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Biomarkers in cancer immunotherapy

Immunotherapy has gained increasing consent in different types of advanced and/or metastatic cancer. More recently, checkpoint inhibitors have been extensively studied and in some cases they have been approved by regulatory authorities for cancer therapy. However, only a minority of patients exhibits a durable response to immunotherapy, while toxicity and costs of these treatments are not insignificant. In this view, biomarkers predicting response, resistance and toxicity should be important for a better selection of patients. PD-L1 expression, TIL identification and characterisation, mutation load, microsatellite instability, MDSCs, IDO, IFN-gamma/Jak pathway mutations are some of these markers. Due to the complexity of immune response, the identification of reliable markers is difficult and research is in progress.

Biography

Paola Ferrari graduated in Medicine and Surgery at Pisa University in 1995 (full marks), specialized in Internal Medicine in 2000, PhD in Medical Physiopathology and Pharmacology. She works as medical oncologist at Unit of Oncology 1, Department of Oncology, New Technologies and Transplantations, University of Pisa. Clinical activity: Follow-up and therapy of cancer patients, mainly breast cancer patients. Principal fields of research: Breast and gastrointestinal cancer follow-up and therapy, breast cancer biomarkers and prognostic factors, cancer immunology, circulating tumor cells, cancer stem cells. Paola Ferrari is author/co-author of about 50 articles in peer reviewed journals. She regularly serves as reviewer for international oncology journals.

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