

Editorial

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New molecular aspects in pathogenesis and progression of pancreatic cancer

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Editorial

Pancreatic cancer is the second most common cause of cancer death among all gastrointestinal cancers. It continues to be a devastating disease and only a limited number of patients can be cured. Within the last decade there was truly significant progress in understanding basic cellular and molecular pathways which influence the course of this disease. Therefore, there are reasons to believe that these advances in molecular research represent one of the most likely resources from which significant improvements in the management of pancreatic cancer are to come for the future.

Thus we compelled a series of reviews which highlight the most important issues in local and systemic growth of pancreatic cancer. New transgenic models of pancreatic cancer (may) open new horizons in understanding and interfering pancreatic cancer development. Pancreatic carcinogenesis is a process with numerous genetic alterations and general chromosome instability, both issues to be reviewed in this special issue. Furthermore, the impact of growth factors, their receptors and some of the most promising pathways for therapy are highlighted. Novel insight in apoptotic pathways and possible therapeutic interventions are discussed. The role of tumor neoangiogenesis and the relation to the tumor microenvironment, alterations in angiogenic pathways and the role of the endocrine pancreas are also discussed comprehensively. In addition, the value of possible novel markers in diagnosis of pancreatic cancer are being reviewed.

Thus it was possible to cover many of the most important aspects of molecular pathogenesis, diagnosis and therapy of pancreatic cancer. This molecular approach was created in an effort to reflect the current state of the art in the area

of pancreatic cancer, with outstanding contributions from renowned experts in this field. Therefore, this issue should be of interest for all basic and clinical pancreatologists who work in this challenging area. Last but not least, it is our particular pleasure to thank all contributors for their efforts in supporting this special issue on pancreatic cancer.

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