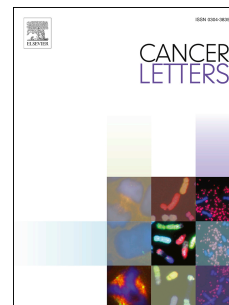


Accepted Manuscript

Autotaxin exacerbates tumor progression by enhancing MEK1 and overriding the function of miR-489-3p

Sudeepti S. Kuppa, Wei Jia, Shuying Liu, Ha Nguyen, Susan S. Smyth, Gordon B. Mills, Kevin K. Dobbin, William J. Hardman, Mandi M. Murph



PII: S0304-3835(18)30370-7

DOI: [10.1016/j.canlet.2018.05.037](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.canlet.2018.05.037)

Reference: CAN 13921

To appear in: *Cancer Letters*

Received Date: 3 April 2018

Revised Date: 21 May 2018

Accepted Date: 24 May 2018

Please cite this article as: S.S. Kuppa, W. Jia, S. Liu, H. Nguyen, S.S. Smyth, G.B. Mills, K.K. Dobbin, W.J. Hardman, M.M. Murph, Autotaxin exacerbates tumor progression by enhancing MEK1 and overriding the function of miR-489-3p, *Cancer Letters* (2018), doi: 10.1016/j.canlet.2018.05.037.

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ABSTRACT

Upregulated expression of autotaxin, a secreted phospholipase and phosphodiesterase enzyme, appears in malignant disease. The identification of a circulating miRNA signature should distinguish autotaxin-mediated disease and also elucidate unknown molecular mechanisms that rationalize its malignant potential. Using female transgenic 'AT-ATX' mice, whereby human wild-type autotaxin is expressed in liver under the control of the alpha-1 antitrypsin promoter, transgenic animals express augmented autotaxin in circulation and a percentage develop tumors. Serum collected at necropsy had circulating miRNAs analyzed for statistical significance. The ensuing autotaxin-mediated miRNome differentiated between groups: healthy FVB/N mice versus AT-ATX mice with and without tumors. Intriguingly, miR-489-3p was sharply increased in AT-ATX tumor-bearing mice. Tissue analysis showed a correlation between miR-489-3p expression in tumors and surrounding milieu with autotaxin concentration in circulation. Sequence alignment suggested miR-489-3p targets MEK1, which was confirmed through *in vitro* studies. Exogenously added miR-489-3p, which decreases MEK1 in normal cells, dramatically increased MEK1 expression in cells stably expressing autotaxin. Taken together, this suggests that autotaxin overrides the normal regulatory function of miR-489-3p to inhibit MEK1 via coordinately increased miR-489-3p appearing in serum.

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