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Editorial

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Preface

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It is my honor as Editor-in-Chief to present the first volume of Targeted Cancer Therapy Connect, a new peer-reviewed journal dedicated to the rapidly advancing field of targeted cancer therapeutics. The aim of this first volume and of subsequent publications is to deepen our understanding of the molecular and cellular drivers of cancer and to highlight strategies that selectively target these molecules or pathways to improve therapeutic efficacy and patient outcomes.

During the past years, targeted cancer therapy has evolved from being a conceptual framework into a cornerstone of modern oncology, changing the landscape of treatment for several patients. Advances in genomic profiling, molecular diagnostics, and drug development have enabled the identification of potential targets and the design of therapies that precisely disrupt oncogenic signaling pathways. From small-molecule inhibitors, T cell- and antibody-based therapies to emerging modalities such as antibody-drug conjugates and targeted protein degradation, these approaches have produced remarkable clinical benefits. However, several challenges need to be addressed, including tumor heterogeneity and immune resistance to biomarker development, as well as toxicities that are immune-related. Such intricacies require a platform for rigorous critical discussions, scientific exchange, and the dissemination of novel discoveries.

This volume includes 9 original and review articles, which reflect on both the depth and diversity of the field of targeted cancer therapy. These studies cover varied topics such as immune evasion mechanisms, tumor microenvironment, cancer vaccines, and prognostic biomarkers, which demonstrate the dedication of the journal to covering pioneering research from basic science to translational innovation. Below is a summary of these studies:

1. **Neoantigen-Based Cancer Vaccines: Current Innovations, Challenges and Future Directions in Personalized Immunotherapy.** This particular review article provides a thorough discussion on neoantigen-based cancer vaccines, along with asserting emphasis on innovation in the field, challenges, and future perspectives.
2. **Chronic Myelomonocytic Leukemia Relapse After Transplant.** This review article provides a comprehensive overview of current and future strategies to prevent relapse of chronic myelomonocytic leukemia following allogeneic stem cell transplantation.
3. **CRISPR-Cas9 is Revolutionizing AML Treatment as a Novel Therapy.** This review article delves into CRISPR-Cas9 gene editing for the treatment of acute myeloid leukemia, offering great advances for the treatment of this aggressive tumor.
4. **Soluble Biomarkers as Predictors of Response to Immunotherapy in Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer (NSCLC)-Insights from the Tumor Microenvironment Perspective.** This review article comprehensively presents important data and insights on the soluble biomarkers, including immune checkpoints, exosomes, and cytokines as prognostic biomarkers in NSCLC.
5. **Characteristics of Tumor Infiltrating Lymphocytes in Patients with Benign and Malignant Sinonasal Neoplasms.** This original article investigated TILs in sinonasal tumors, shedding light on the importance of characterizing different cell subsets and molecules in the tumor tissues as prognostic biomarkers in cancer patients.
6. **Association of Expression of Immune Checkpoints in Tumor-Infiltrating $CD4^+$ T Lymphocytes with Disease-Free Survival in Colorectal Cancer Patients.** Another original article investigated the expression of different immune checkpoints in colorectal tumor-infiltrating $CD4^+$ T cells, highlighting the significance of investigating multiple immune checkpoint expressions to determine the immune cell subpopulations that are associated with patient prognoses.
7. **Fatty Allies: How Short-Chain Fatty Acids Turn the Tumor Microenvironment Against Cancer.** This mini review discusses short-chain fatty acids (SCFAs), highlighting the potential to integrate them with cancer immunotherapy.

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8. **The Intratumor Microbiome: An Untapped Avenue for Translational Applications in Cancer Immunotherapeutics.** This comprehensive review examines the origins, functions, and immune crosstalk of intratumor microbiomes, highlights the concept of oncomicrobiotics, and discusses the challenges and opportunities for leveraging engineered probiotics in cancer therapy and tumor detection.
9. **Covalent BH3-Mimetics and PROTACs Targeting BCL2 Family for Precision Apoptosis Induction:** This mini-review highlights how next-generation strategies of covalent mimetics and BCL2-family-targeting PROTACs can overcome limitations of traditional reversible inhibitors by enabling more potent, durable, and selective induction of apoptosis, therefore expanding BCL2-targeted cancer therapies beyond hematologic malignancies.

As we launch this journal, we are committed to scientific excellence, integrity, and inclusivity. We are also honored to support a community of researchers dedicated to understanding the tumor microenvironment and improving the efficacy of targeted cancer.

We warmly invite researchers in the field of targeted cancer therapy to join us on this exciting journey by sharing their insights and data to collectively push the boundaries in the field. Our mission is to publish high-impact research, critical reviews, and innovative translational studies that bridge laboratory science and clinical application. We welcome interdisciplinary contributions from immunologists, oncologists, computational biologists, clinicians, and industry leaders committed to decoding and directing targeted cancer therapeutics against cancer.

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