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Introduction



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Objectives



- Understand the important role of CAR-T cell therapy in current treatment landscape
- Understand the basic biology of T cell therapy and manufacturing process
- Discuss current FDA approved indications for CAR-T cell therapy
- Understand risk factors and therapies for cytokine release syndrome (CRS)
- Understand barriers and limitations of CAR-T cell therapy, specifically in Hawaii

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Question 1: What are the current FDA approved indications for CAR T cell therapy? (Select all that is correct)



- A: Patients < 25 years of age with relapsed/refractory B-cell acute lymphoblastic leukemia
- B: Adults with relapsed/refractory large B-cell lymphoma
- C: Adults with relapsed/refractory mantle cell lymphoma
- D: A and B
- E: All of the above

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Question 2: What is the only FDA approved treatment for cytokine release syndrome?



- A: Anakinra (interleukin-1 receptor antagonist)
- B: Dexamethasone
- C: Tocilizumab (interleukin-6 receptor antagonist)
- D: Etanercept (tumor necrosis factor inhibitor)

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Question 3: What are the current limitations and barriers to CAR T cell therapy?



- A: Non-response and disease relapse
- B: Complex manufacturing process
- C: Efficacy of CAR T cell therapy in non-hematologic solid tumors
- D: Financial toxicity
- E: All of the above

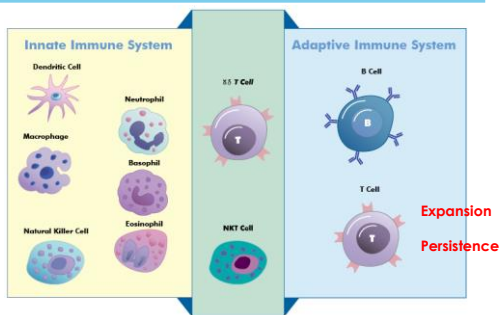
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Immunotherapy as the new pillar of cancer therapy



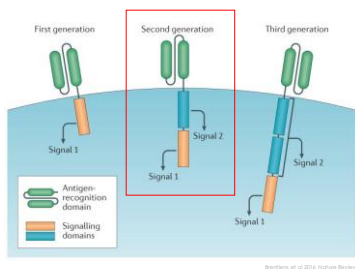
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Quick immunology refresher



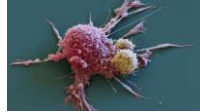
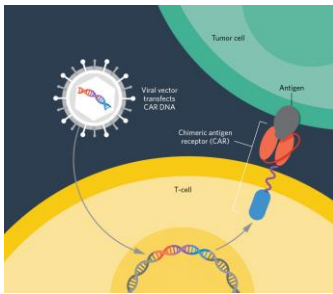
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Current FDA approved CAR T products are 2nd generation CARs



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CAR T cell therapy's mechanism of action is unique as it functions as a "living" drug



The-scientist.com

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Current FDA approved CAR T products and indications



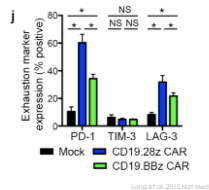
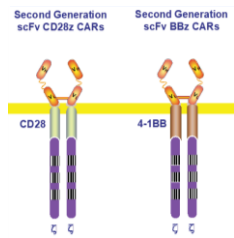
Product	Indications
tisagenlecleucel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children and young adults up to age 25 years of age with B-cell precursor acute lymphoblastic leukemia that is refractory or in second or later relapse Adult patients with relapsed or refractory large B-cell lymphoma after two or more lines of systemic therapy, including DLBCL not otherwise specified, primary mediastinal large B-cell lymphoma, high grade B-cell lymphoma, and DLBCL arising from follicular lymphoma
axicabtagene ciloleucel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adult patients with relapsed or refractory large B-cell lymphoma after two or more lines of systemic therapy, including DLBCL not otherwise specified, primary mediastinal large B-cell lymphoma, high grade B-cell lymphoma, and DLBCL arising from follicular lymphoma
brexucabtagene autoleucel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adult patients with relapsed/refractory mantle cell lymphoma

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The difference between the 2 current FDA approved CAR T product is in the co-stimulatory domain



axicabtagene ciloleucel
brexucabtagene autoleucel



Long et al. 2015 Nat Med

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The story of CAR T cell therapy
began with a girl named Emily...

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CAR T cell therapy as the success
story for difficult to treat cancers



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Encouraging results from clinical trials
led to FDA approval of CAR T cell
therapy



• CTL019

- Phase 1/2a single arm, single center open label studies conducted at CHOP/UPenn
- 4-1BB signaling endodomain
- 30 patients with r/r CD19+ B-ALL were treated
- ORR = 90% 1 month post infusion
- 63% of patients continued to have remission with a median follow-up of 7 months

• ELIANA

- FDA approval of tisagenlecleucel was based on this Phase 2 multicenter trial
- 79 patients received CAR T product (61% had previously undergone allogeneic stem cell transplant)
- ORR = 82% at 3 months post infusion
- RFS = 66% at 12 months, 62% at 24 months
- OS = 76% at 12 months, 66% at 24 months

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CAR T cell therapy has also been encouraging in patients with r/r DLBCL



• JULIET

- Phase 2, multicenter, international trial
- [4-1BB signaling endodomain](#)
- 115 adult patients with r/r DLBCL were treated
- ORR = 54% (40% CR, 13% PR)
- RFS = 66% at 6 months, 64% at 12 and 18 months
- Median OS = 11.1 months

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Encouraging results from clinical trials led to FDA approval of CAR T cell therapy- adults w/ refractory NHL



• ZUMA-1

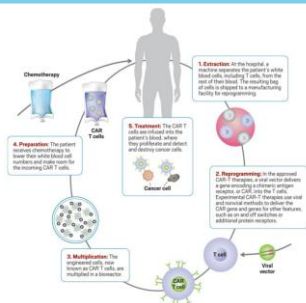
- Phase 2, multicenter
- [CD28 signaling endodomain](#)
- 101 adult patients with refractory **DLBCL, PMBCL, transformed FL**
- ORR = 82%, CR = 54%
- 42% of patients continued to have response with median follow up of 15.4 months
- OS = 52% at 18 months

• ZUMA-2

- Phase 2, multicenter
- 68 adult patients with refractory **mantle cell lymphoma**
- ORR = 85%, CR = 59%
- 57% in remission at 12 months
- PFS = 61% at 12 months
- OS = 83% at 12 months

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CAR T cell therapy is a process, not a drug



<https://www.cancer.org>

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The most common treatment-related toxicities is cytokine release syndrome



- CRS is a constellation of inflammatory symptoms resulting from cytokine elevations associated with T cell expansion, proliferation, immune system activation, and tumor cell elimination
- Can be applied to any T-cell activating/engaging therapy
- Symptoms comes in a range of mild to life-threatening



- High disease burden (in acute lymphoblastic leukemia) is a risk factor for severe CRS

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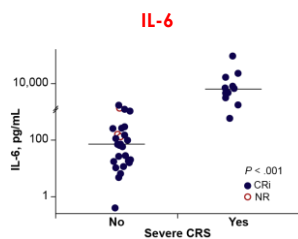
Different CAR constructs leads to different toxicity profile- CRS



Study	Product	N=	Median time of CRS onset (days)	CRS All grades	Severe CRS	Reference
ELIANA (peds r/r ALL)	CD19/CD3 ζ /4-1BB	65	3	77%	21%	Maude et al, NEJM 2018
JULIET (adult NHL)	CD19/CD3 ζ /4-1BB	111	3	58%	22%	Schuster et al, NEJM 2019
ZUMA-1 (adult NHL)	CD19/CD3 ζ /CD28	101	2	93%	13%	Neelapu et al, NEJM 2017
ZUMA-2 (adult mantle cell lymphoma)	CD19/CD3 ζ /CD28	68	2	91%	15%	Wang et al, NEJM 2020

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IL-6 was found to be more elevated in patients with severe CRS



Maude et al 2014 NEJM

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Tocilizumab is the only FDA approved medication for CAR T cell induced CRS



- Tocilizumab specifically blocks IL-6 receptors
- Received FDA approval for CAR T associated CRS in patients >2 years of age in 2017
- Does not appear to suppress T cell function and/or induce T cell apoptosis

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CRS management generally recommends tocilizumab to be given with moderate or severe CRS



Cytokine Release Syndrome Treatment Algorithm

CRS is managed clinically according to the following algorithm.¹

Clinical Severity	Management
Prodromal syndrome: Low-grade fever, fatigue, anorexia	Observe in person; exclude infection; administer antibiotics per local guidelines if neutropenic; provide symptomatic support.
CRS requiring mild intervention (one or more of the following): • High fever • Hypotension • Mild hypoxemia	Administer antipyretics, oxygen, intravenous fluids and/or low-dose vasopressors as needed.
CRS requiring moderate to aggressive intervention (one or more of the following): • Hemodynamic instability despite intravenous fluids and vasopressor support • Worsening respiratory distress, including pulmonary infiltrates, increasing oxygen requirement including high-flow oxygen and/or need for mechanical ventilation • Rapid clinical deterioration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administer high-dose or multiple vasopressors, oxygen, mechanical ventilation, and/or other supportive care as needed. • Administer tocilizumab: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patient weight less than 30 kg: 12 mg/kg intravenously over 1 hour • Patient weight greater than or equal to 30 kg: 8 mg/kg intravenously over 1 hour (maximum dose 800 mg) <p>Repeat tocilizumab as needed at a minimum interval of 8 hours if there is no clinical improvement. If no response to second dose of tocilizumab, consider a third dose of tocilizumab or pursue alternative measures for treatment of CRS.</p> <p>Limit to a maximum total of 4 tocilizumab doses.</p> <p>If no clinical improvement within 12 to 18 hours of the first tocilizumab dose, or worsening at any time, administer methylprednisolone 2 mg/kg as an initial dose, then 2 mg/kg per day until vasopressors and high-flow oxygen are no longer needed, then taper.</p>

<http://hcp.novartis.com>

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Many challenges remain in optimal CRS management



- Unfortunately, not all patients with severe CRS respond to tocilizumab
 - Ongoing investigations for alternative therapies: siltuximab, dasatinib etc
- Optimal timing of tocilizumab is a subject of ongoing clinical trials
 - Prophylactic treatment strategy is being explored

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Neurotoxicity is another common toxicity seen after CAR T cell therapy

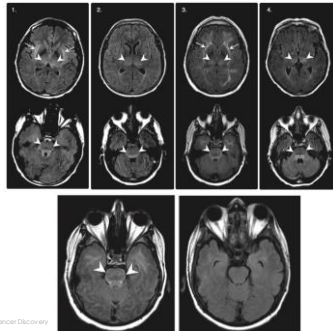


- ICANS = immune effector cell therapy associated neurotoxicity syndrome

- Symptoms: global encephalopathy i.e. aphasia, confusion, hallucination, tremor, agitation

- MRI changes seen in some, but not all patients with severe neurotoxicity

- Complete reversal of MRI changes upon symptoms resolution



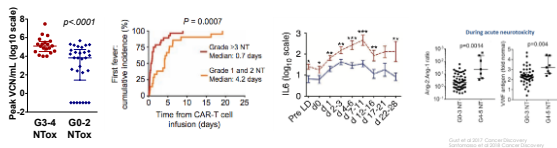
Quail et al 2017 Cancer Discovery

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Neurotoxicity is another common toxicity seen after CAR T cell therapy



- Severe neurotoxicity correlated with peak CAR expansion, earlier onset of fever, elevated serum cytokines, and endothelial activation



Quail et al 2017 Cancer Discovery

- Onset of ICANS is during CRS or shortly after resolution
- Pathophysiology is unclear

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Different CAR constructs leads to different toxicity profile- ICANS



Study	Product	N=	ICANS	Severe ICANS	Deaths from Cerebral edema (n=)	Reference
ELIANA (peds t/r ALL)	CD19/CD3 ζ /4-1BB	65	40%	13%	0	Maude et al, NEJM 2018
JULIET (adult NHL)	CD19/CD3 ζ /4-1BB	111	21%	12%	0	Schuster et al, NEJM 2019
ZUMA-1 (adult NHL)	CD19/CD3 ζ /CD28	101	64%	28%	2	Neelapu et al, NEJM 2017
ZUMA-2 (adult mantle cell lymphoma)	CD19/CD3 ζ /CD28	68	63%	31%	0	Wang et al, NEJM 2020

Tocilizumab is NOT effective in ICANS, focused more on supportive care

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Current challenges and barriers to CAR T cell therapy



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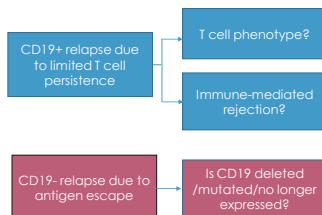
Unfortunately, not all patients who receive CAR T cell therapy are cured



- CAR products with 41-BB costimulatory domain, 10-20% of patients fail to enter remission, and 30-50% of patients who achieve remission will have antigen positive or negative relapse
- ELIANA trial
 - 38% patients relapsed within 24 months
 - 14 of 19 (74%) had evidence of CD19 negative relapse

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Mechanisms of post CAR T cell therapy relapse is complicated and multi-faceted


Slide adapted from Shenn-Chen

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Other engineering strategies to enhance adoptive T cell therapy



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CAR T cell therapy is expensive!



- One-time injection of tisagenlecleucel for ALL: **\$475,000**
- One-time injection of tisagenlecleucel/axicabtagene for NHL: **\$373,000**
- All hospital cost > **\$1 million**
- Few issues of getting insurance reimbursement in pediatric cancers
- Medicare reimbursement process is improving

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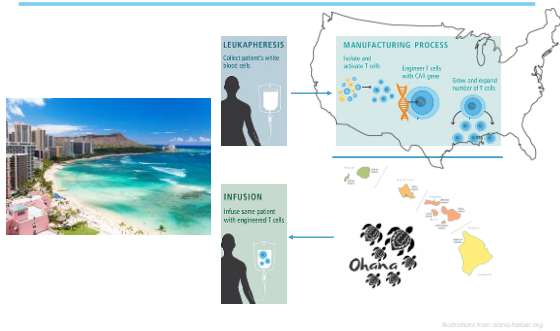
For Hawaii, access to CAR T cell therapy remains as the largest barrier



- 114 institutions in the U.S. that are eligible to administer tisagenlecleucel
- Limited by complex manufacturing process, expertise in managing unique toxicities
- In Hawaii, we are working with many experts from all disciplines to move this process forward

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Proposed model of how we can offer CAR T cell therapy in Hawaii to our patients



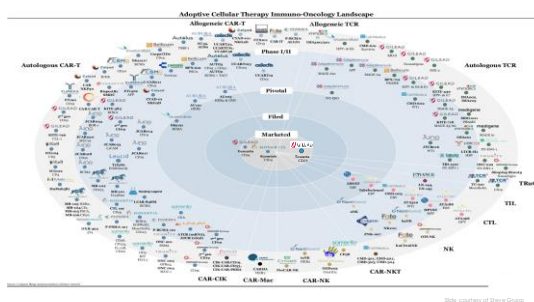
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It takes a TEAM to move mountains!



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It's an exciting world out there!



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