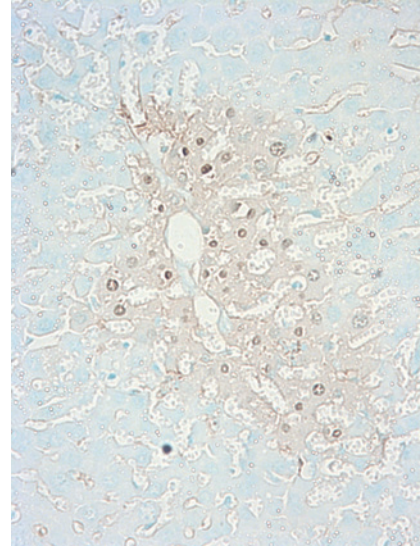


PERSPECTIVES

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|------|--|------|--|
| 1073 | <p>Genetic Driver Events in Premalignancy: LOH Validated for Marking the Risk of Oral Cancer
Webster K. Cavenee
<i>Perspective on Zhang et al., p. 1081</i></p> | 1115 | <p>A Clinical Risk Prediction Model for Barrett Esophagus
Aaron P. Thrift, Bradley J. Kendall, Nirmala Pandeya, Thomas L. Vaughan, David C. Whiteman, for the Study of Digestive Health</p> |
| 1075 | <p>Validation of LOH Profiles for Assessing Oral Cancer Risk
Mark W. Lingen and Eva Szabo
<i>Perspective on Zhang et al., p.1081</i></p> | 1124 | <p>Failure Rates in the Hepatocellular Carcinoma Surveillance Process
Amit G. Singal, Adam C. Yopp, Samir Gupta, Celette Sugg Skinner, Ethan A. Halm, Eucharia Okolo, Mahendra Nehra, William M. Lee, Jorge A. Marrero, and Jasmin A. Tiro</p> |
| 1078 | <p>The Great Escape: Microbial LPS Takes a Toll on the Liver
David S. Weiss
<i>Perspective on Lin et al., p. 1090</i></p> | 1131 | <p>An EMILIN1-Negative Microenvironment Promotes Tumor Cell Proliferation and Lymph Node Invasion
Carla Danussi, Alessandra Petrucco, Bruna Wassermann, Teresa Maria Elisa Modica, Eliana Pivetta, Lisa Del Bel Belluz, Alfonso Colombatti, and Paola Spessotto</p> |
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- | | | | |
|--------------------------|--|------|---|
| RESEARCH ARTICLES | | | |
| 1081 | <p>Loss of Heterozygosity (LOH) Profiles—Validated Risk Predictors for Progression to Oral Cancer
Lewei Zhang, Catherine F. Poh, Michele Williams, Denise M. Laronde, Ken Berean, Pamela J. Gardner, Huijun Jiang, Lang Wu, J. Jack Lee, and Miriam P. Rosin
<i>See Perspectives on p. 1073 and p. 1075</i></p> | 1144 | <p>Phase IB Randomized, Double-Blinded, Placebo-Controlled, Dose Escalation Study of Polyphenon E in Women with Hormone Receptor-Negative Breast Cancer
Katherine D. Crew, Powel Brown, Heather Greenlee, Therese B. Bevers, Banu Arun, Clifford Hudis, Heather L. McArthur, Jenny Chang, Mothaffar Rimawi, Lana Vornik, Terri L. Cornelison, Antai Wang, Hanina Hibshoosh, Aqeel Ahmed, Mary Beth Terry, Regina M. Santella, Scott M. Lippman, and Dawn L. Hershman</p> |
| 1090 | <p>Gut-Derived Lipopolysaccharide Promotes T-Cell-Mediated Hepatitis in Mice through Toll-Like Receptor 4
Yan Lin, Le-Xing Yu, He-Xin Yan, Wen Yang, Liang Tang, Hui-Lu Zhang, Qiong Liu, Shan-Shan Zou, Ya-Qin He, Chao Wang, Meng-Chao Wu, and Hong-Yang Wang
<i>See Perspective on p. 1078</i></p> | 1155 | <p>Deregulation of XPC and CypA by Cyclosporin A: An Immunosuppression-Independent Mechanism of Skin Carcinogenesis
Weinong Han, Keyoumars Soltani, Mei Ming, and Yu-Ying He</p> |
| 1103 | <p>Taxifolin Suppresses UV-Induced Skin Carcinogenesis by Targeting EGFR and PI3K
Naomi Oi, Hanyong Chen, Myoung Ok Kim, Ronald A. Lubet, Ann M. Bode, and Zigang Dong</p> | | |

ABOUT THE COVER

Gut-derived LPS promotes inflammatory hepatic injury and apoptosis by activating Toll-like receptor 4 (TLR4). Reduction of endotoxin using antibiotics regimen or TLR4 ablation in mice greatly attenuates hepatocyte apoptosis in a Con A-induced hepatitis model. Wild-type (wt) and TLR4 knockout (TLR4^{-/-}) mice were injected with Con A intravenously and sacrificed 0, 6, and 20 hours thereafter. The micropictogram featured on the cover (magnification ×200) shows the apoptotic cells (brown) of liver sections from Con A-injected wt mice with antibiotic treatment using TUNEL assay in contrast to normal hepatocytes (green). Quantification of the apoptotic cells induced by Con A was significantly suppressed in both antibiotic-treated ($P < 0.01$) and TLR4^{-/-} mice ($P < 0.001$; not shown) compared with control mice; this was further confirmed by the activation of caspase-3 and PARP demonstrating that the activation of TLR4-signaling pathway is important in Con A-induced hepatic injury in mice. See article by Lin *et al.* (beginning on page 1090) for more information.



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5 (9)

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