630 – 1730  Genetic alterations to guide therapeutic decision and improve diagnosis
  Boris Bastian, Associate Professor, Departments of Dermatology and Pathology, University of California, San Francisco

Theme 2: Melanoma Surgery: Treatment of advanced disease

1730 – 1740  Introduction and case presentation
  J. Gregory McKinnon, Professor of Surgery and Oncology, University of Calgary and Tom Baker Cancer Centre
1740 – 1810  Surgical approaches to advanced disease
  Frances Wright, Associate Professor of Surgery, University of Toronto
1810 – 1840  Isolated limb perfusion for locally advanced melanoma of the extremity; “yea or nay?” A 10 year experience and review
  Carman Giacomantonio, Associate Professor, Surgical Oncology, Dalhousie University
1840 – 1900  Isolated limb infusion: a better alternative?
  J. Gregory McKinnon, Professor of Surgery and Oncology, University of Calgary and Tom Baker Cancer Centre
1900 – 1930  Discussion / Q & A

Saturday, February 6, 2010
Chair: Thomas Salopek, Director of Dermatology, Associate Professor, University of Alberta

0700 – 1150  Registration
0700 – 0730  Breakfast
0730 – 0830  Adjuvant melanoma treatment: from BCG via IFN to targeted agents
  Axel Hauschild, Professor, Department of Dermatology, University of Kiel
Saturday, February 6, 2010 - Continued
Theme III: Dermatology
Chair: Thomas G. Salopek, Associate Professor and Divisional Director; Division of Dermatology and Cutaneous Sciences, University of Alberta

0830 – 0850  
Is UV radiation the only environmental factor in melanoma?  
Richard Gallagher, Clinical Professor, University of British Columbia; Head, Cancer Control Research Program, British Columbia Cancer Agency

0850 – 0910  
Melanoma Epidemiology: a Canadian perspective  
Marni Wiseman, Chair, Skin Cancer Disease Site Group, CancerCare Manitoba; Assistant Professor, University of Manitoba

0910 – 0930  
Diagnosis of melanoma including dermoscopy and biopsy techniques  
Joël Claveau, Dermatologist, Melanoma and Pigmented Lesions Clinic, Hôpital Hôtel-Dieu de Québec

0930 – 0950  
Controversies in melanoma  
Thomas G. Salopek, Associate Professor and Divisional Director; Division of Dermatology and Cutaneous Sciences, University of Alberta

0950 – 1010  
Thoughts and controversies on the primary prevention of melanoma 2010  
Jason Rivers, Clinical Professor, Department of Dermatology and Skin Science, University of British Columbia

1010 – 1030  
Discussion / Q & A

1030 – 1050  
Refreshment Break

1050 – 1150  
Results of the AGENDA trial: bcl-2 antisense and chemotherapy for metastatic melanoma  
Sanjiv Agarwala, Chief, Oncology & Hematology, St. Luke’s Cancer Center

1150 – 1800  
Free time

Cocktail Reception and Patient Advocacy Groups

1800 – 1820  
Save Your Skin Foundation  
Kathy Barnard, Founder, Save Your Skin Foundation

1820 – 1830  
Melanoma Network of Canada  
Annette Cyr, Chair, Melanoma Network of Canada

1830 – 1840  
Canadian Skin Patient Alliance  
Christine Jackson, Executive Director, Canadian Skin Patient Alliance

1840 – 2000  
Dinner Event
Sunday, February 7, 2010

0700 – 1200  Registration

0700 – 0730  Breakfast

0730 – 0830  Targeted therapy: B-Raf
Keith Flaherty, Medical Oncologist, Oncology & Hematology, University of Pennsylvania

Theme IV: Immunology and Systemic Therapy
Chair: Ralph Wong, Medical Oncology, St. Boniface General Hospital

0830 – 0900  Immunomodulatory antibodies for melanoma
Jeff Weber, Director, Donald A. Adam Comprehensive Melanoma Research Center, Moffitt Cancer Center

0900 – 0930  Phase II study of interleukin-21 (rIL-21) in patients with metastatic or recurrent melanoma: NCIC IND 189
Teresa Petrella, Medical Oncologist, Odette Cancer Centre; Assistant Professor, University of Toronto

0930 – 0945  Discussion and Q&A

Jean-Francois Pouliot, PhD, Schering-Plough Canada Inc.

1000 – 1015  Refreshment Break

1015 – 1100  Review of systemic therapy: Can we finally lay DTIC to rest?
Michael Smylie, Senior Medical Oncologist, Cross Cancer Institute; Associate Professor, Department of Oncology, University of Alberta

1100 – 1130  Metabolic impediments to effective immunotherapy of melanoma
David Spaner, Clinical-Scientist, Odette Cancer Center; Associate Professor of Medicine, University of Toronto

1130 – 1145  Discussion / Q & A

1145  Conference Closing
General Information

Objectives
- Identify new targets and targeted agents in the treatment of melanoma;
- Communicate state-of-the-art topics such as biology, pathogenesis, immunology, and novel therapeutics;
- Identify key industry partners who would prioritize the development of products and programs in melanoma management in Canada;
- Continue to build the network of basic and clinical investigators in order to promote translational and clinical research across Canada;
- Discuss short- and long-term research strategies.

Accreditation
The Division of Continuous Professional Learning at the University of Alberta has approved this as an Accredited Group Learning Activity under Section 1 of the Framework of Continuing Professional Development options for the Maintenance of Certification Program of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada.

Organizing Committee
Dr. Michael Smylie (Chair)
Senior Medical Oncologist, Cross Cancer Institute; Associate Professor, Department of Oncology, University of Alberta

Dr. Joël Claveau
Dermatologist, Melanoma and Pigmented Lesions Clinic, Hôpital Hôtel-Dieu de Québec

Dr. Scott Ernst
Head, Division of Medical Oncology, London Regional Cancer program

Dr. David Hogg
Professor, Departments of Medicine and Medical Biophysics, University of Toronto

Dr. J. Gregory McKinnon
Professor of Surgery and Oncology, University of Calgary and Tom Baker Cancer Centre

Dr. Teresa Petrella
Medical Oncologist, Odette Cancer Centre; Assistant Professor, University of Toronto

Dr. Thomas G. Salopek
Thomas G. Salopek, Associate Professor and Divisional Director; Division of Dermatology and Cutaneous Sciences, University of Alberta

Dr. Alan Spatz
Professor of Pathology and Oncology, Department of Pathology, McGill University

Ms. Rebecca Swanson
Conference Secretariat, BUKSA Strategic Conference Services

For More Information
BUKSA Strategic Conference Services
Tel: 780.436.0983 Ext. 231
Fax: 780.437.5984
Email: melanoma@buksa.com
Speakers

Sanjiv Agarwala, Chief, Oncology & Hematology, St. Luke’s Cancer Center
Dr. Sanjiv S. Agarwala, MD, is Chief of Medical Oncology and Hematology at St. Luke’s Cancer Center in Bethlehem, PA and Director of the Melanoma and Renal Cell Cancer Programs. Dr Agarwala is a nationally and internationally recognized investigator in the field of melanoma, renal cell carcinoma, immunotherapy and clinical trials. He is the Program Director and Chair of the International Symposium on Melanoma and Other Cutaneous Malignancies held annually in New York City, NY.

Dr. Agarwala serves on the Eastern Cooperative Oncology Group Melanoma Core Committee and is a member of several professional organizations, including the American Association for Cancer Research, the American Society of Clinical Oncology, European Society of Medical Oncology and the International Society for Biologic Therapy. He has published more than 50 articles in peer-reviewed journals such as The New England Journal of Medicine, Journal of Clinical Oncology, and Clinical Cancer Research and has authored numerous book chapters and reviews on melanoma and renal cell carcinoma.

Ken Alanen, Assistant Clinical Professor, Dermatology and Pathology, University of Alberta
Dr. Ken Alanen is an authentic expert in the diagnosis and treatment of skin disease. He has special interests in skin cancer, lasers and acne. He received his Bachelor of Science and Doctor of Medicine degrees at the University of Western Ontario followed by a five year residency in Laboratory Medicine with FRCPC certification in 1999.

Subsequently, he completed a two year fellowship in Dermatopathology (the art and science of microscopic diagnosis of skin disease) at the University of Colorado under Dr Loren Golitz. He passed the subspecialty Dermatopathology examination, jointly administered by the American Boards of Pathology and Dermatology.

After his dermatopathology fellowship, Dr. Alanen completed a residency in Dermatology and received FRCPC certification in 2004. There are less than five similarly trained individuals in Canada.

Boris Bastian, Associate Professor, Departments of Dermatology and Pathology, University of California, San Francisco
Dr. Boris Bastian is Associate Professor in the Departments of Dermatology and Pathology at the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF). Prior to completing a postdoctoral fellowship in the Cancer Genetics Program of the UCSF Comprehensive Cancer Center, Dr. Bastian was an attending physician at the Department of Dermatology at the University of Würzburg, Germany, where he completed his dermatology residency.

Dr. Bastian's research interest is focused on the molecular genetics of melanocytic neoplasms with a particular focus on the discovery on genetic alterations useful for diagnosis, classification, and therapy. In addition to his research activities, Dr. Bastian is a faculty member of the UCSF Dermatopathology Service and participates in the histopathological and molecular diagnostics of skin diseases. Dr. Bastian has authored more than 80 scientific publications and has received several awards for his research.
Speakers - continued

Joel Claveau, Dermatologist, Melanoma and Pigmented Lesions Clinic, Hôpital Hôtel-Dieu de Québec
Dr. Joël Claveau is a Dermatologist, specializing in the diagnosis and treatment of melanoma, and an Associate Professor with the Department of Medicine at Laval University where he completed his Medical Study and Internal Medicine training. He completed his residency in Dermatology at McGill University and subsequently worked at the Melanoma Clinic at the Royal Victoria Hospital in Montreal, Quebec. He is a diplomat of the American Board of Dermatology and is a member of a number of medical societies including the American Academy of Dermatology and the International Dermoscopy Society. He is the director of the Melanoma and Skin Cancer Clinic at Le Centre Hospitalier Universitaire de Québec, Hôtel-Dieu de Québec. He has received many awards including the Young Dermatologist’s Volunteer Award of the Canadian Dermatology Association for his work on the prevention of skin cancers.

Scott Ernst, Head, Division of Medical Oncology, London Regional Cancer Program
Dr. Ernst is a Professor of Medicine at the University of Western Ontario in London, Ontario where he has also served as Divisional Head, Medical Oncology for the past 3 years. He graduated from University of Ottawa and completed his postgraduate training in Edmonton, Alberta, including the Cross Cancer Institute. He has held faculty positions at the Universities of Calgary, East Carolina and most recently, Miami.

His principle clinical interest has been in the management of GU malignancies and melanoma. His specific research has focused upon new drug development and bone metastases. Dr. Ernst has participated in numerous national and international clinical trials and has authored over 50 peer reviewed publications. He is currently an executive member of the NCIC CTG Melanoma Group and is a founding co-chair for the Canadian Melanoma Conference.

Keith Flaherty, Medical Oncologist, Oncology and Hematology, University of Pennsylvania
Dr. Keith Flaherty received a Bachelor of Science from Yale University and medical degree from Johns Hopkins University. He trained in internal medicine at Brigham and Women’s Hospital and completed a fellowship in medical oncology at the University of Pennsylvania. He joined the faculty in the School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania as an Assistant Professor of Medicine and member of the Developmental Therapeutics Program in the Abramson Cancer Center in 2002. In 2009 he moved to the Massachusetts General Hospital Cancer Center to lead the Developmental Therapeutics Program.

Dr. Flaherty has received numerous grants from the NCI including a K12, K23, SPORE project, and several RO1s. He is the principal investigator of numerous first-in-human clinical trials with novel targeted therapeutics and the principal investigator of two national, cooperative group trials: E2603, a phase III trial comparing sorafenib, carboplatin and paclitaxel to carboplatin and paclitaxel alone in patients with metastatic melanoma and E2804, a randomized phase II trial comparing combinations of anti-angiogenic agents in metastatic renal cell carcinoma. Dr. Flaherty has led the clinical development of the first three Raf inhibitors, ultimately validating mutated BRAF as a therapeutic target in cancer. He is internationally known for expertise in clinical and translational research directed against signal transduction pathways in melanoma.
Speakers - continued

Dr. Flaherty maintains a clinical focus on melanoma and renal cell carcinoma, with an overall emphasis on developing novel therapies for these historically treatment-refractory malignancies. He is a member of the AJCC Melanoma Staging Committee, the melanoma and genitourinary cancer steering committees for the Eastern Cooperative Oncology Group, the American Association for Cancer Research, and the American Society of Clinical Oncology.

Richard Gallagher, Clinical Professor, University of British Columbia; Head, Cancer Control Research Program, British Columbia Cancer Agency

Dr. Richard Gallagher is Head, Cancer Control Research Program at the BC Cancer Agency, and Clinical Professor, School of Population and Public Health at the University of BC, in Vancouver, Canada. He is an associate member of the Departments of Dermatology and Skin Sciences, and Urologic sciences, and a Fellow of the American College of Epidemiology.

His research interests are in environmental epidemiology, with emphasis on cohort studies, UV radiation and skin cancers, and risk factors for prostate cancer. He is a principal investigator of the Canadian Partnership for Tomorrow, a prospective cohort which will establish a population-based disease etiology research for platform scientists across Canada. His current service commitments include the Board of Directors of the Canadian Cancer Society and Scientific Advisory Council of the International Agency for Research on Cancer. He is the author of more than 200 peer reviewed scientific publications and, in 2007, received the BCMAs Terry Fox Medal for Cancer Research.

Carman Giacomantonio, Associate Professor, Surgical Oncology, Dalhousie University

Dr. Carman Giacomantio holds a primary appointment as Associate Professor in the Department of Surgery at Dalhousie University with cross appointments in the Department of Pathology and Microbiology and Immunology. He received a Dalhousie University Clinical Scholar Award in 2009 to support his research in cancer metastases and the role of cancer stem cells in metastases. Dr. Giacomantonio is the president elect for the Canadian Society of Surgical Oncology and the clinical head for Surgical Oncology for Cancer Care Nova Scotia. His clinical practice is focused in melanoma, sarcoma, gastric malignancies and carcinomatosis.

Axel Hauschild, Professor, Department of Dermatology, University of Kiel

Prof. Dr. med. Axel Hauschild is Professor of Dermatology and Head of Dermato-Oncology and Dermatologic Surgery at the University of Kiel in Germany. He is the current president of the Dermatologic Cooperative Oncology Group (DeCOG) in Germany. In addition, he is Co-Chairman of the Global Melanoma Task Force (GMTF) and a board member of the International Melanoma Working Group (IMWG), the German Skin Cancer Foundation, the Hiege Foundation Against Skin Cancer and the Schleswig-Holstein Cancer Society.

Professor Hauschild has been the principal investigator of more than 50 clinical studies in the areas of melanoma, cutaneous lymphomas, epithelial skin cancers and other dermatologic diseases.

David Hogg, Professor, Departments of Medicine and Medical Biophysics, University of Toronto

Biographical sketch was not available at time of printing
Speakers - continued

J. Gregory McKinnon, Professor of Surgery and Oncology, University of Calgary and Tom Baker Cancer Center
Dr. Gregory McKinnon is a Professor of Surgery and Oncology at the University of Calgary and Tom Baker Cancer Center. He obtained his MD and completed a residency in general surgery at Dalhousie University. He completed sub-specialty training in surgical oncology at Roswell Park Memorial Institute, Buffalo, N.Y. and the Medical College of Virginia. He was a research fellow, Royal Prince Alfred Hospital and Sydney Melanoma Unit at the University of Sydney.

He is the former chair of the Royal College Surgical Oncology Specialty Committee, the former chair, Canadian Association of General Surgeons Oncology Committee and the past-president of the Canadian Society of Surgical Oncology

He is the current head of the Cutaneous Oncology Clinic at the Tom Baker Cancer Center and Chair of the Provincial Cutaneous Oncology Tumor Group of Alberta.

Teresa Petrella, Medical Oncologist, Odette Cancer Centre; Assistant Professor, University of Toronto
Dr. Teresa Petrella is a Medical Oncologist at the Odette Cancer Centre in Toronto, Canada and an Assistant Professor at the University of Toronto. Dr. Petrella has a BSc in Molecular Biology from the University of Western Ontario and completed her MD at Queen's University. Her Internal Medicine and Medical Oncology training was at McMaster University. She subsequently completed a fellowship in melanoma and breast cancer at the Toronto Sunnybrook Regional Cancer Centre along with a Masters in Health Research Methodology at McMaster University. She was the recipient of a CIHR/CAMO award for her research in Vaccine therapy in combination with Interferon for melanoma patients. Her research interests are in melanoma and breast cancer and she is currently the Principal Investigator for several multi-centre trials investigating novel therapies in melanoma.

Dr. Petrella joined the staff at OCC in 2002 and became the Head of the Melanoma Site Group. She also Chairs the Provincial Guidelines Melanoma Disease Site Group, Program in Evidence Based Care. She is currently the Chair of the National Cancer Institute of Canada Guidelines Melanoma Disease Site Group, Program in Evidence Based Care. She is also currently the Chair of the National Cancer Institute of Canada (NCIC) Melanoma Clinical Trials Group.

Jason K. Rivers, Clinical Professor, Department of Dermatology and Skin Science, University of British Columbia
Dr. Jason K. Rivers is a clinical professor at the University of British Columbia and a practicing dermatologist at Vancouver’s Pacific Dermaesthetics. He is the former director of the Canadian Dermatology Association’s National Sun Awareness and Skin Cancer Prevention Program, and he was involved in a Federal forum to create the UV Index.

Dr. Rivers received his Bachelor of Science with honors at the University of Toronto and his MD, Magna Cum Laude, from the University of Ottawa Medical School in 1981. His dermatology training took place in Ottawa, Canada and in London, England at St John’s Hospital for Diseases of the Skin. Subsequently, he completed fellowships at New York University Skin and Cancer Unit and at the Sydney Melanoma Unit in Australia. He was on full-time faculty with the Department of Dermatology and Skin Science at the University of British Columbia between 1990 and 2007 where he achieved the rank of full professor.
Speakers – continued

Thomas G. Salopek, Associate Professor and Divisional Director; Division of Dermatology and Cutaneous Sciences, University of Alberta

Dr. Thomas Salopek is Associate Professor in the Division of Dermatology and Cutaneous Sciences at the University of Alberta, where he is also the Divisional Director. He is the Director of the Multidisciplinary Melanoma Clinic at the University Dermatology Center. He is a graduate of the University of Alberta Medical School and Dermatology Residency Program. After graduating from dermatology he spent one year with the renowned melanoma specialist Dr. Al Kopf at New York University, where he was the William Randolph Hearst Melanoma Fellow. In addition to having a special interest in melanoma, he also has an interest in nail disorders, dermatologic surgery, psoriasis, and dermatologic diseases with systemic implications.

Michael Smylie, Senior Medical Oncologist, Cross Cancer Institute; Associate Professor, Department of Oncology, University of Alberta

Dr. Michael Smylie is a Medical Oncologist at the Cross Cancer Institute in Edmonton, Alberta. He holds an academic appointment as an Associate Professor in the Department of Oncology at the University of Alberta. He is currently the Site Leader for the Clinical Trials Committee along with the Site Leader of the NCIC Canada. He is the NCIC Melanoma Group Leader and is very active in designing and participating in clinical trials in malignant melanoma. His other interests include lung cancer and breast cancer. His major research interest is in targeted therapy and new drug development in metastatic melanoma. He has chaired several National Melanoma Meetings and recently organized the first National Melanoma Research Meeting in Canada.

David Spaner, Clinical-Scientist, Odette Cancer Center; Associate Professor of Medicine, University of Toronto

Dr. David Spaner received medical training at the Universities of Alberta, McGill, and Toronto, in Canada. His PhD and post-doctoral training in immunology were carried out in Toronto at the Hospital for Sick Children and Ontario Cancer Institute, respectively. Currently he is a clinical-scientist at the Odette Cancer Center at Sunnybrook Hospital and an Associate Professor of Medicine at the University of Toronto. His research laboratory is concerned with trying to improve the efficacy of T cell-mediated cancer immunotherapy. He is on the editorial board of the journal, Leukemia, and holds research funding from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Terry Fox Foundation, Ontario Institute of Cancer Research, and Leukemia and Lymphoma Society of Canada.

Alan Spatz, Professor of Pathology and Oncology, Department of Pathology, McGill University

Dr. Alan Spatz is Director of the Pathology Department at the Jewish General Hospital, and Professor of Pathology and Oncology at McGill University. He comes from the Gustave Roussy Cancer Institute in Villejuif, France, where he was the director of dermatopathology for 12 years, and chief of the immunopathology and biopsy units. He trained in Pathology in Paris where he received his MD in Pathology and MSc in Molecular Oncology from Paris VI University in 1992.

Dr. Spatz is co-Chair of the National Cancer Institute of Canada CTG, Melanoma committee and of the Canadian Association of Pathologists, Anatomic Pathology committee. Dr. Spatz served as Chair of the European Organization for Research and Treatment of Cancer, Melanoma group, and as President of the French division of the International Academy of
Speakers – continued

Pathology. He currently serves as a board member of several international professional organizations and on editorial boards and international strategic committees. Dr. Spatz is Program Director of the McGill Integrated Cancer Research Training Program.

Dr. Spatz leads an international research group on cutaneous melanoma. His current research involves the X chromosome role in metastatic potential and key factors associated with cancer progression. He has authored more than 150 original scientific papers, reports, review articles, and books.

Victor A. Tron, Professor and Head, Department of Pathology and Molecular Medicine, Queen’s University, Faculty of Health Sciences

Dr. Victor Tron is Professor and Head of Pathology and Molecular Medicine at Queen’s University. His Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) funded research laboratory investigates molecular aspects of melanoma. Recently, his group demonstrated the effectiveness of combinational therapy for melanoma using RNAi and small molecular progression. Clinically, Dr. Tron serves as consultant Dermatopathologist at Kingston General Hospital.

Alan Underhill, Mary Johnston Melanoma Research Chair, Department of Medical Oncology, University of Alberta

Dr. Underhill received his PhD in biochemistry from the University of Western Ontario in 1993 and then carried out a Postdoctoral Fellowship at McGill University with the support of the Cancer Research Society. Currently, he is an Associate Professor in the Department of Oncology, having moved from the Department of Medical Genetics at the University of Alberta in July of 2007. Dr. Underhill’s research has been supported by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research, and Alberta Health Services/Alberta Cancer Research Institute. He currently holds the Mary Johnston Chair in Melanoma Research, which was made possible through a gift from the Johnston family to the Alberta Cancer Foundation. He has served on grant review committees for both the National Cancer Institute of Canada and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, and has authored roughly three-dozen publications. Research in the Underhill laboratory focuses on how genes that have important roles during melanocyte development come to function abnormally in melanoma, as well as epigenetic regulation of cell differentiation and its deregulation in cancer.

Jeff Weber, Director, Donald A. Adam Comprehensive Melanoma Research Center, Moffitt Cancer Centre

Dr. Jeff Weber completed medical school at the New York University in 1980. Since 2007 he has been a director and senior member at the H. Lee Moffitt Comprehensive Cancer Center in Tampa, Florida as well as a Professor and Associate Chair of the Department of Oncologic Sciences at the University of South Florida. Dr. Weber’s research is currently being supported by Mannkind Corp., Genentech, Inc., Bristol Myers Squibb Company, Moffitt Fdtn, Melanoma Research Alliance, US Food and Drug Administration, and Nat Institutes of Health/NCI.

His research interests lie in the monitoring and characterization of T cell responses to vaccination in cancer patients, and in the establishment of in vitro models to facilitate the understanding of how immune modulating antibodies amplify T cell responses in patients. He is also interested in the mechanisms by which achieving autoimmunity induces regression of cancer. Dr. Weber’s clinical interests are in the immunotherapy of melanoma and other malignancies, with a focus on vaccines, adoptive immunotherapy, dendritic cell therapy and the use of immune modulating antibodies.
Speakers - continued

Marni Wiseman, Chair, Skin Cancer Disease Site Group, CancerCare Manitoba; Assistant Professor, University of Manitoba
Dr. Marni Wiseman is an Assistant Professor and a member of the Section of Hematology and Oncology, and the Section of Dermatology in the Department Internal Medicine at the University of Manitoba. She is also the Chair of the Skin Cancer Disease Site Group for CancerCare Manitoba where she runs melanoma, cutaneous lymphoma, and nonmelanoma skin cancer clinics and is an investigator at Dermadvances Research. Dr. Wiseman is an active member of the Executive Board of Directors and a member of the Sun Awareness Committee for the Canadian Dermatology Society (CDA).

Frances Wright, Associate Professor of Surgery, University of Toronto
Dr. Frances Wright completed medical school at the University of Toronto in 1996. She then went to Queen’s University in Kingston for her general surgery residency. She completed a surgical oncology fellowship at the University of Toronto in 2003 and joined the Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre Division of General Surgery in July 2003. In 2004, she completed her Masters of Education at the Ontario Institute of Studies in Education at the University of Toronto. She was promoted to Associate Professor in June 2009. Her main research focus is on getting best evidence into practice (knowledge translation) among practicing surgeons. Her research projects to date have included improving lymph node counts in colorectal cancer using the influence of opinion leaders which garnered a Cancer Quality Council of Ontario Award, multidisciplinary cancer conferences and barriers to their initiation, surgical innovation adoption and the effect of a knowledge translation initiative on pancreatic cancer surgery and mortality. She currently works as a consultant for Cancer Care Ontario regarding multidisciplinary cancer conferences and is the program director for the University of Toronto Surgical Oncology Fellowship Program.
Abstracts

MAGE-A3 Antigen-Specific Cancer Immunotherapy (ASCI) clinical activity in metastatic melanoma is associated with predictive biomarkers present in the tumor prior to immunization.

Spatz A¹, Dreno B², Chiarion-Sileni V³, Mortier L⁴, Robert C⁵, Maio M⁶, Louahed J⁷, Peeters O⁷, Lejeune D⁷, Brichard VG⁷, Eggermont A⁶, Keiholz U⁹, Lehmann F⁷.

¹Jewish General Hospital, McGill University, Montreal, Canada; ²CHU Nantes, France; ³Azienda Ospedaliera, Padova, Italy; ⁴CHR Lille, France; ⁵IGR, Villejuif, France; ⁶Azienda Ospedaliera Universitaria-Policlinico “Le Scotte, Siena, Italy; ⁷GlaxoSmithKline Biologicals, Rixensart, Belgium; ⁸Erasmus Medical Center, Rotterdam, Netherlands; ⁹Charité, Berlin, Germany

Introduction: The MAGE-A3 gene is expressed in up to 76% of the melanoma tumors and represents the first target developed as Antigen-Specific Cancer Immunotherapeutics (ASCI).

Objective and Purpose: A randomized open-label Phase II study (EORTC16032-18031 - NCT00086866) was conducted to evaluate recombinant MAGE-A3 protein combined with either AS02B or AS15 Adjuvant System as first-line treatment of MAGE-A3 (+) metastatic cutaneous melanoma patients.

Methods: Primary endpoints were the safety profile and the rate of objective responses (CR/PR). Secondary endpoint included immune response. Gene expression profiling by microarrays of the tumor prior to treatment was performed to identify predictive biomarkers.

Results: The 72 eligible, MAGE-A3-positive patients were equally distributed between the 2 treatment groups. The safety profile of the 2 groups was equivalent: no patient was withdrawn because of toxicity. In the AS15 group 3 patients obtained a CR (11, 23+, 32+ months) and 1 a PR (5 months), in the AS02B group 1 patient had a PR (7 months). 5 patients in each group had > 16 weeks SD. Median overall survival was longer in the AS15 (31.1 months) than in the AS02B (19.9 months) group. Higher and more frequent immune responses (antibody and CD4+ T-cells) were observed in the AS15 group.

A gene signature (GS) was identified, with a potential to predict the benefit from MAGE-A3 ASCI therapy: across the 2 treatment groups median overall survival was 28.8 months in the GS(+) versus 16.2 months in the GS(-) subgroup of patients. Most of the genes identified in the GS are immune-related suggesting that the presence of a specific tumor-environment prior to ASCI treatment influences its efficacy.

Conclusions: A stronger immune response and better clinical activity was shown in patients receiving MAGE-A3 + AS15, while the safety profile of the 2 ASCI formulations was very similar.

Future Direction: The AS15 formulation has thus been selected for further development. A Phase III DERMA study has been initiated in resected MAGE-A3 (+) pathological stage IIIB/C melanoma with macroscopic lymph nodes involvement. Objectives are efficacy (DFS) and prospective validation of the GS and other predictive biomarkers.

Acknowledgement: Funding sources: GSK Bio Technical help: Helene Servais

Minimization of Drug Related Side effects of High Dose Interferon-alfa 2b by optimizing Nursing Support in Patients with High-Risk Melanoma


1 Juravinski Cancer Centre, Hamilton, Ontario, 2 Lakeridge Health, Oshawa, Ontario, 3 Grand River Regional Cancer Centre, Kitchener, Ontario 4 Sunnybrook Regional Cancer Centre, Toronto, Ontario, 5 Princess Margaret Hospital, Toronto, Ontario, 6 Lions Gate Hospital, Mississauga, Ontario, 7 Regional Cancer Centre, Windsor, Ontario, 8 Royal Victoria Hospital, Barrie, Ontario, 9 Tom Baker Cancer Center, Calgary, Alberta, 10 Merck Canada Inc. Kirkland, Québec.

**Introduction:** Melanoma incidence increased dramatically in the last decades. Intron A is the only adjuvant therapy that has been shown to increase survival in high-risk melanoma. However, Intron A is associated with numerous side-effects that often lead to early discontinuation of therapy, decrease drug exposure and potentially sub-optimal therapeutic benefit. The Heath Management Program II (HMP II) was designed to maximize patient compliance through education and support.

**Methods:** Patients scheduled to receive Intron A adjuvant therapy were educated by oncology nurses on procedures known to minimize and/or prevent Intron A side-effects. The patients also received comprehensive education materials on side effect management and prevention. During the study period, patients were seen or contacted regularly to closely monitor, manage and prevent adverse events.

**Results:** This interim analysis was performed after 118 of 250 planned patients completed one year of therapy. All were intended to receive a high dose Intron A regimen consisting of 20 MIU/m² 5 days a week intravenously for 4 weeks (induction), followed by 10 MIU/m² 3 times a week subcutaneously for 48 weeks (maintenance). Thirteen patients (11%) progressed prematurely. Of the remaining 105 patients, 60 (57%) completed therapy. Only 7 patients (6%) discontinued during the induction phase vs. 51 (43%) during the maintenance phase. The main reason for discontinuation was consent withdrawal; most of which (56%) occurred during or immediately after patients completed the induction phase. Twenty-six percent of discontinuations were due to adverse events including: depression (23%), CNS toxicity (23%), headache (15%), fatigue (15%), nausea (8%), myalgia (8%) and neutropenia (8%). Most patients received concurrent i.v. hydration during induction (98%) and the majority (89%) consumed more than 1.5 liter of fluid per day. Activity level was mostly impacted during the induction phase, activity levels then gradually recovered during maintenance, almost returning to baseline after one year.

**Conclusion:** The proportion of patients on Intron A who discontinued treatment due to adverse events was lower than previously reported in a similar program (HMP I). The decrease in discontinuation due to adverse events may be a reflection of the benefit of proper hydration in patients receiving high dose Interferon therapy.

This study was supported by Merck Canada

*This abstract has been selected for oral presentation*
Introduction: Atypical spitz tumors (ASTs) are rare skin lesions that have overlapping features of Spitz nevus and melanoma. We hypothesize that these tumors are of low malignant potential and may not need to be treated as aggressively as malignant melanoma.

Objectives: The purpose of our study was to compare the clinicopathological features, nodal status and clinical outcomes of patients treated for ASTs with wide local excision and sentinel node biopsy (SNB) at our institution.

Methods: Two groups of patients were selected from a prospectively maintained melanoma database containing 855 patients between July 1996 and December 2005. The AST group consisted of 26 patients. The melanoma group (n=310) was queried based on similar age and tumor thickness without ulceration to that of the AST group. Clinicopathologic variables were compared between groups using the chi-square or Fisher exact test and the Wilcoxon rank-sum test. Overall and recurrence-free survivals were defined as the time from SNB to time of death or first recurrence, respectively, or last follow-up. Patients alive or recurrence-free at last follow-up were censored. The log-rank test was used to compare survival and recurrence curves between groups. The median follow-up was 6.15 years and 5.15 years for AST and melanoma groups respectively.

Results: Of the 26 AST patients (median age: 34 years, mean tumor depth: 2.1 mm), eight (31%) had positive SNB, but none had additional nodal disease at completion nodal dissection. Compared to melanoma, AST group showed a trend towards better recurrence-free survival (p= 0.09) and overall survivals (p=0.11), with only one regional recurrence and no mortality. ASTs had significantly lower mitotic index and size of the SN metastases when compared to melanoma.

Conclusions: AST is a rare disease that tends to affect younger populations, but more frequently involved SN (31%) but rarely involve non-SN (0%). ASTs also showed a trend towards better recurrence-free and overall survivals. Our results suggest that AST need not be treated as aggressively as melanoma, especially when it comes to the decision for completion nodal dissection. More study should be done.
Speaker Disclosure

Sanjiv Agarwala  Received honoraria from Novartis and Schering Plough

Boris Bastian  Received research support and is a consultant for Abbott; Received honorarium from Abbott, Novartis, Alnylous and Exelixis

Axel Hauschild  Either served as a member of advisory board and/or received honorarium from Abraxis Oncology, AstraZeneca, Bayer-Schering, Bristol-Meyers Squibb, Essex Pharma-Schering Plough, GlaxoSmithKline, Eli Lilly, Novartis, Onyx, Roche and Synta

Victor Tron  Received financial support from Abbott Laboratories

Jeffrey Weber  Received honorarium from Bristol-Meyers Squibb / Medarex and Pfizer

All other speakers associated with the 4th Canadian Melanoma Conference have no potential or actual conflict of interest.

Committee Disclosure

No organizing committee members associated with the 4th Canadian Melanoma Conference have potential or actual conflict of interest.