Conclusion* Dynamic dose fractionation HDR-brachytherapy, as 1st step of preoperative chemo-irradiation, allows to reach the total tumor regression, which enable further ablative surgery and relapse-free follow-up.

199

RANDOMISED PHASE II BGOG/ENGOT-CX1 STUDY OF PACLITAXEL-CARBOPLATIN WITH OR WITHOUT NINTEDANIB IN FIRST-LINE RECURRENT OR ADVANCED CERVICAL CANCER

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Introduction/Background* Platinum in combination with paclitaxel (P) and bevacizumab is the standard of care in first-line recurrent/advanced cervical cancer (Tewari, NEJM 2020). Nintedanib is an oral tyrosine kinase inhibitor targeting, among others, vascular endothelial growth factor receptor.

Methodology Double-blind phase II randomised study in patients with first-line recurrent or primary advanced (FIGO stage IVB) cervical cancer. Patients received carboplatin AUC 5-6 and paclitaxel 175mg/m² q 3 weeks with oral nintedanib 200 mg BID/placebo. Stratification factor was primary advanced versus recurrent disease. The primary endpoint was progression-free survival (PFS) at 1,5 years with at least 87 events and $\alpha=0.15$, $\beta=80\%$, one sided, in favor of the nintedanib (N) versus control (C) arm. The study (NCT02009579) was performed according to the ENGOT model A.

Result(s)* 120 patients (62 N, 58 C) were randomised between March 2014 and October 2018. Median follow-up was 35 months. Baseline characteristics were similar in both groups (total population: squamous cell carcinoma 62%, prior radiotherapy 64%, primary advanced 25%, recurrent 75%). The primary endpoint was met with a PFS at 1.5 years of 15.1% versus 12.8% in favour of the nintedanib arm ($p = 0.057$). Median overall survival (OS) was 21.7 and 16.4 months for N and C, respectively. Subgroup analysis did not demonstrate a difference in PFS in the primary advanced setting, but in the recurrent setting the 1 year PFS was 22.8% and 14.9% for N and C, respectively. Confirmed RECIST response rate was 48% for N and 39% for C. No new adverse events were noted for N. However N was associated with numerically more serious adverse events for anemia and febrile neutropenia. Discontinuation of chemotherapy was similar in both groups. N was discontinued in 3% versus placebo in 1.6% of the patients. Dose reduction of N was necessary in 53% of the patients.

Conclusion* The study met its primary endpoint with a prolonged PFS in the N arm. No new safety signals were observed.

200

CAN METHYLATION SIGNALS OF CERVICAL CANCER ENHANCE CERVICAL SCREENING?: AN EPIGENOME-WIDE ASSOCIATION STUDY ON THE ILLUMINA 850K ARRAY

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Introduction/Background* Cervical cancer is one of the most prevalent and leading cause of cancer mortality for women worldwide. Persistent infection with HPV is associated with the development of cervical cancer. Although most infections are cleared by the immune response, the factors related to persistent infection and carcinogenesis are less well understood. Epigenetic alterations are essential in the development of many cancers; while aberrant hypermethylation in cervical carcinogenesis has been identified in several targeted studies, epigenome-wide exploration has been limited. In this epigenome-wide association study (EWAS) we explore differential DNA methylation signatures associated to CIN3 and Cervical Cancer, to better understand potential drivers and biomarkers of cervical carcinogenesis.

Methodology 247 women (119 normal, 74 CIN3/CGIN and 54 cervical cancer) attending gynaecological appointments, cervical screening and oncological treatment between 2014-2020 at English and Greek referral hospitals were recruited. Methylation signatures were obtained following bisulphite conversion of DNA extracted from exfoliated cervical cells and sequenced using the Illumina 850k array data. After normalisation and data QC, mixed linear models and a penalised regression were used to test for independent associations between methylation CpG sites and case-control status. P-values were Bonferroni corrected and adjusted for batch, chip, age and HPV status.

Result(s)* 177 CpG sites were strongly associated with CIN3 or cervical cancer, as measured by a P -value $<5 \times 10^{-8}$ and a gain/loss in methylation of $>15\%$ between cases and controls. Epigenetic signals were located in over 141 unique genes genome-wide, with a gain in methylation in CIN3 or cancer cases being more common ($n=77/80$).

Conclusion* This is potentially the first adequately powered study to highlight genome-wide epigenetic signatures associated to carcinoma *in situ* and cervical cancer. This builds on previous genetic signals associated with cervical cancer identified by our group (Bowden *et al*, Lancet Oncol, 2021). While around 59 genes were previously reported associations to CIN or cervical cancer, the remaining 82 signals appear to be novel. Functional annotation highlighted several genes related to tumour suppressor function, transcription factors and apoptosis – important for cervical cancer tumorigenesis.

Epigenetic determinants of cervical disease

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Supervisors

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Dr James Flanagan
Prof Marc Chadeau-Hyam

Natural history of CIN and cervical cancer

What is happening in the interactive host-viral system to dictate progression or regression??

RESEARCH

OPEN ACCESS Clinical course of untreated cervical intraepithelial neoplasia grade 2 under active surveillance: systematic review and meta-analysis

Karolina Tainio,¹ Antonios Athanasios,² Kari A O Takkinen,³ Riikka Aaltomäki,⁴ Jovita Cardenas Hernandez,⁵ Shan Gülsen Uzelon,⁶ Marja Järvelin,⁷ Kirsi Joronen,⁸ Mari Kiviharju,⁹ Katriina Luoma,¹⁰ Sanna Oksanen,¹¹ Riikka Takkinen,¹² Seppo Vartiainen,¹³ Pekka Nieminen,¹⁴ Maria Kyrgiou,¹⁵ Ilkka Kalliala¹⁶

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Meta-analysis of 1470 women
50% regression of CIN2 in 2 years
60% in <30yrs (BMJ 2018)

- HPV infection is common however the majority of infections are cleared
- Not all CIN2 lesions are the same

But

why.....?

What promotes Cervical Carcinogenesis?

Genetic and epigenetic determinants of cervical disease
Imperial College London
S Bowden 31st October 2020

Cervical screening programme protocol for primary HPV screening introduced in UK 2019

Imperial College London

Human Epigenome in Cervical Cancer

- **Host methylation sites**, including CADM1, EPB41L3, FAM19A4, PAX1, MAL, MIR124-2 and SOX1 have been identified as candidate markers for cervical cancer in targeted epigenetic studies.
- The full spectrum of epigenetic marks is currently unknown, but is potentially enormous, the diploid human epigenome contains $>10^8$ Cytosines of which $>10^7$ are CpGs, and $>10^8$ histone tails, that can all potentially vary [Rakyan 2012]
- Epigenome-wide association studies have identified **epigenetic signatures** associated with other cancers (e.g breast, colon, ovarian) including **up to 5 years before cancer diagnosis** [Roos 2016; Van Veldhoven 2015; Johansson 2017]

BJOG An International Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology

Host methylation sites, including CADM1, EPB41L3, FAM19A4, PAX1, MAL, MIR124-2 and SOX1 have been identified as candidate markers for cervical cancer in targeted epigenetic studies.

Abstract
This paper briefly reviews the role of hypermethylation of host cell genes in cervical carcinogenesis and discusses potential clinical applications of methylation analysis in the management of high-risk HPV (hrHPV)-positive women. We argue that methylation

Can DNA methylation tests improve the accuracy of cervical screening?

15 Bowden, S. L. et al. 2020. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1471-0528.15448>

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In this issue of BJOG, Kremer and colleagues present a comprehensive review on the role of hypermethylation of host cell genes in cervical carcinogenesis and discuss the complexity of the literature surrounding different human DNA methylation tests [Kremer et al. BJOG 2020].

Epigenome-wide association study

EWAS pipeline

Coeff vs. Pval spread

Volcano plot of $-\log_{10}(\text{p-value})$ versus coefficient (methylation % change) in cases vs controls. Red dots represent those with a false discovery rate <0.05

Annotation of top methylation sites

Manhattan plots showing the associations between CPG and CIN3/ICC (N=245). CPGs (N=850,000) are ordered by their position on the genome (X-axis). The p-values, measuring the strength of association, are derived from multilinear mixed models and are represented on the $-\log_{10}$ scale (Y-axis). The epigenome-wide significance level is set to 5×10^{-8} (horizontal red line).

HPV adjustment

Manhattan plot for CIN3 and Cervical Cancer

Future work

- Finalise EWAS model, explore HPV effect on methylation
- Validate EWAS findings in our lab in a separate cohort of women with CIN and cancer

Future work

- Finalise EWAS model, explore HPV effect on methylation
- Validate EWAS findings in our lab in a separate cohort of women with CIN and cancer
- Explore ability of epigenetic markers to predict progression or regression of CIN2
- Umbrella review of environmental and behavioural risk factors for cervical cancer with mendelian randomisation

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Institute of Reproductive and
Developmental Biology

School of Public Health

Abstract 200 Figure 1

Methylation signatures of cervical cancer genes are promising for future diagnostic and prognostic tools.

218

WORSE PROGNOSIS OF HUMAN PAPILLOMAVIRUS NEGATIVE COMPARED TO HUMAN PAPILLOMAVIRUS POSITIVE CERVICAL CANCER

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Introduction/Background* To evaluate the prevalence and prognosis of human papillomavirus (HPV)-negative cervical cancer (CC), and compare these to data for HPV-positive CC.

Methodology This retrospective cohort study compared between HPV-negative CC and HPV-positive CC patients. Primary endpoints were recurrence-free survival, disease-free survival, and overall survival. Secondary endpoints were demographic and clinical variables including histological diagnosis, stage, and treatment.

Result(s)* Of 233 women with CC, 18 (8%) were HPV negative. During a median follow up of 45 months, 33 (14%) recurrences and 41 (18%) deaths were observed. Eleven (61%) of the 18 women who were HPV negative and 41 (19%) of the 215 who were HPV positive had only adenocarcinoma ($P<0.001$). In a multivariate logistic regression analysis, adenocarcinoma histology at diagnosis ($P=0.010$) and primary treatment with chemotherapy or radiotherapy ($P=0.011$) remained statistically significant for recurrence. The factors associated with lower survival were advanced age ($P=0.008$), higher stage at diagnosis ($P<0.001$) and HPV