NCI’s Division of Cancer Prevention: Vision

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On behalf of the Division of Cancer Prevention, NCI/NIH/DHHS

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Cancer Burden


Trends in Cancer Death Rates* by Sex, US, 1975-2018

*Age-adjusted to the 2000 US standard population and adjusted for delays in reporting.
Source: Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results (SEER) Program, National Cancer Institute, 2020.

*Age-adjusted to the 2000 US standard population.
The Mission of the Division of Cancer Prevention (DCP)

“The NCI Division of Cancer Prevention leads, supports, and promotes rigorous, innovative research and training to reduce risks, burdens, and consequences of cancer to improve the health of all people.”
Translational Research at the National Cancer Institute

Division of Cancer Prevention (DCP)

- Preventive Agents
- Biomarkers for Screening and Early Detection
- Symptom Science, Prevention, & Management
Extramural/Stakeholder Engagement (Examples)

- Multi-Cancer Early Detection Study Design Workshop (Dr. Lori Minasian & the MCED “Tiger Team”)
- Cancer Screening Workshop (Drs. Paul Pinsky and Brandy Heckman-Stoddard)
- Translational Advances in Cancer Prevention Agent Development Virtual Workshop on Immunomodulatory Agents (Drs. Mark Miller & Altaf Mohammed)
- Cannabis Workshop (Dr. Alexis Bakos, DCCPS, DCTD, FDA, NIDA)
- FNIH Cancer Prevention Workshop (Drs. Lori Minasian & Leslie Ford)
- FDA-NCI Mini-Symposium on Cancer Prevention and Risk Reduction (Dr. Brandy Heckman-Stoddard)
  - Initiated new FDA-NCI working group on cancer prevention (CDER, CBER, and CDRH)
- IPAs with KOLs/Experts (in progress)
- New engagements with industry partners!!!
Cancer Prevention: Avoidance, Vaccination (1º Prevention), & Screening & Treatment/Interception (2º Prevention)

Precursor States

Carcinogen Avoidance/Early Treatment:
➢ Tobacco Prevention
➢ Human papillomavirus Vaccination
➢ Hepatitis B Vaccination
➢ Treatment of H. pylori

Tobacco Cessation

Screening, Diagnosis, & Removal (excision)/ Destruction (ablation) for Cancer Risk Reduction: polyps & intraepithelial neoplasia (IN), and prophylactic surgeries

(Adapted from Nat Rev Cancer 2012, 12:835)
Interception of Cancer

Molecular prevention and immunoprevention with targeted agents and immune modulators

Agents targeting specific pathways:
- Tamoxifen and its derivatives for breast cancer
- NSAIDS for colon cancer
- Immune modulators such as STAT-3 inhibitors
- Drugs targeting oncogenic drivers (e.g., mTOR inhibitor, EGFR inhibitors, and PARP Inhibitors)
- Reactivators of tumor suppressor genes (ONC-201)

(Adapted from Nat Rev Cancer 2012, 12:835)
DCP Cancer Preventive Agent Pipeline (Drs. Sei and Shoemaker)

Prevent Cancer Program

1) Proof of Concept
   (Evaluate Activity)

2) Secondary Testing
   (Confirm Efficacy)

3) Advanced Preclinical Development
   (CGMP, GLP, & IND)

Approved Concepts

Go/No-Go

Clinical Trials Networks

Clinical Development Team

CAP-IT

CP-CTNet
Cancer Prevention Clinical Trials Network (CP-CTNet) (Eva Szabo, MD)

- Design/conduct early phase clinical trials to assess the safety, tolerability, and cancer preventive potential
- Additional goals:
  - Optimize clinical trial designs
  - Develop surrogate and intermediate endpoint biomarkers
  - Test novel imaging technologies
  - Develop further insights into mechanisms of cancer prevention by agents
Examples of Recent Protocols in the CP-CTNet

- Lisinopril to Prevent Progression of Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease
- Nonavalent Prophylactic HPV Vaccine to Assess Immunogenicity of A Prime and Deferred-Booster Dosing Schedule among 9-11 Year-old Girls and Boys (Delayed Booster Trial- An Extended Follow-up Study)
- Clinical Study of Bioactivity of Low-Dose Apalutamide in Prostate Cancer Patients Scheduled for Prostatectomy
- Surgical Window of Opportunity Study of Megestrol Acetate Compared with Megestrol Acetate and Metformin for Endometrial Intraepithelial Neoplasia
- Targeting Dominant-Negative Missense Mutant p53 by Atorvastatin for Reducing the Risk of Longstanding Ulcerative Colitis-Associated Cancer: Two-Arm, Randomized and Placebo-Controlled Phase II Trial
Screening and Early Detection

Risk-informed screening: higher risk = more screening and/or different management, and potential for intervention with targeted preventive agents

Screening for the prevention and control of breast, cervical, colorectal, lung, HCV (for liver), and prostate cancer in asymptomatic adults; targeted screening of higher-risk individuals for the prevention of less common but still important cancers
EDRN Organizational & Operational Structure (Dr. Sudhir Srivastava)

Research Groups
- Prostate & Other Urologic
- Breast and Other Gynecologic
- Lung & Upper Aerodigestive
- Colon & Other GI

EDRN Collaborations & Partners
- Parallel, EDRN-Advised Initiatives:
  - Co-funding e.g., PanCAN, Canary Foundation, & Cancer Research UK
- Independent, collaborative groups e.g., Pancreatic Cancer Detection Consortium, Consortium for Imaging and Biomarkers, Human Tumor Atlas Network (Pre-Cancer Atlas), & Center for Global Health (NCI)
- Associate Members (>350)
- Federal Partners e.g., NIST, FDA, & Jet Propulsion Lab (JPL)
- Pharma/Biotech Industry (15 active)
NCI Community Oncology Research Program (NCORP) (Worta McCaskill-Stevens, MD, MS)

1,000+ Clinical Sites (46 Centers & Affiliates), 4,000+ Investigators
TMIST (NCORP) Design Modifications

- Primary endpoint remains as occurrence of advanced cancer. However, assessment approach was modified:
  - Original design: occurrence of advanced cancer within a fixed time period of 4.5 years from randomization (binary endpoint, binomial comparison). Screening schedule of participants does not change.
  - Revised design: occurrence of advanced cancer at any time up to 7 years from randomization (time-to-event endpoint, comparison via logrank test).

- Power lowered to 85% from original 90% (Reduced sample size of 36K). Derivation of sample size continues to assume 20% relative reduction in advanced cancer at 4.5 years from randomization.

- Study duration: 10 years (7-year accrual, 3-year follow-up). Projected completion date: Aug 30, 2027
TMIST (NCORP) Accrual (12/1/2021): 60,422

New accrual target: 129,000

Minority Accrual=28%

- 20% Black/African American Women
- 6% Hispanic Women
- 2% Women of Other Racial/Ethnic Groups
Examples of Research Under Way or Recently Approved by the NCORP Steering Committee

**Large Screening/Management Trials**
- **FORTE**: Five- or ten-year colonoscopy for 1-2 non-advanced adenomatous polyps
- **TMIST**: Randomized to 2D digital mammography versus 3D tomosynthesis mammography for 4 years; primary endpoint is reduction in advanced cancers

**Symptom Management & Quality-of-Life Trials**
- **Immune Checkpoint Inhibitor Toxicity (I-CHECKIT)**: A Prospective Observational Study
- **Optimizing Functional Outcomes of Older Cancer Survivors After Chemotherapy**

**Other Studies**
- Comparing the clinical impact on pancreatic cyst low versus high intensity surveillance
- Comparing the non-inferiority of salpingectomy to salpingo-oophorectomy to reduce the risk of ovarian cancer among BRCA1 carriers
Screening and Early Detection R&D Pipeline

Basic Science Research

Translation to Humans

Translation to Patients

Translation to Practice

Translation to Community

Trans-NCI Liquid Biopsy/Multi-Cancer Early Detection Program
MCED Study Design Workshop (Dr. Lori Minasian)

- Current knowledge on MCED assays focuses on diagnostic performance
  - Sensitivity is modest for early stage, greater for advanced stage
  - Specificity appears to be high (97% or higher)

- Clinical utility of widespread implementation of MCED testing is unknown
  - Favorable diagnostic performance does not always translate to satisfactory outcome
  - Risks and harms associated with using MCED for cancer screening are not known

- MCED tests present novel implementation challenges
  - How to quickly and reliably confirm cancer status and site after a positive test
  - How best to screen for multiple cancers with different latency periods
Themes that Emerged from the Workshop

▪ NCI needs to support a trial to evaluate MCED assays
  ➢ Rigorously assess risk and benefits from the screening process
  ➢ Comparison for a trial would be MCED assay + standard of care screening versus standard of care screening alone

▪ Several unknowns for the screening process
  ➢ Variability in diagnostic workup
    o Different assays may or may not point to a “tissue of origin“ for the workup
    o Even with a tissue “locator,” the follow up testing to reach a diagnostic resolution varies with providers and patients’ access to further diagnostic studies and willingness to complete those diagnostic studies (time away from work, etc.)
  ➢ Need to assess the full process for the workup and when to stop the workup
Additional Themes Discussed

▪ Assure enrollment of various populations
  ➢ Underserved populations
  ➢ Diverse populations
  ➢ Vulnerable (socio-economically disadvantaged, others)
  ➢ High-risk individuals

▪ Need concrete process for the recruitment:
  ➢ Communication strategy to include a combination of remote and in-person recruitment approaches

▪ Need to assure means for adequate follow up to occur and not inadvertently or disproportionally expose vulnerable people to the harms
My Holy Grail: Precision Cancer Prevention

Discovery | Early Validation | Efficacy
Biomarker Pipeline

Discovery | Early Validation | Efficacy
Preventive Agent Pipeline

DETECT & MITIGATE CANCER RISK
Symptom Science and Management

*Basic research to uncover mechanisms and markers of risk for adverse events*

3° prevention with chemotherapy, immunotherapy, surgery, radiation therapy, and hormonal therapy

Prevention and management of symptoms of cancer and cancer treatment

(Adapted from Nat Rev Cancer 2012, 12:835)
Symptom Mgt/Supportive Care R&D Pipeline

Basic Science Research

Translation to Humans

Translation to Patients

Translation to Practice

Translation to Community

Moonshot: Tolerability Consortium

NCORP

Investigator-Initiated Research

• RFAs CA-15-008, 16-010, 18-019 (Provocative Questions)
• PAR-19-325
• RFA-17-052
Symptom Management and Toxicity Mitigation

- **Understand mechanisms of action for the chronic adverse effects**
  - Investigator community interested in exploring mechanisms of adverse effects of cancer treatment to normal tissue
  - Provocative question RFA had significant response

- **Rigorously characterize the clinical syndrome for the toxicity or symptom**
  - Need appropriate and robust measures for symptomatic toxicities
    - Examples: chemotherapy induced peripheral neuropathy and cancer-related fatigue
  - Need longitudinal studies to evaluate the natural history of the toxicity
  - Current approach is to capture most severe event using CTCAE at single point in time

- **Capture how the patient functions & feels through patient reported outcomes**
  - Symptom management and toxicity mitigation trials frequently have PROs as the primary endpoint
  - Need systematic approach to collection, analysis and reporting of PRO data
Trans-NCI Research Opportunities

- Provocative Question:
  - PQ9 or 12: What are the molecular and/or cellular mechanisms that underlie the development of cancer therapy-induced severe adverse sequelae?
  - RFAs CA-15-008, 16-010, 18-019

- Clinical Characterization of Cancer Therapy-Induced Adverse Sequelae and Mechanism-Based Interventional Strategies
  - PAR-19-325
  - Specifically, identified the need for longitudinal phenotyping projects

- Analyzing and Interpreting Clinician and Patient Adverse Event Data to Better Understand Tolerability
  - RFA-17-052
Cannabis, Cannabinoids, and Cancer (Dr. Alexis Bakos)

- Virtual Workshop December 2020
- Members from multiple NCI divisions, FDA, and NIDA
- Monograph published last week

(Volume 2021 Issue 58 | JNCI Monographs | Oxford Academic (oup.com))
Final Comments: Some Proposed DCP Priorities

- **Biological & Population Risk-Informed Interventions:**
  - **Biological Risk** --- Targeted interventions (agents or biomarkers) based on the biology/pathways of carcinogenesis, i.e., “precision cancer prevention”
  - **Population Risk** --- Using risk to decide who gets screened and how, how screen+ are managed, and harmonizing care i.e., “equal care for equal risk”

- **Obesity**: ≥20% of cancers are attributable to obesity but we do not really understand how obesity contributes to carcinogenesis. If we did, we could mitigate its effects.

- **Symptom Science/Precision Symptom Prevention & Management**: How can we use biology, genetics, and epidemiology to:
  - Understand the “etiology” of symptoms (symptom science)
  - Explain adverse responses to treatments
  - Move symptom management from trial-and-error to precision medicine
Final Comments: Some Proposed DCP Priorities

- **Health Disparities**: Innovations in technologies (e.g., self-collection, POC testing, etc.) to bring standard-of-care (or better) to underserved populations who are typically at higher risk of cancer.

- **New Technologies**: AI, multi-cancer early detection, synthetic biomarkers, etc., etc. We need to get out front and figure out what is good and what is not.

- **Immunology and Preventive Vaccination**: What constitutes an effective immune response to a carcinogenic insult; neoantigen discovery and validation.
Final Comments: Redefining Precision Cancer Prevention to Promote Health Equity*

- Maximizing Benefits to Harms for the Entire Population (B:H)
- Understanding all causes of differences---not just biological---informs how we can be more “precise”

**Who:** use population risk to decide needs the intervention  
**What:** use biological risk for a targeted approach  
**Where:** increasing access by alternative healthcare delivery strategies  
**How:** B:H can be increased by alternative routes of administration to increase bioavailability at the target site and limit exposure at non-target sites

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*Butler, Umar, Heckman-Stoddard, Kunrod, Signorello, Castle PE, *submitted*
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"I'll have an ounce of prevention."
THANK YOU!

www.cancer.gov

www.cancer.gov/espanol