Ultrastructural and functional differences between normal and tumor endothelial progenitor cells

Valentina Poletto¹, Marco Biggiogera², Elisa Bonetti¹, Matteo Della Porta³, Camillo Porta⁴, Mariapia Cinelli⁵, Stefania Montagnani⁵, Domenico Tafuri⁶, Francesco Moccia², Vittorio Rosti¹, Germano Guerra⁷

¹Laboratory of Biotechnology, Fondazione IRCCS Policlinico San Matteo, 27100 Pavia, Italy
²Department of Biology and Biotechnology “L. Spallanzani”, University of Pavia, 27100 Pavia, Italy
³Department of Hematology Oncology, Fondazione Istituto Di Ricovero e Cura a Carattere Scientifico Policlinico San Matteo, Pavia, Italy
⁴Department of Medical Oncology, Fondazione IRCCS Policlinico San Matteo, 27100 Pavia, Italy
⁵Department of Public Health, University of Naples “Federico II”, 80131 Napoli, Italy
⁶Department of Sport Sciences and Wellness, University of Naples “Parthenope”, 80133 Napoli, Italy
⁷Department of Medicine and Health Sciences, University of Molise, 86100 Campobasso, Italy

Endothelial progenitor cells (EPCs) may be released from bone marrow to sustain the angiogenic switch that promotes tumor growth and metastatization of several solid cancers (Moccia et al., 2014). It has long been thought that tumor endothelium represents a rather stable structure, devoid of the genetic heterogeneity featuring neoplastic cells; however, more recent studies showed that tumor endothelial cells (TECs) present with an altered gene expression profile that bestows massive morphological and functional differences on them as compared to normal cells (Aird, 2012). Similarly, circulating EPCs isolated from individuals suffering from metastatic renal cellular carcinoma (mRCC) undergo a significant remodelling of their Ca²⁺ machinery, which is a master regulator of both angiogenesis and vasculogenesis. The present study clearly indicate that EPCs isolated from RCC (RCC-EPCs) and breast carcinoma (BC-EPCs) patients display ultrastructural and functional differences as compared to normal cells (N-EPCs).

References


Keywords

Endothelial progenitor cells, renal cellular carcinoma, breast carcinoma, electron microscopy, TUNEL assay, apoptosis.