Esophagogastric Cancer: Molecular Subtypes and Implications for Targeted Therapies

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Cancers of the stomach and esophagus are common and deadly diseases where systemic therapy has largely relied upon only modestly effective empiric chemotherapy. Within these diseases, there has been recognized to be a degree of heterogeneity with differences related to histology, anatomic location of the disease and even in regards to the geography of where the affected patient resides. In this talk, we will review emerging evidence regarding the new molecular data across gastro-esophageal cancers that have shed new light onto the distinct classes of these diseases. As we move to try to divide gastroesophageal cancers into classes based upon their molecular and genomic features, we may be more able to refine our therapies and target specific salient driving alterations. Indeed, through work in The Cancer Genome Atlas we have observed the presence of distinct classes of stomach cancers. Emerging work is trying to reveal more carefully how to understand the differences between the stomach and esophagus, given that molecular data show striking similarity of many of these cancers.