



Bits and Pieces from the CLL Global Community

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June 2015

Greetings Friends!

Summer is finally here. Along with the fun that comes from added daylight hours, vacations, and taking advantage of warm weather and the outdoors, comes an increased risk from sun exposure. One of the most frequently encountered second cancers that CLL patients face is skin cancer, including melanoma. Because of this it is important to remember to practice sun safety while enjoying the great outdoors. Wearing sunscreen and a hat, avoiding peak daylight hours, and covering exposed skin are all proven ways to reduce your risk of skin cancer. So enjoy the season while it is here, because it won't last forever, but do so safely so you can take full advantage of many more summers to come.

NEWLY DIAGNOSED

If you have recently been diagnosed with CLL, you probably have questions.

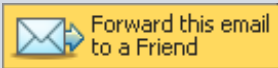
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CLL GLOBAL GRANTEE HIGHLIGHT

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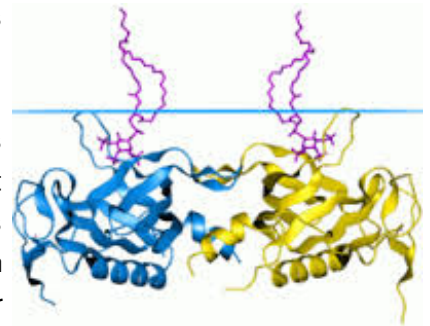
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Dr. Deepa Sampath, PhD

Mechanism based combinations for the therapy of CLL

Dr. Deepa Sampath is an assistant professor of Internal Medicine at The Ohio State University. Her research interest is in the epigenetics of lymphoid malignancies. Dr. Sampath is a recent recipient of a CLL Global Alliance grant. Below she provides an outline of her work on this project to date, and what she plans to do moving forward.

The Bruton's tyrosine kinase BTK is a protein that sends important chemical information to tell B cells to make antibodies. However, in CLL BTK activates many other proteins that help keep the leukemic cells alive.



Ibrutinib is a targeted drug that can be used to treat CLL because it prevents the kinase activity of BTK and stops it from sending survival signals to the CLL cells. This drug has been shown to help when CLL is hard to treat, for example, if there are chromosome 11

FEATURED VIDEOS



Understanding Common CLL Symptoms

Drs. Alessandra Ferrajoli, Nitin Jain, and Javier Munoz, discuss common symptoms of CLL including night sweats and fatigue.

or 17 deletions, or if CLL has grown back after undergoing other treatments. However, as with many other targets therapies, a new problem has emerged, where the CLL cells are able to alter the protein structure of BTK by undergoing a mutation making it difficult for ibrutinib to attach itself to BTK and stop it from working. MicroRNA are a group of small molecules which have important roles in cancer, including CLL. When the body stops producing microRNA, CLL cells survive better. In this project we plan to use a drug called the histone deacetylase inhibitor (HDACi) which allows the CLL cells to form microRNA. These microRNA then attach themselves to the messenger RNA that produces BTK protein and stop BTK from being made. The BTK depleting action of the HDACi should work together with the kinase blocking action of ibrutinib to completely kill CLL cells because the HDACi are able to decrease BTK protein regardless of whether the cells develop the ibrutinib-combating mutation in BTK or not. This strategy will help develop a new treatment for ibrutinib-resistant disease and may even prevent ibrutinib resistance.

AMAZON SMILE

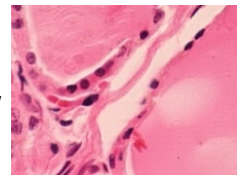


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HIGHLIGHTS FROM EHA

New targeted combination therapy for CLL

Results from an early phase clinical trial that combines the drug venetoclax (formerly ABT-199) with rituximab were presented by Dr. Andrew Roberts at the 2015 European Hematology Association (EHA) meeting in Vienna, Austria. A



A new combination therapy is needed for CLL patients that aren't responding to standard treatments, or whose CLL has recurred. Dr. Roberts and his colleagues from the Royal Melbourne Hospital in Melbourne, Australia, reported that 84% of 49 patients with difficult-to-treat CLL who received the venetoclax-rituximab combination are responding. Notably 41% of all patients achieved a complete response. Further testing is underway in a randomized trial of this combination versus standard chemotherapy (bendamustine) plus rituximab.

TOWN MEETING



CLL Global, in conjunction with our partners at Patient Power, will be hosting a town meeting on October 25, 2015, in Houston, TX. CLL Global CEO Dr. Michael Keating and CLL expert Dr. Nicole Lamanna will be available to provide the latest information on CLL treatment options, clinical trials and ways to improve the quality of life for CLL patients. There will also be a question and answer session. Don't live close to Houston? No problem. The forum will include a virtual option for online participation.

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING US!

As we celebrated Father's Day in June, CLL Global would like to recognize all the wonderful dads out there. And for the dads who are no longer with us, we celebrate the comforting memories we are fortunate to have. It is through the support of families, the ones we are born into and the ones we create over a lifetime of friendships, that we find the strength and courage to make a difference in the world. Thank you for all that you do to support CLL Global and the entire CLL community worldwide. Together we will achieve our goal of curing CLL.

Sincerely,

CLL Global Research Foundation

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