Tumor Cell-Free DNA Copy Number Instability Predicts Therapeutic Response to

Glen J. Weiss¹, Julia Beck², Donald P. Braun³, Kristen Bornemann-Kolatzki², Heather Barilla¹, Rhiannon Cubello¹, Walter Quan, Jr.¹, Ashish Sangal¹, Vivek Khemka¹, Jordan Waypa¹, William M. Mitchell⁴. Howard Urnovitz². Ekkehard Schütz²

Cancer Treatment Centers of America, Goodyear, AZ¹; Chronix Biomedical, Göttingen,

Germany²; Cancer Treatment Centers of America, Zion, IL^{3;} Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN⁴

Running Title: cfDNA predicts response to immunotherapy

Keywords: tumor cell-free DNA; chromosomal number index; immunotherapy; chemotherapy;

advanced/metastatic solid tumors; biomarker

Corresponding author:

Glen J. Weiss, MD, MBA Cancer Treatment Centers of America 14200 W Celebrate Life Way, Goodyear, AZ 85338 Telephone: 623-207-3000 Fax: 623-207-3003 E-mail: <u>glen.weiss@ctca-hope.com</u>

Disclosure of Potential Conflicts of Interest

GJW: Consultant for: Blend Therapeutics, Pharmatech, Viomics, and Paradigm;

Speakers' Bureau: Medscape, Merck, Novartis; Travel: NantWorks

DPB: Board of Directors: Celsion Pharma

GJW, DPB, HB, RC, WQ Jr, AS, VK, JW are employees of Cancer Treatment Centers of

America. JB, KBK, HBU, and ES are employees of Chronix Biomedical hold stock/options in

Page 1 of 23

Chronix Biomedical. WMM is on the Board of Directors of Chronix Biomedical and holds stock/options in Chronix Biomedical. The other authors have no competing interests to declare. Funding for the study was provided by Cancer Treatment Centers of America.

WORD COUNT: 3311 (not including statement of translational relevance, abstract, or

references)

Number of figures: 5

Number of tables: 0

Statement of translational relevance

Genomic analysis of tissue malignancies is well recapitulated by tumor cell free DNA (cfDNA) using the power of Next Generation Sequencing (NGS). This study demonstrates that over 90% of non-resectable diverse human cancers had NGS detectable "hot spots" of chromosomal instabilities in cfDNA from a "liquid biopsy". Using a classical training and a blinded prospective validation subset, the data provides a statistically high concordance of quantified chromosomal instability (CNI score) and the prediction of stable versus progressive disease as a function of immune based therapy prior to standard imaging analysis. The data further demonstrates the clear superiority of cfDNA analysis versus classical protein tumor markers used for progression prediction. This is the first report of the real time advantage of tumor cfDNA analysis of chromosomal instability in the evaluation of drug efficacy versus RECIST imaging criteria.

ABSTRACT

Purpose: Chromosomal instability is a fundamental property of cancer, which can be quantified by Next Generation Sequencing (NGS) from plasma/serum derived cell-free DNA (cfDNA). We hypothesized that cfDNA could be used as a real time surrogate for imaging analysis of disease status as a function of response to immunotherapy and as a more reliable tool than tumor biomarkers.

Experimental Design: Plasma cfDNA sequences from 56 patients with diverse advanced cancers, were prospectively collected and analyzed in a single-blinded study for copy number variations, expressed as a quantitative chromosomal number instability (CNI) score versus 126 non-cancer controls in a training set of 23 and a blinded validation set of 33. Tumor biomarker concentrations and a surrogate marker for T regulatory cells (Tregs) were comparatively analyzed.

Results: Elevated CNI-scores were observed in 51 of 56 patients prior to therapy. The blinded validation cohort provided an overall prediction accuracy of 83% (25 of 30) and a positive predictive value of CNI-score for progression of 92% (11 of 12). The combination of CNI-score before cycle (Cy) 2 and 3 yielded a correct prediction for progression in all 13 patients. The CNI-score also correctly identified cases of pseudo-tumor progression from hyper-progression. Before Cy2 and Cy3, there was no significant correlation for protein tumor markers, total cfDNA, or surrogate Tregs.

Conclusions: Chromosomal instability quantification in plasma cfDNA can serve as an early indicator of response to immunotherapy. The method has the potential to reduce health care costs and disease burden for cancer patients following further validation.

Introduction

The assessment of efficacy of systemic anti-tumor therapy is essential for the optimal management of cancer patients. Current assessments are accomplished with imaging procedures at defined intervals evaluated using standard (RECIST 1.1) criteria(1) with or without frequent measurement of protein humoral tumor markers. Depending on the localization of the tumor, other procedures such as ultrasound can be useful. Nevertheless, there are numerous limitations. Tumor markers may be absent or variably expressed. Imaging may be influenced by non-tumor burden factors such as inflammatory responses in the microenvironment of the neoplasm. Early assessment of response to immunotherapy remains an unmet need to discern response/pseudo-tumor progression(2,3) from progression/hyper-progression(4).

Tumor genomic testing to guide treatment decisions continues to evolve since its introduction into clinical practice matching specific cancers with targeted therapies. Genomic testing of representative tumor biopsies provides mutational status of known driver genes, but methods currently available are reported to be inconsistent(5-7). Sequential biopsies during therapy have been proposed to capture alterations in driver mutations occurring with selection pressures from systemic therapies(8), which is often contra-indicated due to technical or safety issues, as well as, patient reluctance. As an alternative, "liquid biopsies", utilizing tumor derived cell-free DNA (cfDNA) present in plasma can be used(9) as a minimally invasive method to identify "actionable" mutations with their inherent limitations, e.g. frequencies of such mutations being only 50% or lower (10), and conflicting results by technology (6,7).

One hallmark of cancer biology is that most cancer cells have chromosomal instability often expressed as large physical or functional somatic gains and losses in tumor cfDNA(11-13). This report describes a novel application of the liquid biopsy by quantifying cancer-related chromosomal instability in cfDNA, an approach minimally influenced by clonal heterogeneity, which remains a problem for targeted "actionable" genes(10). The quantification of chromosomal instability from a liquid biopsy notably does not require any prior knowledge of individual somatic tumor mutations simplifying its use in clinical settings.

In this single-blinded study of patients with multiple solid tumor types during immunotherapy treatment, alone or in combination with systemic chemotherapy (ImmunoTx), the changes in genomic copy number instability (CNI)-score of cfDNA(13) during the first therapeutic cycles was compared with conventional humoral tumor markers, with the aim to assess the efficacy of therapy as defined by imaging based RECIST1.1 and irRECIST(14). The primary objectives of this study were to 1) investigate the usefulness of cfDNA CNI-scores in different tumor types for early prediction of therapy efficacy and 2) determine equivalency to conventional biochemical tumor markers. Secondary objectives were the evaluation of total cfDNA concentrations and percentage of peripheral Tregs for the same purpose.

Materials and Methods

Study design

The study was conducted as a prospective training/validation study. After obtaining written informed consent, 56 patients with advanced cancer were included at Western Regional Medical Center, Goodyear, AZ (WRMC) with blood collection and usage for this study approved by the Western Institutional Review Board (Protocol# 20140257). The study was conducted in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki. All patients underwent systemic treatment for their advanced cancer including imaging reviewed by board-certified radiologists. Patients were divided into a Discovery cohort consisting of the first 23 patients of which 11 were assessed as disease progression (PD) and 12 as disease controlled (DC), which includes stable disease (SD) and partial response (PR). The Validation cohort consisted of a subsequent prospective collection of 33 patients (Supplementary Tables S1 and S2). All patients received either standard commercially available immunotherapy (interleukin-2, PD-1 inhibitor, and/or CTLA-4 inhibitor), or were receiving a combination of a PD-1 inhibitor with systemic chemotherapy, targeted therapy, and/or radiation therapy as part of a treatment clinical trial. Blood for cfDNA was collected before the first cycle of treatment and before each consecutive cycle. Tumor markers (TuM) were quantified as standard of care, where applicable, by the WRMC CLIA-certified clinical laboratory.

Computation of irRECIST and RECIST 1.1 (n=56) was performed by a board-certified medical oncologist (GJW). Patients that did not have a response scan due to clinical deterioration or had clinical deterioration between subsequent response scans, were categorized as PD, and where applicable, further defined as clinical PD and/or biochemical PD (using conventional protein tumor markers). One ovarian cancer patient (ID#13-38-154) showed a steeply rising CA-125, and subsequent clinical deterioration, but no

radiologic change at the time. Subsequent imaging indicated misclassification on prior imaging and was categorized as PD.

Blood samples were anonymized and coded by a unique patient identifier and time point of draw. Thus, CNI-scores were determined without prior knowledge of the clinical status. At the end of the training and validation phases, imaging data were assessed for study purposes and the CNI results were unblinded together with the treatment response estimates and compared. The values of tumor markers were kept undisclosed throughout the study and were added to the database after evaluation of the Validation group to ensure a bias-free comparison to the CNI-score results.

Processing of plasma and extraction of cfDNA

Blood was collected in Cell-Free DNA BCT tubes (Streck), which inhibits plasma DNAse activity and preserve leukocyte integrity(15) and processed within 5 days. Tubes were centrifuged at 2500 x g for 10 min to separate the plasma from the peripheral blood cells. Plasma was stored at -80°C and shipped to the central laboratory of Chronix in Göttingen, Germany. DNA was extracted from 2 ml aliquots of plasma using the Large Volume Viral Nucleic Acids Extraction Kit (Roche) according to the manufacturer's instructions but without addition of carrier RNA. An artificial spike-in DNA was eluted into 50µL Low-TE buffer (EDTA•Na 0.05 mM, Tris 5 mM) in DNA Low Bind Tubes (Sarstedt) and stored at -20°C until sequencing library preparation.

DNA recovery quantification from plasma

For the quantification of absolute cfDNA two assays, each targeting one single copy genomic locus, were used in one ddPCR together with one assay targeting the artificial

8

spike product. The ddPCR was carried out in 1x ddPCR Supermix for Probes (Bio-Rad) and contained the following primers and probes: (i) genomic assays: S55.F, S55.R, S110.F, and S110.R (0.6µmol/L each), S55.ProbeA, S55.ProbeB, S110.ProbeA, and S110.ProbeB (0.15µmol/L each); (ii) spike assay: Spike.F and Spike.R (0.6µmol/L each) and Spike.Probe (0.3µmol/L) (Supplementary Table S3). Cycling conditions were initial denaturation 95°C for 10min; 40 cycles 95°C for 30sec, 55°C for 1min; final heat stabilization 98°C for 10min. The absolute cfDNA concentrations were corrected for the determined spike recovery rate and a PCR length based efficiency of 60% for the 90 bp amplicons.

Sequencing

Samples with cfDNA yields >10ng were processed using the ThruPLEX DNA-seq Kit (Rubicon Genomics) according to the manufacturer's instructions. The resulting sequencing libraries were pooled and paired-end sequenced (37bp/36bp) on a NextSeq500 (Illumina).

CNI-Score Calculation

Copy-numbers were called after mapping using BWA(16) and quality filtering in ~5.5 Mbp windows (sliding), yielding an average read coverage of 24,000-fold per bin. Reads with a mapping quality score not reaching the maximum value in BWA were censored form further analysis. After correction for GC-content and mapability using proprietary algorithms for cfDNA sequencing, the read counts were transformed into log2 ratios(17) and converted into Z-values based on Gaussian transformations vs. a normal control group (n=126). These secondary data were then subjected to a noise reducing proprietary bioinformatics pipeline using stochastic and statistic algorithms to calculate a final Z-score for each bin value to be within the dispersion of the normal control group (null hypothesis:

equality). For bins of which the null hypothesis is rejected at a 0.2% false positive rate, the corresponding absolute values of the Gaussian cumulative density function are summed to generate the CNI-score as general measure of tumor derived copy number instability.

CNI Technical Reproducibility

Technical controls consisted of i) a plasma pool of healthy individuals; ii) sheared tumor DNA with known copy-number imbalances mixed at 1% and 10% in normal PBMC DNA from the same patient; sheared to 200bp (average). All three control pools were prepared and analyzed analogous to the study samples. CNI values (between runs) of the normal plasma pool (5th-95th percentile range: 4-31 were within the range of the normal control group mentioned above (n=126 5th-95th percentile range: 0-25). CNI values (25 runs) were (average±SD) 70±13 for 1% and 219±16 for 10% tumor DNA, both above the 97.5th percentile of 126 healthy controls (CNI-score=30). Controls were included in each run and had to be within the ±2SD range for run quality acceptance.

TSDR Percentage

The Treg-specific demethylation region (TSDR) of FoxP3 was measured after bisulfite conversion of 500ng PBMC DNA using the EZ-DNA Methylation-Gold[™] Kit (Zymo Research). Of the 12µL eluate 1µL was used for determination of methylated region, while 4 µL were used for determination of demethylated region. Each reaction contained 1x ddPCR Supermix for probes (Bio-Rad), 0.75µmol/L of each primer, and 0.25µmol/L of the respective probe (Supplementary Table S3) in a total reaction volume of 20 µL. Droplets were read in the QX100[™] or QX200[™] Droplet Digital[™] PCR System (Bio-Rad) and analyzed using the embedded Quantasoft software. Results were expressed as percent copies TSDR of total FoxP3 in a subset of 29 patients.

Statistical and analytical plans

Microsoft Excel[™] was used for statistical calculations and data plots. Significance of contingencies were calculated using Fisher's exact test and frequencies are reported by proportions and the exact Clopper-Pearson method was used for confidence intervals (CI) given as 5th – 95th percentile¹⁶.

All samples were prospectively collected and cfDNA analytics were done continuously and immediately recorded into a database. When the clinical outcome (irRECIST and RECIST 1.1) of the first 23 enrolled patients was available, the outcome data of those first 23 patients were unblinded and used for developing of the prediction method, while continuing to enroll patients under the conditions above, until a final total of 56 patients were recruited. The method set using the discovery group was applied to the remaining 33 patients for cfDNA-based outcome prediction and the clinical outcome was unblinded for comparative statistical analyses.

Results

All 56 study patients with metastatic cancer had plasma samples collected prior to initiation of ImmunoTx for up to six cycles of treatment. Five patients were censored from further analysis due to low CNI-scores at baseline (two melanoma in the Discovery cohort, two renal and one pancreatic cancer in the Validation cohort). Elevated CNI-scores prior to therapy were seen in the 51 evaluable patients (91%; CI:82-97%), when compared to the 95th percentile of non-cancerous controls (Figure 1), which is a substantially higher rate compared to SNP-based approaches(10). Patients with carcinoma of the lung yielded the highest average CNI-score and renal the lowest (Figure 1). In 56 patients tumor burden (computed using response criteria(1,14)) prior to therapy was correlated with the total cfDNA concentration (r= 0.37, p=0.013) but correlated higher (r=0.41, p=0.005) with tumor CNI-score (Supplementary Figure S1).

Data from the Discovery cohort (n=21) were used to establish a model to predict outcome at the earliest possible time point. The best and earliest prediction was possible with the CNI-score before the second cycle, as well as, before the third cycle of ImmunoTx. Criteria were established using an average ±3 SD of the difference in the CNI-score between baseline and time point value of the group showing PR in imaging (Cycle 2:-174, Cycle 3:-2140), followed by a second criterion which was the absolute value of the CNI-score. If the decrease of CNI-score at the cycle time point did not reach the limits above and remained above 90 (3-fold 97.5th percentile of controls), a patient was categorized as having PD.

These criteria were subsequently applied to the blinded Validation cohort (n=30). For samples collected prior to the second cycle in the prospective Validation cohort, we calculated an overall prediction accuracy of 83%(CI:68-93%), while 11 of the 15 PD patients were correctly predicted and only one patient of 15 with DC was discrepant based

12

on the predefined outcome criteria(1,14). The positive predictive value (PPV) of the CNIscore change for PD, therefore, was 92%(CI:66-100%). Combination of Discovery and Validation cohorts yielded an accuracy of 80% (CI:69-89%)with a PPV for PD remaining at 89%(CI:70-98%). The two PD predicted patients (melanoma and lung) discrepant with DC were classified correctly by the cycle 3 criteria. When predictions were based on a combination of cycle 2 and cycle 3 criteria a PPV for PD of 100% (CI:79-100%) was obtained where an accuracy of 80% (CI:68-89%) was retained. The results are summarized in Figure 2

TuM biomarkers (CEA, CA19-9, CA15-3, CA-125 and/or β HCG) were available in 29 patients prior to and during therapy at the identical blood raw time points as cfDNA. To assess the correlation with outcome, the direction of the concentration under treatment was estimated (rising or falling prior to cycle 2 and cycle 3 time points) and compared with response outcome. There was no consistency (non-predictive) in the direction of TuM in 14 of 29 patients at the early pre-cycle 2 time point (accuracy: 52%, CI:35-68%; p=0.57). As shown in Figure 3, a similar lack of predictive accuracy was found for total cfDNA (accuracy: 52%, CI:35-68%; p=0.54). In contrast, CNI-score direction showed a significant correlation with outcome with only four patients categorized incorrectly (accuracy: 86%, CI: 71-95%; p<0.0001). For samples before cycle 3, there was still no significant correlation for TuM (accuracy: 68%, CI:51-82%; p=0.07) or total cfDNA (accuracy: 57%, CI:40-73%; p > 0.27). In contrast, correlation with CNI-score (accuracy: 82%, CI:66-93%; p<0.001) was highly significant (Supplementary Figure S2).

Visualization of specific changes as linear genomic plots that depict all bins with significantly altered CNI-values are presented for two exemplary patients with PD in Figure 4; representative scan images of the same patients are shown in Supplementary Figures

13

S3 and S4. Two examples of patients with decreasing CNI-scores associated with PR are illustrated in Figure 5 and scans are shown in Supplementary Figures S5 and S6. For easier comparison between two consecutive samplings the "Delta Dot Plot" depicts the change of the CNI-score for significantly altered bins from one time point to the next. Respective Delta Dot Plots of the four exemplary patients are shown in Supplementary Figures S7 and S8.

A secondary objective was to investigate potential factors associated with response to ImmunoTx for which we measured the percentage of positive TSDR (TSDR%) in peripheral leukocytes. Although there was a significant decrease in the TSDR% at the last cycle compared to pre-treatment (p=0.02), no difference between DC and PD (p>0.2) was seen. Whether this change in the circulatory Tregs is representative of a reduction of Tregs in the tumor microenvironment (reviewed in(18)) is unknown, but worthy of future investigation.

Discussion

Tumor cfDNA in treatment monitoring of cancer is increasingly being used for the quantification of somatic tumor-specific SNPs and the identification of escape mutations with targeted therapy. The use of tissue tumor SNPs is hampered by high mutation rates in tumors and may not reflect the dominant malignant cell clone (primary/metastatic) under chemotherapy, radiotherapy or immunotherapy. An additional complication is the frequency of SNP positive tumors. When searching for common known driver and suppressor genes, 60% of patient samples are interrogated without a detectable somatic SNP(19).

Genomic analysis of tissue malignancies is well recapitulated by tumor cfDNA(20,21). In contrast with a recent article evaluating cfDNA in melanoma patients receiving PD-1 inhibitor therapy(22), we did not see a clear statistically significant correlation between pretherapeutic cfDNA level and response to ImmunoTx. Further, ~47% of the melanoma patients did not have baseline detectable cfDNA, using a SNP-based digital PCR, while baseline cfDNA CNI-score was not elevated in only ~14% from our cohort of melanoma patients. As demonstrated here, over 90% of metastatic tumors are evaluable by elevated CNI-scores detectable in cfDNA, which provides a real time method for therapy monitoring with the rapid turnover of *in-situ* plasma cfDNA(23). The method used herein is robust and can detect less than 1% tumor derived cfDNA in plasma, which is demonstrated by the values determined in an artificial control with 1% tumor DNA (see Methods). The 5th percentile (CNI-score=49) is about 2-fold higher than the 95th percentile of healthy individuals (CNI-score=25). This makes such a test relatively universally applicable. The key finding is the ability of early prediction of outcome of ImmunoTx 3-4 weeks after the first dose, across a variety of cancer types and different regimens of ImmunoTx. If the measured CNI-score does not decrease substantially, the chance of progression is over

Downloaded from clincancerres.aacrjournals.org on March 21, 2017. © 2017 American Association for Cancer Research.

15

Author Manuscript Published OnlineFirst on March 20, 2017; DOI: 10.1158/1078-0432.CCR-17-0231 Author manuscripts have been peer reviewed and accepted for publication but have not yet been edited.

90% in our validation group. We have seen similar effects for cytotoxic chemotherapy (24). These data justify prospective studies in specific cancer cohorts with defined approved treatment to validate the apparent universality of the CNI method for quantifying chromosomal instability.

The evaluation of efficacy of ImmunoTx is still a critical endeavor and has several constraints, such as pseudo-tumor progression from delayed imaging and intra-tumor inflammatory responses. Given the high costs of these therapies, early guidance as to whether a patient might benefit has not only a potential financial impact, but also a medical advantage to change therapy sooner, if it is not going to be effective or the therapy might lead to hyper-progression(4). In our series, we observed six cases of hyper-progression (examples are given in Figure 4 and Supplementary Figure S3 and S4), and five of these cases were predicted to have PD by the CNI-score at a significantly earlier time (~6 to 9 weeks) than with routine practice of imaging assessment. We also observed one case (#13-38-044) of pseudo-tumor progression(2,3) by imaging (see Figure 5 and Supplementary Figure S5) with an initial increase in CA-125, and at each CNI time point, there was a decline consistent with prediction for a response to ImmunoTx.

The decrease in circulating Treg could be interpreted as a general activation sign of the immune system, whereas other factors such as the tumor microenvironment and dendritic cell activation play critical roles(25) for efficacy. The value of Treg content determination in the tumor microenvironment as a predictor of ImmunoTx efficacy cannot be assessed by this investigation, which was focused on blood based analytics.

One primary aim of this study was to determine if there are specific tumors that are less suited for this copy number dependent analysis. Overall, renal cancers had lower CNI-

Author Manuscript Published OnlineFirst on March 20, 2017; DOI: 10.1158/1078-0432.CCR-17-0231 Author manuscripts have been peer reviewed and accepted for publication but have not yet been edited.

scores, which might be due to location, vasculature, or immune phenotype and merits further investigation. All other solid tumor types investigated in this work showed a uniform behavior for response outcome with ImmunoTx. Limitations due to low release of tumor DNA into the bloodstream will counteract any cfDNA method and most likely any bloodborn analytic. Also tumors with only few or copy-number neutral genomic alterations will be challenging, although such seem rare, based on the data presented herein.

The other primary objective was to compare the CNI-score with conventional tumor markers. Interestingly and noteworthy, the biochemical TuM were found to be very unreliable under therapy, when their direction was compared with outcome. This is well in line with the overall cautious recommendations made for their use in therapy monitoring(26,27). The comparison revealed that CNI-scores in plasma outperformed TuM substantially.

Increased total cfDNA concentrations have been shown in cancer (reviewed in (28)), and proposed for therapy monitoring(29-31). We could not establish any substantial predictive value for outcome, which is consistent with other recent literature(32,33).

In summary, the evaluation of CNI can serve as an early indicator of response to ImmunoTx. The method is reproducible, robust, can be accomplished in one working week and appears suitable for use in high complexity clinical reference laboratories. Quantification of chromosomal instability has the potential to reduce health care costs and disease burden for cancer patients. Larger studies focused on specific cancers, such as pancreatic and lung are planned to establish cut-off values for specific tumors and therapies, which are needed for wider clinical use of this pharmacodynamic monitoring of systemic cancer therapies using cfDNA. Furthermore, evaluating clinical drug development studies may significantly decrease the burdensome costs of Phase I clinical trials by allowing intra-trial adjustment to drug doses and scheduling not possible with imaging protocols.

Authors' Contributions

Conception and design: GJW, DPB, HU, ES

Acquisition of data: GJW, JB, KBK, HB, RC, WQ, AS, VK, JW, ES

Analysis and interpretation of data: GJW, JB, DPB, KBK, WMM, HU, ES

Writing, review, and/or revision of the manuscript: All authors

Administrative, technical, or material support (eg, reporting or organizing data, constructing

databases): GJW, JB, DPB, WMM, HU, ES

Study supervision: GJW, HU, ES

Acknowledgments

We thank the cancer patients that participated, and all clinical staff who assisted.

References:

- 1. Eisenhauer EA, Therasse P, Bogaerts J, Schwartz LH, Sargent D, Ford R, *et al.* New response evaluation criteria in solid tumours: revised RECIST guideline (version 1.1). Eur J Cancer **2009**;45(2):228-47.
- 2. Atrash S, Makhoul I, Mizell JS, Hutchins L, Mahmoud F. Response of metastatic mucosal melanoma to immunotherapy: It can get worse before it gets better. J Oncol Pharm Pract **2016**;0(0):1-5.
- 3. Bearz A, Perin T, Cancian L, Berto E, Sartor I, Tirelli U. Immune checkpoint inhibitors and response analysis: a tough challenge. A case report. BMC Res Notes **2016**;9:349.
- 4. Champiat S, Dercle L, Ammari S, Massard C, Hollebecque A, Postel-Vinay S, *et al.* Hyperprogressive disease (HPD) is a new pattern of progression in cancer patients treated by anti-PD-1/PD-L1. Clin Cancer Res **2016**; Published online November 8, 2016.
- 5. Kuderer NM, Burton KA, Blau S, Rose AL, Parker S, Lyman GH, *et al.* Comparison of 2 Commercially Available Next-Generation Sequencing Platforms in Oncology. JAMA Oncol **2016**; Published online December 15, 2016.
- 6. Weiss GJ, Hoff BR, Whitehead RP, Sangal A, Gingrich SA, Penny RJ, *et al.* Evaluation and comparison of two commercially available targeted next-generation sequencing platforms to assist oncology decision making. Onco Targets Ther **2015**;8:959-67.
- 7. Balmana J, Digiovanni L, Gaddam P, Walsh MF, Joseph V, Stadler ZK, *et al.* Conflicting Interpretation of Genetic Variants and Cancer Risk by Commercial Laboratories as Assessed by the Prospective Registry of Multiplex Testing. J Clin Oncol **2016**;34(34):4071-8.
- 8. Allison KH, Sledge GW. Heterogeneity and cancer. Oncology (Williston Park) **2014**;28(9):772-8.
- 9. Diaz LA, Jr., Bardelli A. Liquid biopsies: genotyping circulating tumor DNA. J Clin Oncol **2014**;32(6):579-86.
- 10. Tannock IF, Hickman JA. Limits to Personalized Cancer Medicine. N Engl J Med **2016**;375(13):1289-94.
- 11. Beck J, Urnovitz HB, Mitchell WM, Schutz E. Next generation sequencing of serum circulating nucleic acids from patients with invasive ductal breast cancer reveals differences to healthy and nonmalignant controls. Mol Cancer Res **2010**;8(3):335-42.
- 12. Beck J, Hennecke S, Bornemann-Kolatzki K, Urnovitz HB, Neumann S, Strobel P, *et al.* Genome aberrations in canine mammary carcinomas and their detection in cell-free plasma DNA. PLoS One **2013**;8(9):e75485.
- 13. Schutz E, Akbari MR, Beck J, Urnovitz H, Zhang WW, Bornemann-Kolatzki K, *et al.* Chromosomal instability in cell-free DNA is a serum biomarker for prostate cancer. Clin Chem **2015**;61(1):239-48.
- 14. Nishino M, Giobbie-Hurder A, Gargano M, Suda M, Ramaiya NH, Hodi FS. Developing a common language for tumor response to immunotherapy: immunerelated response criteria using unidimensional measurements. Clin Cancer Res **2013**;19(14):3936-43.
- 15. Wong D, Moturi S, Angkachatchai V, Mueller R, DeSantis G, van den Boom D, *et al.* Optimizing blood collection, transport and storage conditions for cell free DNA increases access to prenatal testing. Clin Biochem **2013**;46(12):1099-104.
- 16. Li H, Durbin R. Fast and accurate short read alignment with Burrows-Wheeler transform. Bioinformatics **2009**;25(14):1754-60.

- 17. Scheinin I, Sie D, Bengtsson H, van de Wiel MA, Olshen AB, van Thuijl HF, *et al.* DNA copy number analysis of fresh and formalin-fixed specimens by shallow whole-genome sequencing with identification and exclusion of problematic regions in the genome assembly. Genome Res **2014**;24(12):2022-32.
- 18. Chaudhary B, Elkord E. Regulatory T Cells in the Tumor Microenvironment and Cancer Progression: Role and Therapeutic Targeting. Vaccines (Basel) **2016**;4(3).
- 19. Schwaederle M, Husain H, Fanta PT, Piccioni DE, Kesari S, Schwab RB, *et al.* Detection rate of actionable mutations in diverse cancers using a biopsy-free (blood) circulating tumor cell DNA assay. Oncotarget **2016**;7(9):9707-17.
- 20. Dawson SJ, Tsui DW, Murtaza M, Biggs H, Rueda OM, Chin SF, *et al.* Analysis of circulating tumor DNA to monitor metastatic breast cancer. N Engl J Med **2013**;368(13):1199-209.
- 21. Murtaza M, Dawson SJ, Tsui DW, Gale D, Forshew T, Piskorz AM, *et al.* Noninvasive analysis of acquired resistance to cancer therapy by sequencing of plasma DNA. Nature **2013**;497(7447):108-12.
- 22. Lee JH, Long GV, Boyd S, Lo S, Menzies AM, Tembe V, *et al.* Circulating tumour DNA predicts response to anti-PD1 antibodies in metastatic melanoma. Annals of Oncology **2017**;Published online January 24, 2017.
- 23. Lo YM, Zhang J, Leung TN, Lau TK, Chang AM, Hjelm NM. Rapid clearance of fetal DNA from maternal plasma. Am J Hum Genet **1999**;64(1):218-24.
- 24. Weiss GJ, Beck J, Braun DP, Bornemann-Kolatzki K, Barilla H, Cubello R, *et al.* Abstract 3138: Changes in tumor cell-free DNA copy number instability (CNI) predict therapeutic response in metastatic cancers. Cancer Research **2016**;76(14 Supplement):3138.
- 25. Olson BM, McNeel DG. Monitoring regulatory immune responses in tumor immunotherapy clinical trials. Front Oncol **2013**;3:109.
- 26. Diamandis EP, Hoffman BR, Sturgeon CM. National Academy of Clinical Biochemistry Laboratory Medicine Practice Guidelines for the Use of Tumor Markers. Clin Chem **2008**;54(11):1935-9.
- 27. Locker GY, Hamilton S, Harris J, Jessup JM, Kemeny N, Macdonald JS, *et al.* ASCO 2006 update of recommendations for the use of tumor markers in gastrointestinal cancer. J Clin Oncol **2006**;24(33):5313-27.
- 28. Fleischhacker M, Schmidt B. Circulating nucleic acids (CNAs) and cancer--a survey. Biochim Biophys Acta **2007**;1775(1):181-232.
- 29. Holdenrieder S, Stieber P, Chan LY, Geiger S, Kremer A, Nagel D, *et al.* Cell-free DNA in serum and plasma: comparison of ELISA and quantitative PCR. Clin Chem **2005**;51(8):1544-6.
- Kumar S, Guleria R, Singh V, Bharti AC, Mohan A, Das BC. Plasma DNA level in predicting therapeutic efficacy in advanced nonsmall cell lung cancer. Eur Respir J 2010;36(4):885-92.
- 31. Leon SA, Shapiro B, Sklaroff DM, Yaros MJ. Free DNA in the serum of cancer patients and the effect of therapy. Cancer Res **1977**;37(3):646-50.
- 32. Li BT, Drilon A, Johnson ML, Hsu M, Sima CS, McGinn C, *et al.* A prospective study of total plasma cell-free DNA as a predictive biomarker for response to systemic therapy in patients with advanced non-small-cell lung cancers. Ann Oncol **2016**;27(1):154-9.
- Thierry AR, El Messaoudi S, Gahan PB, Anker P, Stroun M. Origins, structures, and functions of circulating DNA in oncology. Cancer Metastasis Rev 2016;35(3):347-76.

Figure Legends

Figure 1: Univariate Comparison of apparently healthy control individuals with the baseline values of all tumor patients as well as stratified by primary tumor site. Whiskers represent the 1.5-fold IQR distance from 1st and 3rd quartile according to Tukey.

Figure 2: Prediction of therapy outcome of CNI-score before cycle 2 and in combination with the values determined before cycle 3.

PD: Progressive Disease; DC: Disease Control (Stable Disease or Complete/Partial Response). The overall accuracy and predictive values in the Validation cohort were very similar to the performance in the total study group, when values in cfDNA drawn before cycle 2 were evaluated. When both time points (prior to Cycle 2 and prior to cycle 3) were used in parallel (PD is predicted when both values are indicating PD) a 100% specificity was seen (100% pos. predictive value).

Figure 3: Comparison of increasing/decreasing course of total cfDNA, tumor marker concentrations and CNI-Score before cycle 2 with outcome. Decreasing values under treatment are scored correct for disease control (DC) and not correct for disease progression (PD); increasing values are scored the opposite way. The CNI-Score showed a significant distribution in to the correct groups (Fisher exact p<0.0002), whereas both, tumor markers (p=0.57) and total cfDNA concentration (p=0.54) did not.

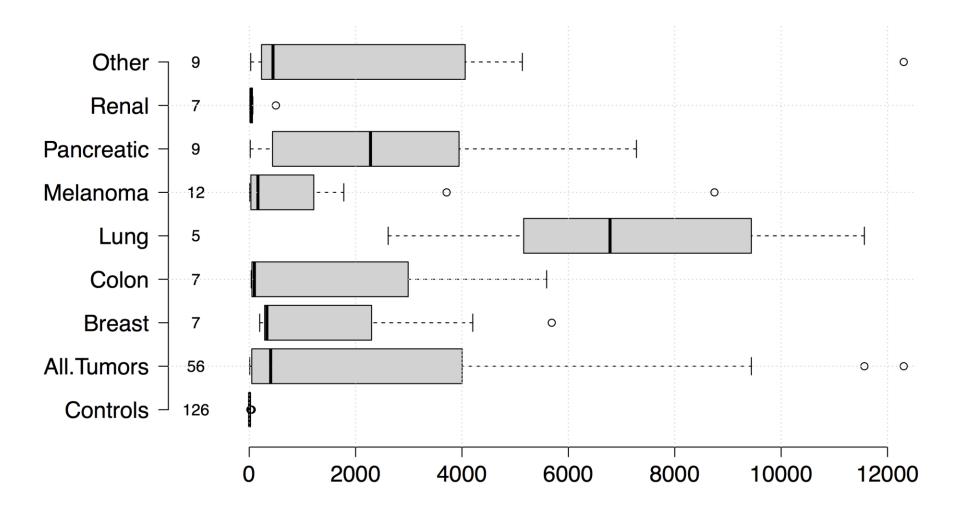
Figure 4: Plots showing the CNI-values of significantly (>Z=2.84 or <Z=-2.84) aberrant bins for two patients with tumor progression. The number of aberrant bins as well as the Z-Score amplitude is increasing in the consecutive samplings.

#13-38-56: Breast cancer with disease progression (PD); #13-38-101: Melanoma with PD

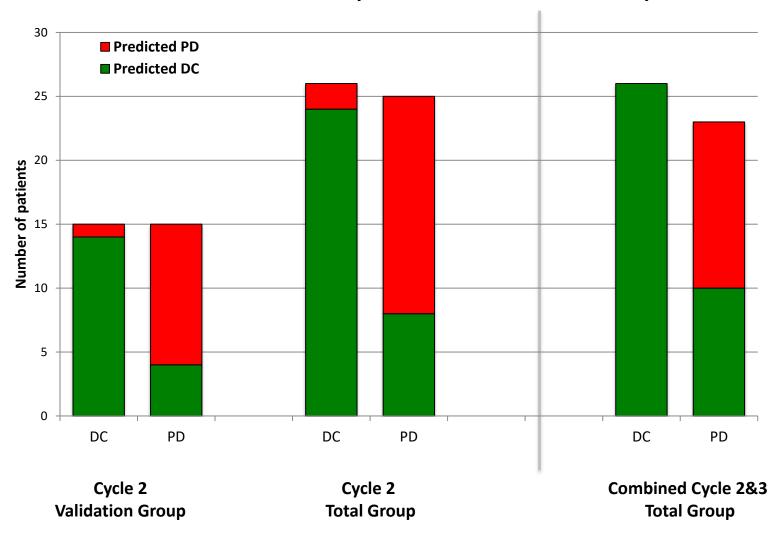
Figure 5: Plots showing the CNI-values of significantly (>Z=2.84 or <Z=-2.84) aberrant bins for two patients with tumor response. The number of aberrant bins as well as the CNI amplitude is decreasing in the consecutive samplings.

#13-38-044: Ovarian cancer with partial response (PR); #13-38-067: Pancreatic cancer

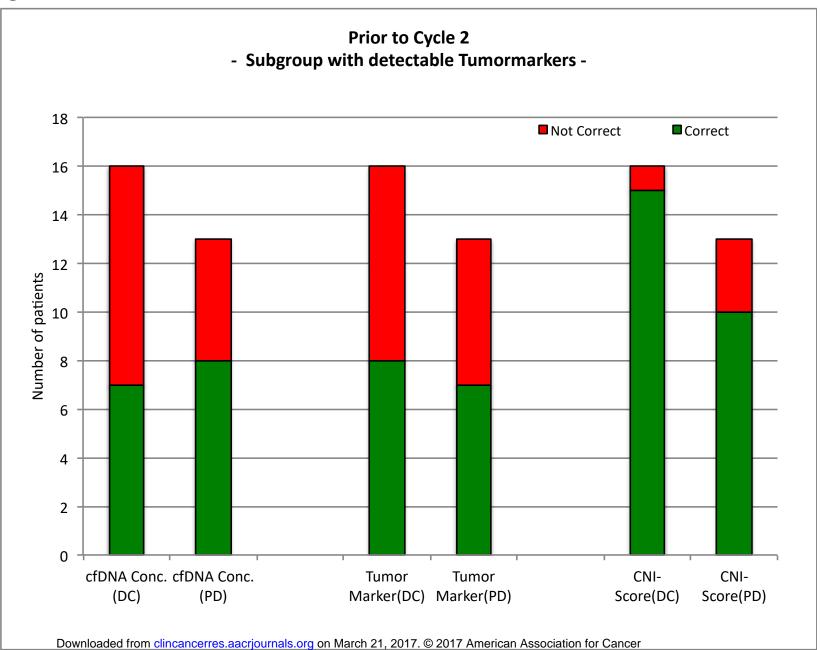
with PR



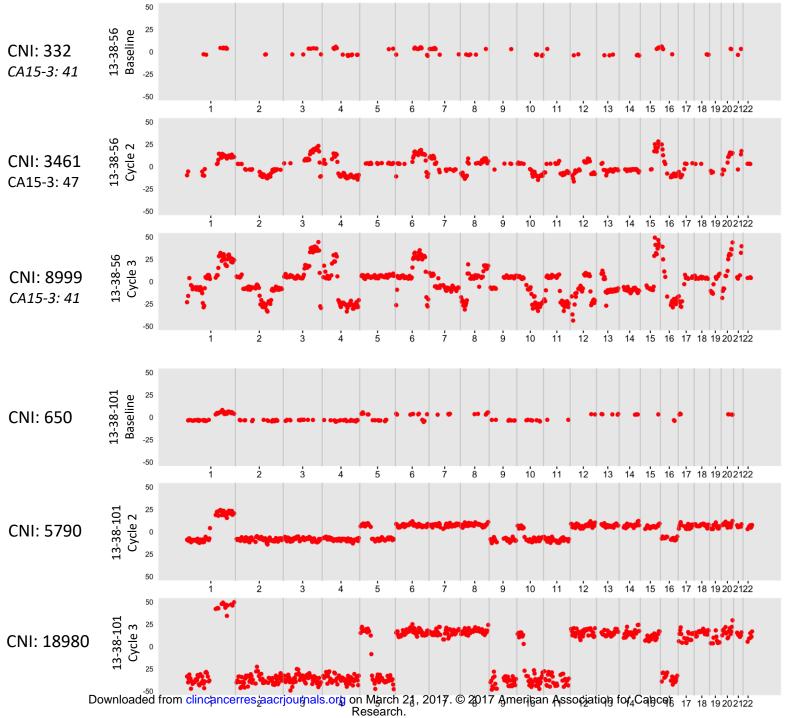
CNI-Score Difference Baseline to before Cycle 2 and in combination with Cycle 3

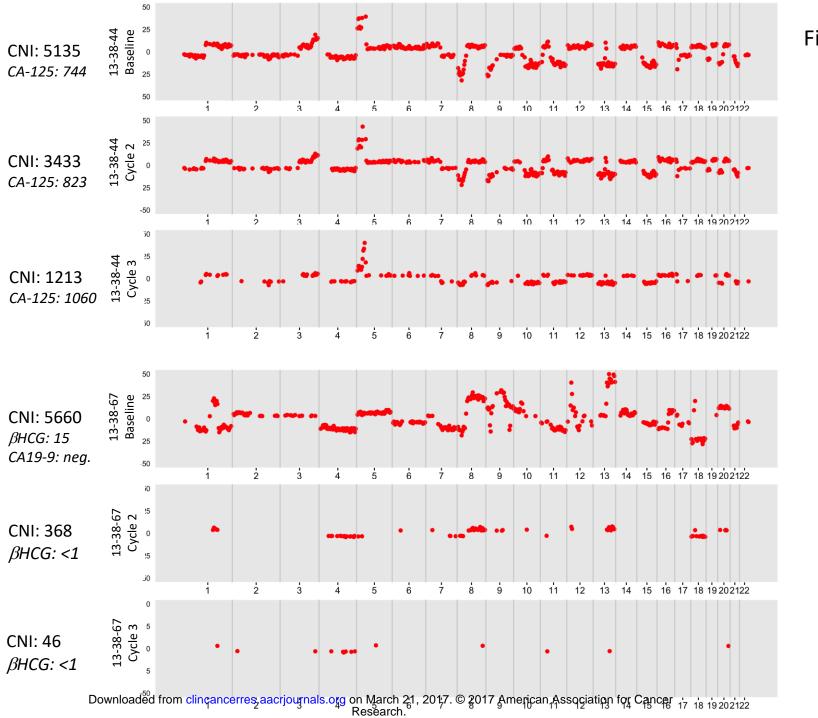


Downloaded from clincancerres.aacrjournals.org on March 21, 2017. © 2017 American Association for Cancer Research.



Research.







Clinical Cancer Research

Tumor Cell-Free DNA Copy Number Instability Predicts Therapeutic Response to Immunotherapy

Glen J Weiss, Julia Beck, Donald P Braun, et al.

Clin Cancer Res Published OnlineFirst March 20, 2017.

 Updated version
 Access the most recent version of this article at: doi:10.1158/1078-0432.CCR-17-0231

 Author Manuscript
 Author manuscripts have been peer reviewed and accepted for publication but have not yet been edited.

E-mail alerts	Sign up to receive free email-alerts related to this article or journal.
Reprints and Subscriptions	To order reprints of this article or to subscribe to the journal, contact the AACR Publications Department at pubs@aacr.org.
Permissions	To request permission to re-use all or part of this article, contact the AACR Publications Department at permissions@aacr.org.