



PD-L1, A Master Regulator of Immunity

Guest Editors:

Prof. Karine Breckpot

Laboratory of Molecular and Cellular Therapy, Department of Biomedical Sciences, Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Brussels, Belgium

Dr. David Escors

Navarrabiomed-Fundación Miguel Servet, Complejo Hospitalario de Navarra, Pamplona, Spain

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Message from the Guest Editors

Receptor programmed cell death-1 (PD-1) is a co-inhibitory receptor that is mainly expressed on activated T cells. Through binding with its ligand, programmed death ligand-1 (PD-L1), PD-1 regulates the activity of T cells. As such, adaptive immune responses mediated by T cells against invading pathogens are strictly regulated, thereby avoiding collateral damage to the host. This regulatory circuit is however abused in several diseases such as chronic infection and cancer to dampen immune responses prematurely. Blocking the PD-1:PD-L1 immune checkpoint axis has therefore garnered substantial interest. In cancer, PD-1:PD-L1 blockade has resulted in unprecedented successes in individual patients across a variety of cancer types. However, a large cohort of patients fails to respond to PD-1:PD-L1 blockade. Insights into different mechanisms underlying this therapy failure are gradually gained. These highlight the complexity of the immune system and cancer as a disease. They further shed light on how combination with other therapies could enhance the response rates to PD-1:PD-L1 blockade.





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Editor-in-Chief

Prof. Dr. Maurizio Battino

Department of
Odontostomatologic and
Specialized Clinical Sciences,
Sez-Biochimica, Faculty of
Medicine, Università Politecnica
delle Marche, Via Ranieri 65,
60100 Ancona, Italy

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*International Journal of Molecular
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MDPI, Grosspeteranlage 5
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