

IMMUNOTHERAPY BEYOND CHECKPOINT INHIBITORS

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Purpose: It has been convincingly documented that the immune system plays an important role in recognizing and eliminating malignant cells. An active antitumor immunity in cancer patients is associated with an improved clinical outcome. The aim of cancer immunotherapy has been to improve the efficacy of anticancer treatment by deploying the mechanisms of the immune system. Various approaches targeting different stages and components of antitumor immune response have been explored in the recent years but it's has been the success of checkpoint inhibitor therapies that represented a real breakthrough and resulted in cancer immunotherapy becoming an additional therapeutic modality in oncology.

Many preclinical and clinical studies are now ongoing in order to explore the potential synergy of checkpoint inhibitor treatments with complementary immunotherapy strategies. The aim of these studies is to further augment the intensity of antitumor response and possibly increase the response rate and improve the efficacy of cancer immunotherapy. In this presentation I will focus on discussing the rationale for the combination of checkpoint inhibitors with antibody drug conjugates and T cell and NK cell activating cytokines. I will also briefly comment on recent studies combining checkpoint inhibitors with CAR T therapies. I will review the preclinical data and early clinical data to illustrate the promise of such combination therapies that might become part of standard oncology treatment protocols in future.