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Immunotherapy for pancreatic cancer: A long and hopeful journey

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Abstract

Multiple therapeutic strategies have been developed to treat pancreatic cancer.

However, the outcomes of these approaches are disappointing. Due to deeper

understandings of the pivotal roles of the immune system in pancreatic cancer

tumorigenesis and progression, novel therapeutic strategies based on immune cells

and the tumor microenvironment are being investigated. Some of these approaches,

such as checkpoint inhibitors, chimeric antigen receptor T-cell therapy, and BiTE

antibodies, have achieved exciting outcomes in preclinical and clinical trials. The

current review describes the roles of immune cells and the immunosuppressive

microenvironment in the development of pancreatic cancer, as well as the preclinical

and clinical outcomes and benefits and considerations of recent passive and active

immunotherapeutic approaches, which may help us further disclose the mechanisms

of pancreatic cancer progression and the dialectical views of feasibility and

effectiveness of immunotherapy in treatment of pancreatic cancer.

Keywords: Pancreatic cancer; Immunotherapy; Tumor microenvironment; Vaccines;

Monoclonal antibodies

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