



Circulating and Disseminated Tumor Cells — Novel Approaches and Future Outlook

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Message from the Guest Editor

Despite major improvements in the diagnosis and treatment of solid tumors, many patients show a relapse in disease, often even years after first diagnosis, such as in breast cancer. In many cases, recurrence of the disease is explained by early micrometastatic spread of circulating tumor cells (CTCs) to blood and further dissemination into secondary organs such as the bone marrow (BM) to settle down there as disseminated tumor cells (DTCs). Although the clinical relevance for relapse and overall survival has been demonstrated in a variety of tumor entities based on the analysis of thousands of patients, the lack of therapeutic approaches to eliminate these cells constitutes a major obstacle to the successful treatment of the disease. Whereas multimarker detection methods are available for the characterization of CTCs, methods are lacking for DTCs because BM auto-fluorescence and endogenous immune cell properties as well as BM matrix components can generate false-positive staining.

With the rapid technical progress in the detection of these cells, might help to evaluate patients for additional treatment options to eliminate minimal residual disease.





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Message from the Editor-in-Chief

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