



Research

PANCREATIC CANCER ACTION NETWORK

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PANCREATIC CANCER: NEWS & UPDATES

July 28, 2008

Node Evaluation for Pancreatic and Gastric Cancer Differentiates Hospitals

<http://www.medpagetoday.com/HematologyOncology/OtherCancers/tb/10203>

<http://www.acor.org/news/display.html?id=7038>

Better gastric and pancreatic cancer survival rates at high-quality, high-volume cancer centers may be partly because of improved staging through more extensive searches during surgery for metastatic nodes. These national cancer registry findings published in the July issue of the *Archives of Surgery* support guidelines recommending resection and pathologic evaluation of at least 15 regional lymph nodes.

Aurora St. Luke's Medical Center Initiates New Early Detection Program for Pancreatic Cancer

<http://www.wisbusiness.com/index.iml?Article=131669>

Dr. Joseph Geenen and Aurora St. Luke's Medical Center in Milwaukee, Wisconsin have initiated a pancreatic cancer early detection program.

Past and Future of Pancreas Cancer: Are We Ready to Move Forward Together?

Drs. Nipun Merchant and Jordan Berlin of Vanderbilt University wrote an editorial and the past and future of pancreatic cancer.

Endostatin Levels Reflect Pancreatic Cancer Progression

<http://www.cancerpage.com/news/article.asp?id=12463>

http://www.asco.org/ASCO/News/Cancer+News?&reuterview=detail_view&reutersid=11027

Endostatin is a potent inhibitor of angiogenesis and is shown to be expressed in pancreatic cancer. Umea University Hospital researchers studied circulating levels of endostatin in patients with pancreatic cancer (before and after surgical treatment or intraperitoneal chemotherapy) and in healthy controls. They found that its levels increased in patients with pancreatic cancer and declined after surgery or chemotherapy. Their study shows that measuring the circulating level of endostatin could potentially serve as a biomarker for pancreas cancer progression.

Fighting Cancer Is Everyone's Obligation

<http://jco.ascopubs.org/cgi/content/short/26/21/3473>

The Journal of Clinical Oncology recently introduced a new section "Perspectives in Oncology" with the purpose to publish commentary from an array of authors on topics beyond those typically covered in the *Journal*. Lance Armstrong wrote the first inaugural commentary about acting on a united front against cancer and making cancer a national priority.

Cancer Drug Delivery Research at Case Western Reserve University Cuts Time from Days to Hours

<http://www.acor.org/news/display.html?id=7037>

Case Western Reserve University researchers have developed a technique that has the potential to deliver cancer-fighting drugs to diseased areas within hours, as opposed to the two days it currently takes for existing delivery systems.

High Surgeon Volume Linked to Lower Costs for Cancer Surgery

<http://www.newswise.com/articles/view/541921/>

Hospital costs for complex cancer surgeries are lower when the procedures are done by surgeons who perform a larger number of such operations.



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Cancer 'Cure' in Mice to be Tested in Humans

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2008/06/080628155300.htm>

Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center are about to embark on a human trial to test whether a new cancer treatment will be as effective at eradicating cancer in humans as it has proven to be in mice. The treatment will involve transfusing specific white blood cells, called granulocytes, from select donors, into patients with advanced forms of cancer. A similar treatment using white blood cells from cancer-resistant mice has previously been highly successful, curing 100 percent of lab mice afflicted with advanced malignancies.

Doctors Extract Cancer Cells from Blood Sample

<http://www.reutershealth.com/archive/2008/07/03/eline/links/20080703elin017.html>

<http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601124&sid=aq3RcpeKCbwI&refer=science>

Running a teaspoon of blood through a Harvard University-developed device may enable doctors to tailor lung-cancer treatment to the severity of the disease in an individual patient. In December, this same group reported in *Nature* that their circulating tumor cells chip could extract malignant cells from people with breast, prostate, pancreatic and colorectal cancers, as well as lung tumors.

Smokeless Tobacco Can Also Increase Cancer Risk

<http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/113500.php>

A review published in *Lancet Oncology* finds that although users of smokeless tobacco products likely have a lower cancer risk than smokers, they are still increasing their risk of developing several types of cancer.

The review reports that researchers still lack conclusive evidence as to the risk of individual cancers due to smokeless tobacco products. Researchers performed an assessment of all studies and concluded that smokeless tobacco products lead to an 80% increase in risk of oral cancer, a 60% increase in risk of esophageal cancer, and a 60% increase in risk of pancreatic cancer.

Scientists Find Way to Dim Cancer Switch

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/07/01/AR2008070101536.html>

Stanford University reports that they have discovered that they can use a kind of dimmer switch to stop a "cancer signal" from contributing to the development of tumors. The findings don't represent a cure, but the research does clear a pathway for scientists to follow as they determine which "switches" they need to turn off to stop cancer from growing.

Novel Assay Allows Individualized Chemotherapy Management Monitoring

<http://www.medinews.com/GMEDTS32olcqi/ts.cgi?tsurl=0.52.28795.0.0&tsstmplt=object&cat=Critical%20Care>

5-FU Personalized Chemotherapy Management (PCM) assay, intended for use on the Olympus AU400 clinical chemistry analyzer, allows oncologists who prescribe 5-fluorouracil (5-FU) continuous infusion regimens (alone or in combination for colorectal, stomach, breast, and pancreatic cancers) to control and fine-tune individualized dosing.

Effective Treatment of Pancreatic Cancer Remains Elusive

<http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/577281?sssdmh=dm1.366777&src=nldne>

Although therapeutic strategies have advanced for many common gastrointestinal cancers, significant progress in the treatment of pancreatic cancer remains elusive. The recent results of randomized trials evaluating gemcitabine-based combination regimens have proven disappointing. Two recent trials have demonstrated a modest survival benefit with combination therapy, although some consider the improvement too small to justify the risk of toxicity or added cost.



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Japanese Study Shows Active Lifestyle may Prevent Cancer

http://www.asco.org/ASCO/News/Cancer+News?&reuterview=detail_view&reutersid=10958

Researchers led by the Japanese Health Ministry report that physically active people are less likely than sedentary types to develop cancer. While Western research has extensively examined the relationship between leisure and the development of cancer, this is the first Japanese study of its size and scope. Moreover, the Japanese study differs from past research in that it looked at overall daily physical activity that people take part in and not just exercise done for fitness.

Nanoparticle Smart Bombs used to Target Cancer Cells

<http://www.newscientist.com/article/dn14271-nanoparticle-smart-bomb-homes-in-on-cancer.html>

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2008/07/080707171742.htm>

University of California San Diego researchers report they have developed molecule-sized "hypodermics" called nanoparticles that deliver drug agents to stop the metastasis of pancreatic and kidney cancers from spreading in mice; however, the system has little impact on primary tumors. The researchers were able to establish the desired anti-cancer effect while delivering the drug at levels 15 times below what is needed when the drug is used systemically. The much lower chemotherapy dose works because it attacks the cancer with much more precision.

Decline in Cancer Deaths in US tied to Education Levels

http://www.cancer.net/patient/News+and+Events/News+Articles?&reuterview=plwc_detail_view&reutersid=10947

A study published in the Journal of the National Cancer Institute is the latest to illustrate how a person's health can be closely tied to socioeconomic factors such as education and income level. The decline in death rates since the 1990s, from the four leading types of cancer in the United States, has been largely driven by college-educated men and women. These reductions in U.S. death rates from major cancers suggests that persons in lower socioeconomic groups have not yet benefited equivalently from recent advances in prevention, early detection and treatment of the major fatal cancers.

Obesity 'Hikes' Pancreatic Risk

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/25703096/>

Research published this week in the British Journal of Cancer reports that obese women, who carry most of their excess weight around the stomach, are 70% more likely to develop pancreatic cancer. Obesity was thought to increase the risk more in men than women.

Highlights of the American Hepato-Pancreato-Biliary Association 2008 Consensus Conference on Resectable and Borderline Resectable Pancreas Cancer

<http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/575639?src=mp&spon=7&uac=61043SJ>

The above link provides access to a summary of the private AHPBA conference proceedings that occurred earlier this year during the 2008 Gastrointestinal Cancers Symposium. This consensus conference reviewed resectable and borderline resectable pancreatic adenocarcinoma over three sessions: (1) pretreatment assessment, (2) surgical treatment, and (3) combined modality treatment.

Cancer Survival Depends on Where You Live

http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/news/fullstory_67040.html

<http://www.webmd.com/cancer/news/20080716/cancer-survival-rates-vary-by-country>

A report recently published in the *The Lancet Oncology* reports that one's odds of surviving cancer depend on which country one lives in. Economic differences among countries, access to health care, and the availability of cancer treatments influence the disparities in survival. In the United States, it also depends on whether one is black or white.



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Increased Need for Oncologists to Understand Economic Issues in Cancer Care

<http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/577452?sssdmh=dm1.367895&src=nldne>

The economic impact of cancer care has increasingly been the target of scrutiny because of the large price tag attached to many of the agents that have become available during the past few years, especially the biologics. However, cost can vary dramatically noting that some traditional systemic therapies for colorectal cancer can range from less than \$100 for combination fluorouracil/leucovorin administered daily for 5 days every month, to more than \$50,000 for weekly treatment with cetuximab which is a biologic. This is *also* a concern for pancreatic cancer patients prescribed Tarceva which is a costly biologic.