

Clinical Trials to Treat Pain from Bone Metastasis

Research Results

The Radiation Therapy Oncology Group (RTOG) recently reported preliminary results from its Phase III trial, 97-14 showing that a single fraction (radiation treatment) provides the same benefit in pain relief as the conventional ten radiation treatments given over two weeks. Research like this, to find more effective strategies to manage the side effects of cancer and its treatments, is important to cancer patients. One of the most common and under-treated side effects or symptoms of cancer is pain. Fifteen to 30% of patients in treatment, and up to 90% of those with advanced disease have pain.

The most effective treatment for painful metastases is radiation therapy. Until now the standard treatment used worldwide was 30 Gy given in 10 fractions over two weeks. RTOG 97-14 compared this treatment with 8 Gy in a single fraction and found the one time treatment provided equivalent pain relief for breast or prostate cancer participants. For patients who are suffering with pain this means fewer trips for treatments and less time, energy and money spent for the same benefit in pain relief. 15% of patients had side effects, which included low blood counts (4%), nausea, constipation or diarrhea (8%) and skin irritation or itching (4%). A few patients had fatigue or weakness. A web cast of the American Society for Therapeutic Radiology and Oncology annual meeting, where these results were reported, can be found on the ASTRO web site <http://www.astro.org>.

Another Cooperative Group, the American College of Radiology Imaging Network (ACRIN) has opened a Phase I/II trial evaluating radiofrequency ablation (RFA) to treat painful bone metastasis. RFA requires insertion of an antenna into the bone lesion, then heating the antenna with radio waves. The trial involves individuals with documented metastasis and a new painful bone lesion. The goal is to estimate the adverse event rate due to radiofrequency ablation within a one-month follow-up period. Pain scores will be collected, using the Memorial Pain Assessment Cards, every day beginning 5 days immediately prior to RFA, daily for 14 days post RFA, 1 month, and 3 months post procedure. You can find more information about this trial at <http://www.clinicaltrials.gov>.

What's In a Name?

The Drug Naming Process

Tools for Advocates

Keeping track of drugs can be confusing because drugs have at least three and sometimes four names. All drugs have a chemical, a generic and a brand name.

Chemical name: This is the name given when a new chemical entity is developed and is based on the compound's chemical structure. Most drug companies use a code to refer to the drug, such as IMC-C225.

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RESEARCH ADVOCACY NETWORK MISSION:

Our mission is to enable advocates and researchers to advance science and improve patient care through education, support, collaboration and the measurement and dissemination of research results and advocate interventions.



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Generic name: When a cancer drug is filed as an IND (Investigational New Drug) with the FDA, it is given its generic name by the United States Adopted Names (USAN) Council. A liaison for the (FDA) is on the Council. The stem of a generic name identifies the class of drugs to which the drug belongs. The stem *-mab* indicates a monoclonal antibody such as cetuximab or trastuzumab.

Brand or Trade name: Brand names are created by the company that holds the patent on the new drug in conjunction with the USAN. All brand names must be approved by the FDA. The choice of a brand name is primarily driven by marketing considerations. Trade names such as Erbitux and Herceptin are easier to pronounce and to remember.

If basic researchers are referring to a drug, they commonly use the chemical or code name. The protocol for clinical researchers is to use the generic names. However, generic names are sometimes difficult to pronounce and advocates and patients often use the brand name. For example, the drug IMC-C225 used in the treatment of colon cancer is also known as cetuximab and Erbitux.

Below are four websites that provide information about drugs and that can be searched by generic or brand name.

- List of Approved Oncology Drugs; from the FDA
<http://www.fda.gov/cder/cancer/approved.htm>
- Medline Plus, Drug Information
<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/druginformation.html>
- BC (British Columbia) Cancer Agency
<http://www.bccancer.bc.ca/HPI/DrugDatabase/DrugIndexPt/default.htm>
- People Living with Cancer, an ASCO Website
<http://www.plwc.org> select Knowledge Center then Drug Database to search for a specific drug

References: see article posted on our website
<http://www.researchadvocacy.org>

Progress in the Nation's War on Cancer

AACR Public Forum

Opportunities/Events for Advocates

The American Association for Cancer Research (AACR) is a non-profit scientific organization comprised of over 20,000 cancer researchers. Our organization is the world's oldest and largest society dedicated to the cure and prevention of cancer. To achieve our mission, the AACR publishes five prestigious journals; convenes an annual meeting attended by more than 13,000 scientists from around the world; organizes several highly focused scientific conferences each year on new and significant developments in research; offers educational workshops and grants to young investigators; maintains an active public education program; and interacts frequently with cancer survivors, lay advocates, and the general public in support of its mission. This year's meeting is being held in New Orleans, LA.

On Saturday, March 27th, the AACR will present "Progress in the Nation's War on Cancer," a free, one day event at which local and national cancer organizations exhibit and cancer researchers/experts speak with the general public in lay terms about the latest in cancer research. For more information go to: <http://www.aacr.org/publicforum/index.asp>.

Calendar-What is Research Advocacy Network Doing?

February 2004

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29						

March 2004

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

Network News

Network News is being sent to you as a courtesy. If you would like to discontinue receiving this publication, please send an email message to info@researchadvocacy.org and type "UNSUBSCRIBE" in the subject line. The newsletter is currently published monthly and includes articles on advocacy, research results and activities.

Research Advocacy Network

Advancing Patient-Focused Research

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Research Advocacy Network Activities

- March 11 UCSF SPORE External Advisory Board (Invited representative)
- March 13 Komen St. Louis Affiliate/Siteman Cancer Center Research Advocacy Symposium, St. Louis, MO (Public invited)
- March 18 Genomic and Cancer Care Advocacy Workshop, Washington, DC (Invited representatives)
- March 24-28 Intercultural Cancer Council Biennial Symposium, Washington, DC (Public Invited, registration info at <http://iccnetwork.org/symposium/>)
- March 27 AACR Public Forum (Public invited)
- March 28-31 American Association of Cancer Research, Orlando, FL

**Research Advocacy
Network
Phone & Fax Number
877-276-2187**

Additions to

<http://www.researchadvocacy.org>

Check out the addition of ADVOCATE OPPORTUNITIES on the Research Advocacy Network website <http://www.researchadvocacy.org/Adv%20Opps.html>. This listing presents opportunities and contact information for research advocates to become involved in programs. Currently the list includes information about the FDA Patient Consultant Program, NCI Director's Consumer Liaison Group, NCI Consumer Advocates in Research and Related Activities, Eastern Cooperative Oncology Group, North Central Cancer Treatment Group and more. Other programs are added as information is received and opportunities are identified.

Research Advocacy Network is YOUR network. A part of our primary mission is to serve and support research advocates and in order to do that we want to hear from you. Please help us by going to <http://www.researchadvocacy.org/form.html> and completing the survey. If you prefer to have a print copy that you can fax back to us, just let us know via email to info@researchadvocacy.org or call 877-276-2187.