In the past weeks, the very promising results of three SARS-CoV-2 vaccines were reported, which hopefully will bring an end to the COVID-19 pandemic. Cancer patients, especially those undergoing active systemic treatment, are at risk for a severe course of COVID-19 and should be in the front row at the start of vaccinations. Although cancer research is still progressing, this pandemic led to lockdown of many research labs for months and has impacted on the lives and wellbeing of many researchers.

As a fledgling journal, IOTECH is highly dependent on a large output of innovative research, which may have been temporarily compromised by this pandemic. In order to open up the possibility of submission to even more researchers, we have decided to expand the scope of the journal from Immuno-Oncology Technology to Immuno-Oncology and Technology. The journal will still have a strong focus on technological developments in Immuno-Oncology, but will also welcome other research in preclinical and clinical immunotherapy, including natural, therapy-induced, innate and adaptive immune responses against solid cancers and hematologic malignancies.

IOTECH is the sister journal of Annals of Oncology and ESMO Open and is the youngest member of ESMO’s portfolio of world-class journals. It is supported by a very strong editorial board of international experts in the IO field (https://www.esmoiotech.org/content/editorialboard). You can be confident that by choosing to publish in IOTECH, your work will be published quickly and sent directly to all (approximately 25,000) ESMO members around the world. Your research will be further promoted by ESMO and Elsevier via their strong marketing and social media channels.

IOTECH’s current issue has two articles from renowned research labs. Feucht and Sadelain from MSKCC, beautifully describe the molecular characteristics of two CD19 CAR-T designs, called 1928\textsuperscript{z} and 19BB\textsuperscript{z}, signaling either via CD28 and CD3\textsuperscript{z} or 4-1BB and CD3\textsuperscript{z}.\textsuperscript{1} Although clinically the two CAR-T designs perform equally, their different signaling domains are linked to differences in target sensitivity favoring 1928\textsuperscript{z}, which may be important when ligand densities are low. In addition, the lifespan of the different CAR-T designs is dissimilar, which can be explained by more pro-survival signals in the 19BB\textsuperscript{z} CAR-Ts. These in-depth studies by the Sadelain lab have revealed some new and sophisticated ways to improve the performance of genetically engineered CAR-T cells, which may become the next generation of these fully synthetic cancer cell receptors.

Will we be swallowing pills containing microbes to modulate our gut microbiome to help fight the cancer in a couple of years from now? Soto Chervin and Gajewski, have written an intriguing story on the essentials of having “healthy” microbiota in our gut.\textsuperscript{2} Mostly based on preclinical models with fecal microbiota transplantation, depending on the donor, tumors’ growth and response to immune checkpoint blockade may be strongly influenced. Certain bacterial taxa appear required for a better functioning immune system, but whether this is dependent on a single strain or consortia is yet not clear. Clinical trials aimed at changing the gut microbiome are on the way, and results are eagerly awaited.

In 2021 as we publish more original research alongside our high quality, carefully commissioned reviews, IOTECH will actively pursue coverage by the major indices such as PubMed, Medline and Scopus. In addition to being available to read by thousands of researchers worldwide via www.esmoiotech.com and Elsevier’s ScienceDirect platform, once indexed, your work will also be searchable in the large databases. With the broadening of the aims and scope of IOTECH to embrace more widely the field of IO, we stimulate and challenge researchers in the IO field to submit to this journal.

Wishing you all the best in these uncertain and difficult times. Happy Christmas holidays and stay safe!!

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