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CDX2 as a Prognostic Biomarker in Colon Cancer

Marta Schirripa, M.D.,
University of Southern California, Los Angeles, Los Angeles, CA

Fotios Loupakis, M.D., Ph.D.,
Istituto Oncologico Veneto IRCCS, Padua, Italy

Heinz-Josef Lenz, M.D.
University of Southern California, Los Angeles, Los Angeles, CA

The study reported by Dalerba et al. elegantly showed that lack of *CDX2* expression might be a negative prognostic factor in colon cancer. It also showed that lack of *CDX2* expression may be predictive of the efficacy of chemotherapy in patients with stage II cancer.

To underscore the power of these findings, we would more carefully consider the role of microsatellite instability and *BRAF* status. Associations between a lack of *CDX2* expression and microsatellite instability and *BRAF* mutation are known, and the prognostic and predictive implications of those markers have been extensively studied.[1-5] Moreover, microsatellite instability is currently a key factor in decision making regarding the treatment of patients with stage II cancer who have undergone radical resection.

In addition, in the study reported by Dalerba et al., a possible bias in patient selection may have limited the findings on the predictive role of *CDX2* expression. The available data were not derived from randomized trials comparing adjuvant chemotherapy with surgery alone. Given the association between *CDX2* and adverse prognostic features, patients with tumors that lacked *CDX2* expression, as compared with patients with CDX2-positive tumors, may have had a more aggressive disease. These aspects could have influenced the decision by treating physicians to withhold adjuvant chemotherapy from patients with poor clinical conditions.

Supplementary Material

Refer to Web version on PubMed Central for supplementary material.

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lenz@med.usc.edu.

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