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Anti-angiogenesis therapy: Clinical puzzles and prospects

Angiogenesis, the formation of new capillaries, is an essential process in many physiological and pathological events. In cancers, new vasculature promotes tumor growth and metastasis. Vascular permeability factor/vascular endothelial growth factor (VPF/VEGF) has been implicated in the new vessel development found in most tumors including GI related tumors, renal cell carcinoma, brain cancer and also hematological malignancies. Several groups including ours have been investigating decades regarding the regulatory role of VPF/VEGF to elucidate the mechanisms by which this important pro-angiogenesis cytokine functions in a variety of tumor models. Based on those studies there are several anti-angiogenesis drugs are now in clinics to treat cancer patients and other vascular diseases. However, our recent experiences in clinics and also results from different laboratories suggest that therapy with anti-angiogenesis drugs frequently does not extend survival of cancer patients for more than months, because tumors elicit elusive resistance. In addition, some reports propose that VEGF inhibitors reduce primary tumor growth but promote tumor invasiveness and metastasis. In this context, our recent findings will be discussed in this session that might explain these puzzling findings and also bring the important questions of how to best treat cancer patients with anti-angiogenesis medicine in the future.

Biography

Debabrata Mukhopadhyay Professor of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, Mayo Clinic, Rochester, MN, has a joint appointment with the Department of Physiology and Biomedical Engineering and Associate Director of Mayo Clinic Comprehensive Cancer Center for Global Alliances. He has a broad background in tumor microenvironment, with specific training and expertise in key research areas including Cancer, Cardiovascular Diseases, and Diabetes. As a postdoctoral fellow, later as an independent investigator followed by as an Associate Professor at Harvard Medical School, Boston, he carried out angiogenesis and tumor microenvironment related research. After moving to Mayo Clinic as a Professor and also as Directors of both Tumor Microenvironment and Nanomedicine programs, he has been supervising additional research areas including stellate cell biology, new drug delivery systems and trained several young investigators who are now independent faculties in different institutes. Recently, he has received a Tumor Microenvironment Training Grant (T32) from National Cancer Institute. Additionally, he has initiated the biannual Mayo Clinic Angiogenesis and Tumor microenvironment Symposium, which has been widely attended by international and national scientists and also Mayo Clinic and University of Minnesota Nanotechnology workshops. He has been serving as reviewer for several study sections in NIH, and also international funding agencies and also participating as editorial board members of well received journals including Cancer Research and Nanomedicine.

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