Androgen Receptor Variants Mediate DNA Repair Following Radiation in Prostate Cancer

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Recently, the combination of androgen deprivation therapy (ADT) and radiation therapy (RT) has been shown to block the androgen receptor (AR)-driven DNA damage response (DDR) and enhance RT-mediated cell kill of prostate cancer (PCa). Since ADT may induce expression of AR splice variants (ARVs) we hypothesized that ARVs can drive DDR and mediate resistance to combined ADT and RT. Herein, we demonstrate that ARVs can increase the clonogenic survival of PCa cells following RT in an ADT-independent manner. RT induces the interaction between ARVs and a DDR driver, the DNA-dependent protein kinase catalytic subunit (DNA-PKc). Pharmacological inhibition of DNA-PKc blocks its interaction with ARVs and results in persistence of DNA damage, increased tumor cell kill and improved PCa cell survival following RT. These results indicate that combinatorial targeting of DNA-PKc with ADT and RT may be an effective strategy for overcoming radioresistance when treating clinically localized PCa.

Funding Acknowledgements:
This work was supported by the following grants: W81XWH-15-1-0128 (Y. Yin), W81XWH-14-1-0556 (Y. Yin), W81XWH-13-2-0093 (G. V. Raj), and W81XWH-12-1-0288 (G. V. Raj) from the Department of Defense, 1R01CA200787-01(G. V. Raj), R01CA174777 (S.M. Dehm), and R00CA160640 (R. S. Mani) from the NIH, and the Mimi and John Cole Prostate Cancer Fund (G. V. Raj).

Disclosure of Potential Conflicts of Interest:
F.Y. Feng is the founder of PFS Genomics, reports receiving a commercial research grant from Varian, and is a consultant/advisory board member for Dendreon, EMD Serono, Ferring, Janssen, Medivation/Astellas, and Sanofi. J.S. de Bono has received speakers bureau honoraria from AstraZeneca and is a consultant/advisory board member for Astellas, AstraZeneca, Bayer, Genentech Roche, Merck Serono, and Orion. G.V. Raj is the founder of C-diagnostics, GaudiumRx and EtraRx, has received grants from Bayer, and serves as a consultant/speaker for Janssen, Medivation/Pfizer, Astellas and Sanofi. No potential conflicts of interest were disclosed by the other authors.