

# Chemotherapy 101

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# Learning Objectives

1. Identify the different classes of anti-cancer medications
2. Identify the common toxicities and side effects of anti-cancer medications
3. Understand basic interventions for managing treatment toxicities

# Disclosures

- No relevant financial relationships with any entity producing, marketing, re-selling, or distributing health care goods or services consumed by, or used on, patients

# Patient Case

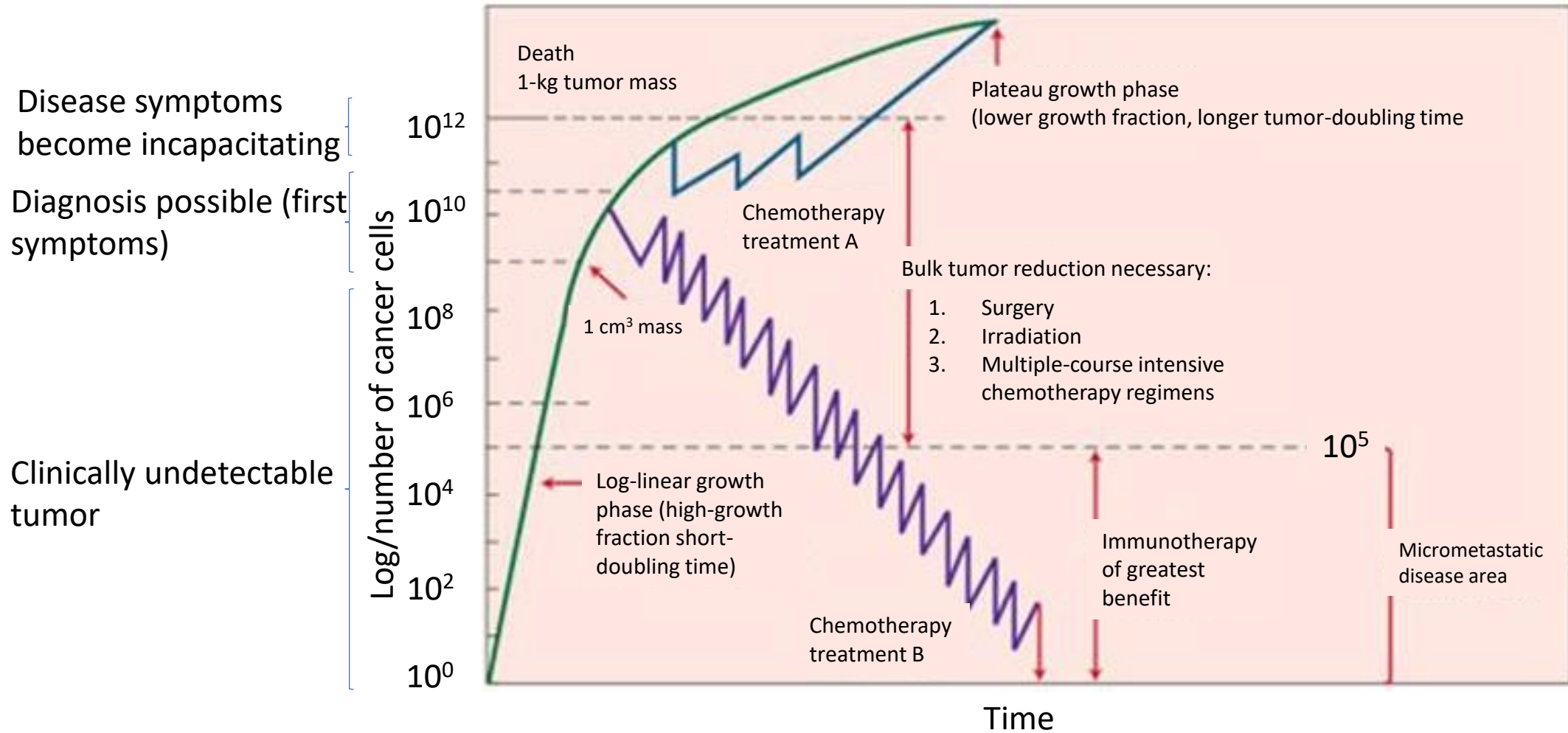
- MS is a 45 year old female with cervical cancer
- She is starting treatment with cisplatin + paclitaxel + pembrolizumab + bevacizumab

# Principles of Chemotherapy

# Principles of Chemotherapy

- Tumor Growth: Gompertzian
  - Early stages: tumor growth is exponential
  - Growth fraction declines as tumors expand in size
  - Larger tumors harbor higher numbers of nonproliferating cells

# Gompertzian Growth Curve



# Kinetic Principles

## **Non-phase specific:**

- Fixed percentage of cells killed at a given dose
- Dose-dependent

## **Phase-specific:**

- Plateau in concentration dependent effects since only a subset of proliferating cells remain fully sensitive to cytotoxic effects
- Schedule-dependent



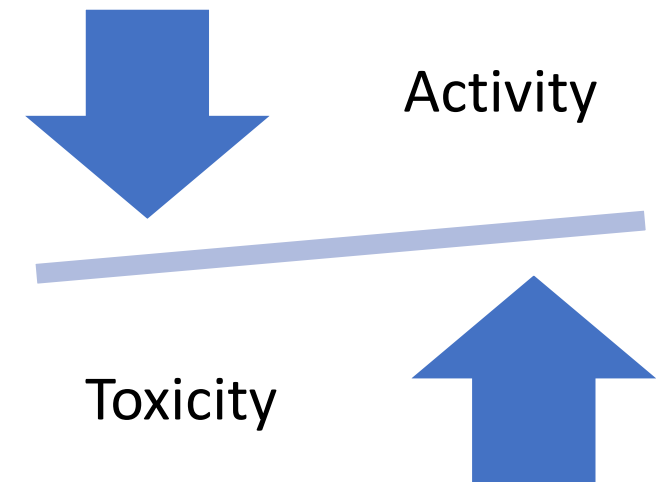
# Rationale for Combination Chemotherapy

A number of active drugs from different classes used in combination

1. Provides maximal cell kill within the range of toxicity tolerated by the host
2. Provides a broader range of interaction between drugs & (heterogeneous) tumor cells
3. May prevent or slow the development of cellular drug resistance

# Principles of Combination Chemotherapy

- Use only drugs known to be effective against the tumor when used alone
- Use drugs with different mechanisms
- When choosing from a particular class, use a drug without toxicities that overlap with other agents in the combination (assumes equal efficacy)
- Use drugs with different patterns of resistance
- Use drugs at their optimal dose & schedule
- Give at consistent interval



# Dosing of Chemotherapy

- Flat
- Weight based: BSA, mg/kg
- Capped dosing
  - Vincristine 2mg
  - Brentuximab vedotin 120mg
  - Gemtuzumab ozogamicin 4.5mg
  - Tisotumab vedotin 200mg
- Unique: Carbo AUC calculation – based on weight and SCr

# Dosing in Obesity

- Underdosing
  - 20% relative reduction in survival in adjuvant breast cancer patients as a result of underdosing
  - Cure rate of cisplatin-based chemo for testicular cancer reduced by 10% by underdosing
- ASCO Recommendation is to use actual body weight

# Anticancer Therapy

# Hallmarks of Cancer

- Self sufficiency in growth signals
- Insensitivity to growth-inhibitor signals
- Evasion of apoptosis
- Limitless replicative potential
- Sustained angiogenesis
- Tissue invasion coupled with metastasis

# Chemotherapy

## **Non-Cell Cycle Specific**

- Alkylating agents
- Platinum analogs
- Hypomethylators
- Anthracyclines

## **Cell Cycle Specific**

- Antimetabolites
- Microtubule inhibitors
- Topoisomerase inhibitors
- Anthracyclines

# Chemotherapy

## **Non-Cell Cycle Specific**

- Alkylating agents
- Platinum analogs
- Hypomethylators
- Anthracyclines

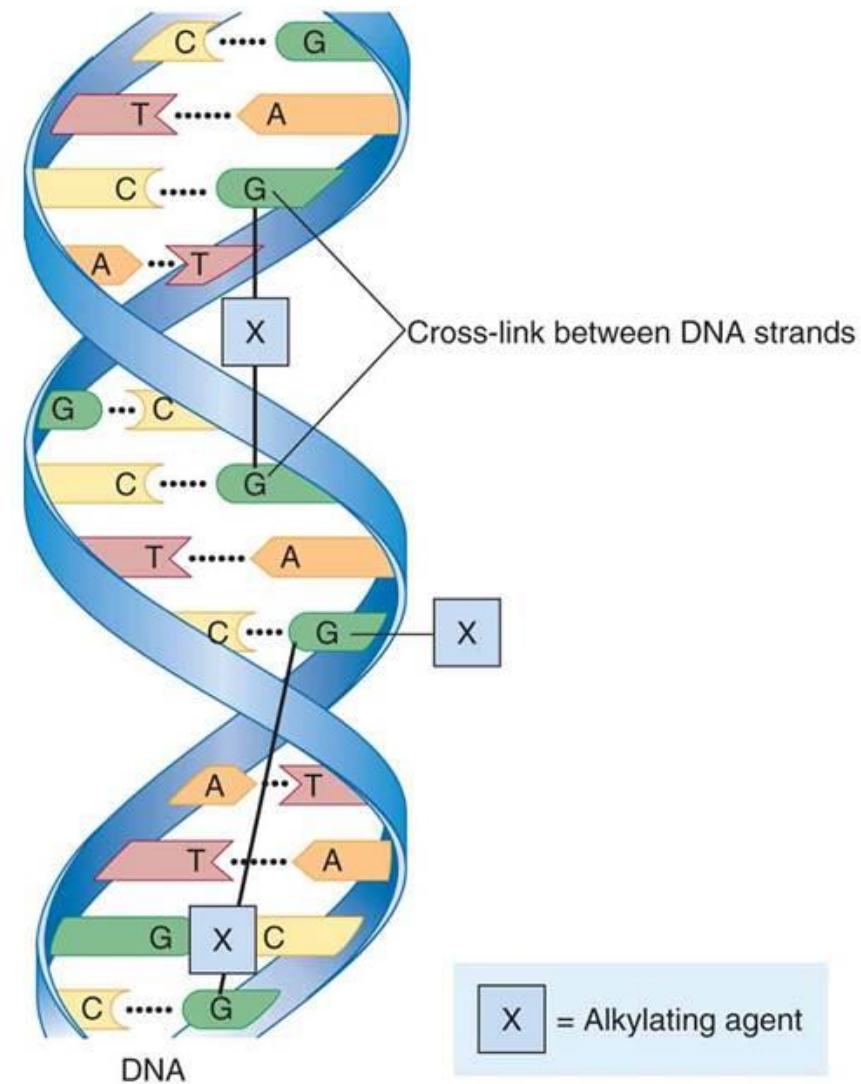
## **Cell Cycle Specific**

- Antimetabolites
- Microtubule inhibitors
- Topoisomerase inhibitors
- Anthracyclines

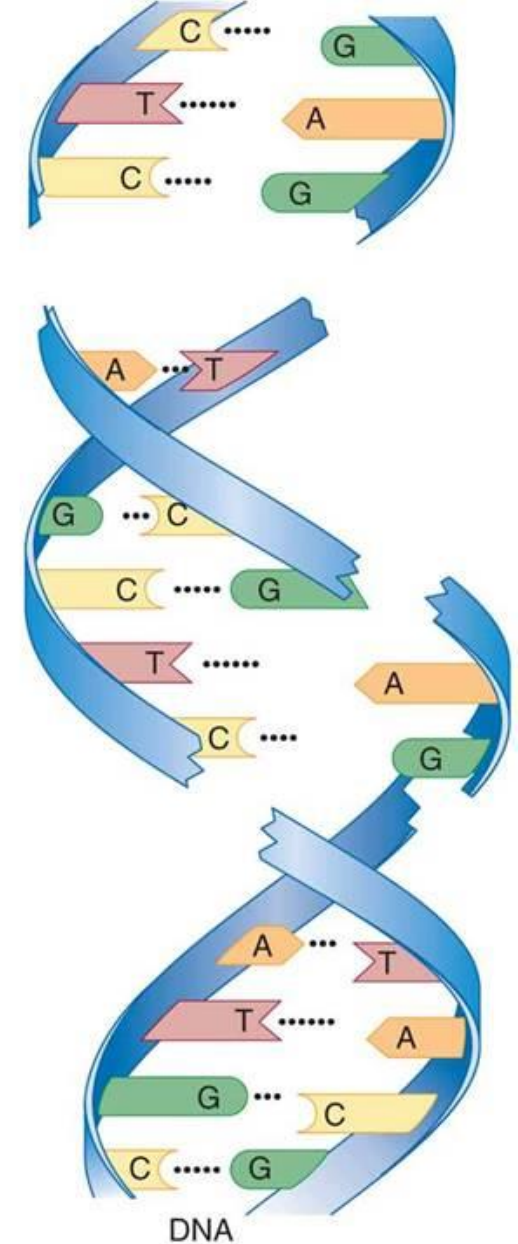


# Alkylating Agents

- Forms covalent bonds in DNA and RNA to prevent cell replication
- Some of the earliest anticancer agents



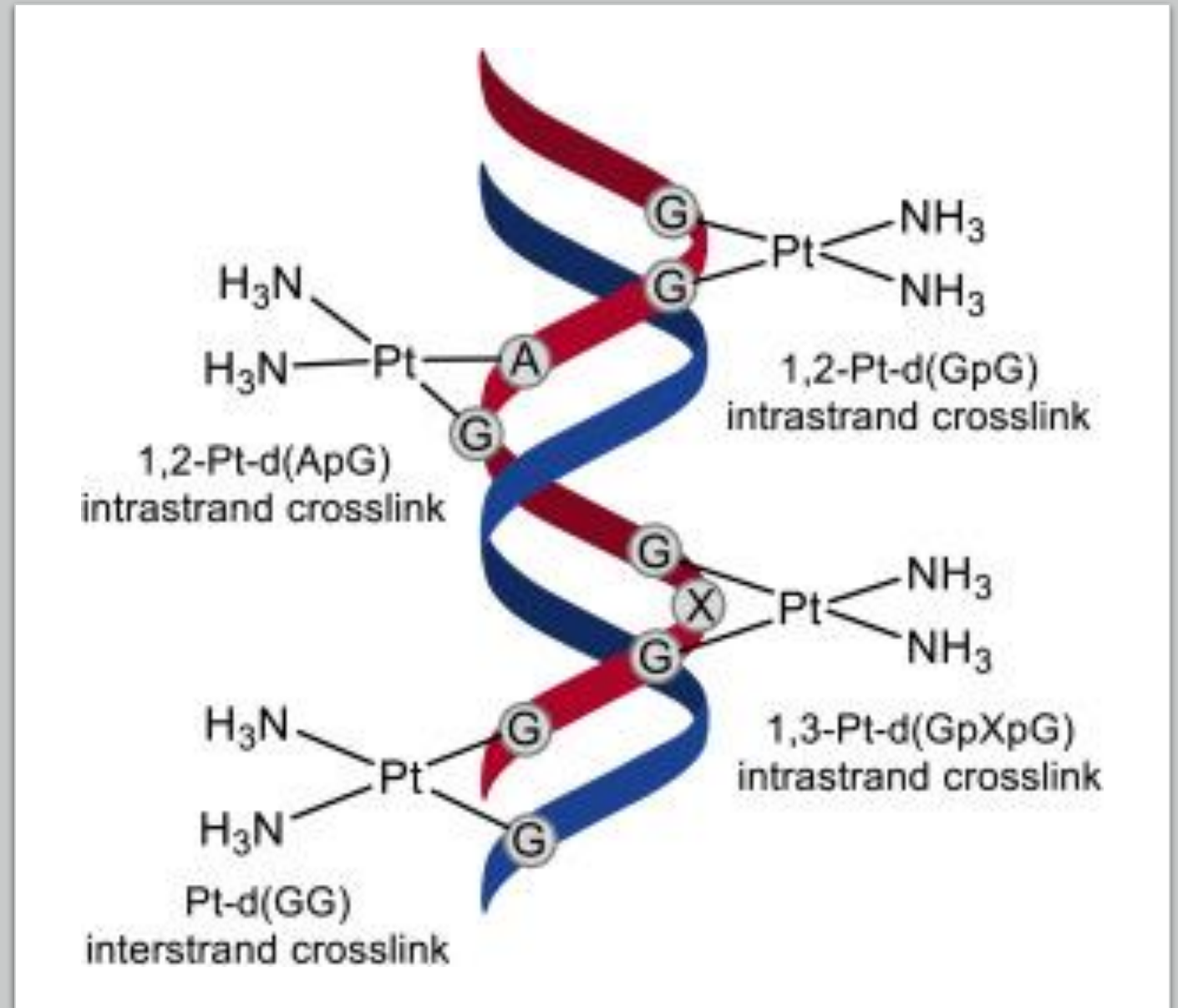
(a) Alkylation occurring during  $G_0$  (resting) phase of cell cycle



(b) Strand breaks occurring when DNA replicates during S phase of cell cycle

# Platinum Analogues

- Alkylating agent
- Intrastrand and interstrand DNA cross-links



# Chemotherapy

## **Non-Cell Cycle Specific**

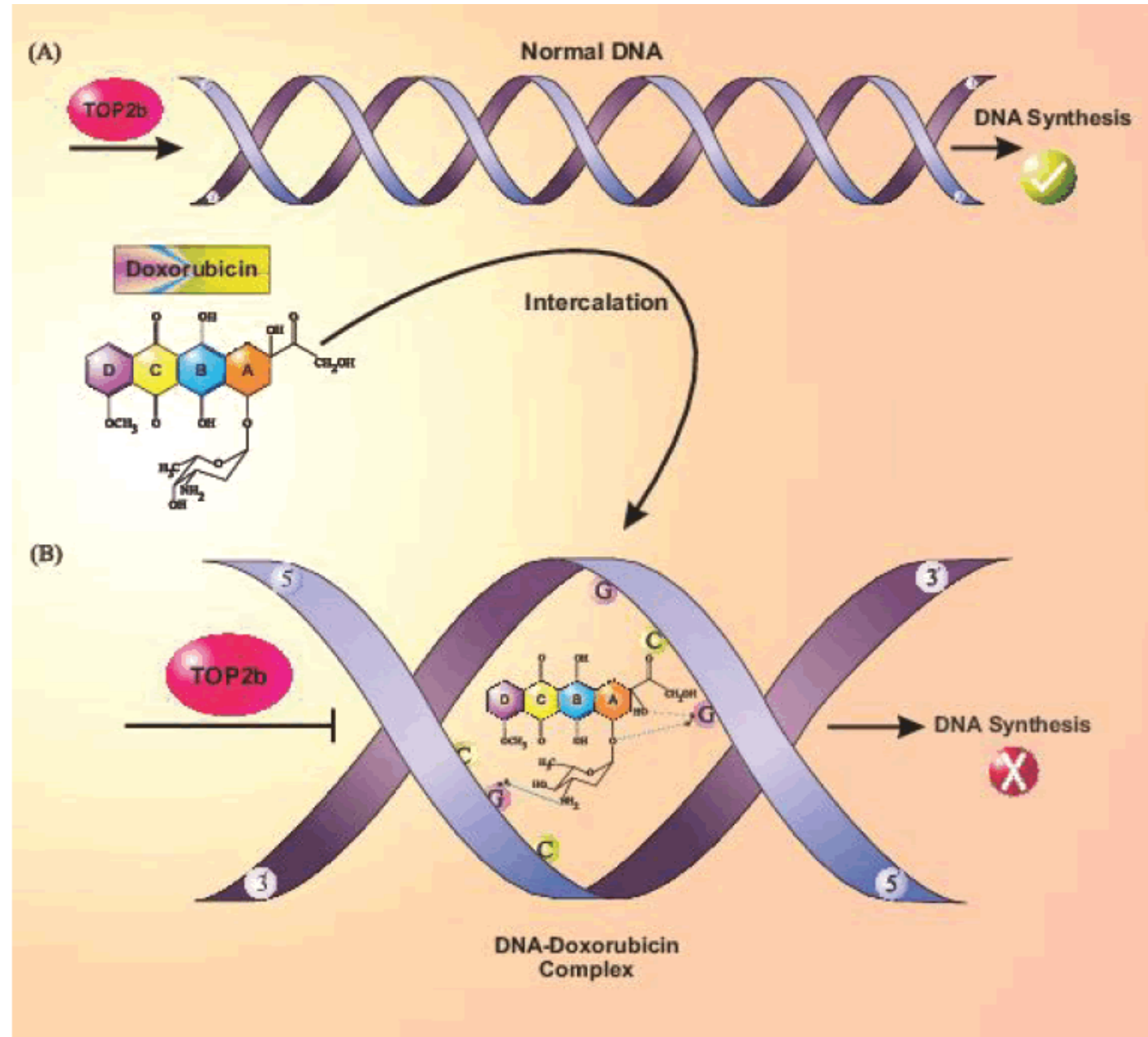
- Alkylating agents
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## **Cell Cycle Specific**

- Antimetabolites
- Microtubule inhibitors
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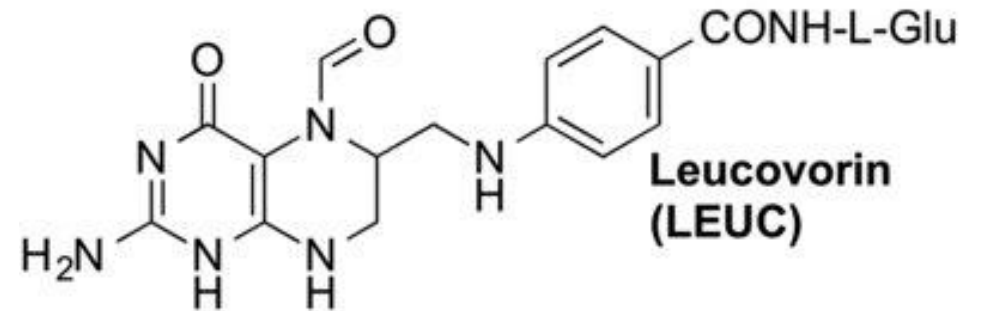
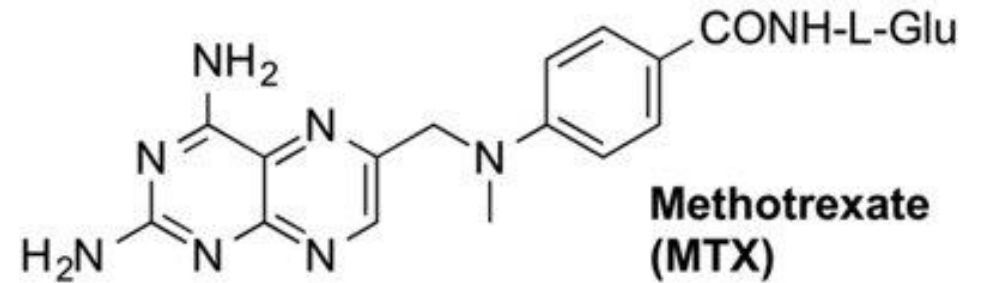
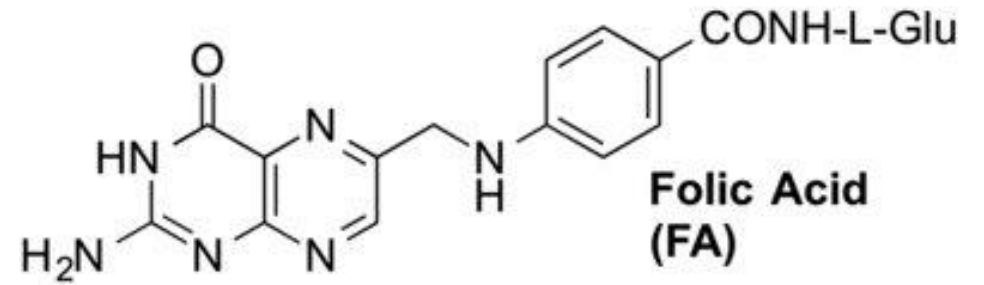
# Anthracyclines

- Anticancer antibiotic
- Intercalate DNA base pairs
- Inhibits topoisomerase I and II
- Free radical formation



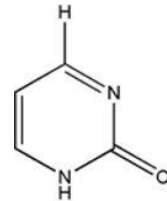
# Antimetabolites

- Analogs of naturally occurring nucleotides
- Antifolate agents

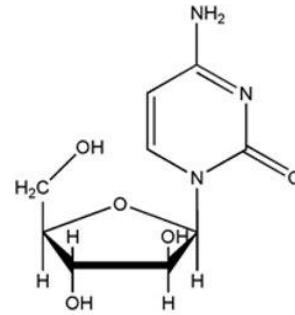


# Antimetabolites

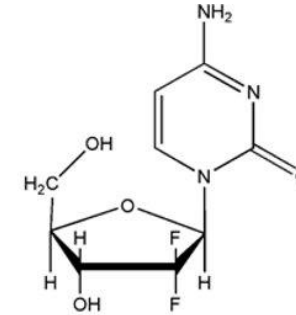
- Analogs of naturally occurring nucleotides
- Pyrimidine Analogs



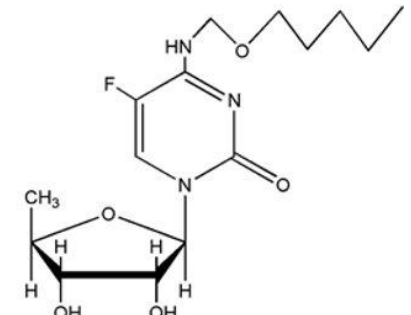
CYTOSINE



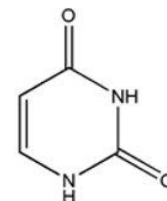
CYTARABINE



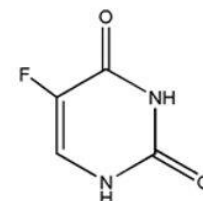
GEMCITABINE



CAPECITABINE



URACIL

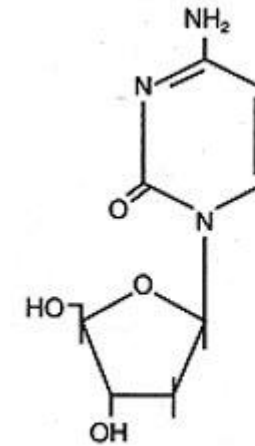


5-FLUOROURACIL

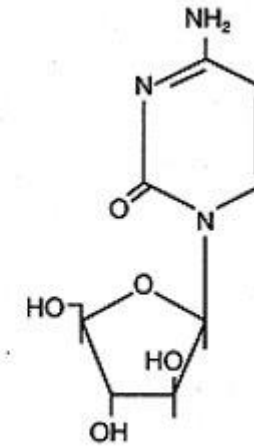


# Antimetabolites

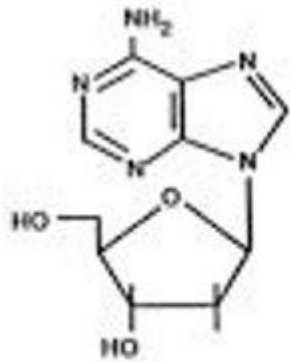
- Analogs of naturally occurring nucleotides
- Purine Analogs



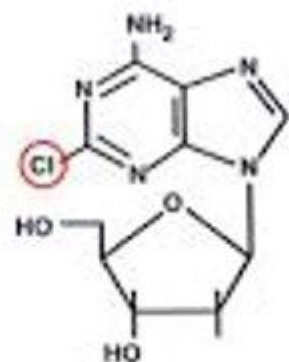
**Deoxycytidine**



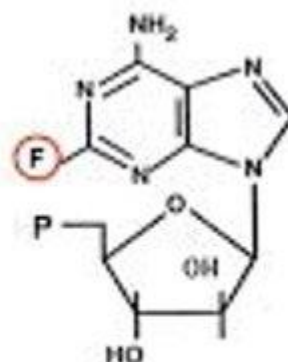
**Cytarabine**



**2'-deoxyadenosine**  
*natural purine*

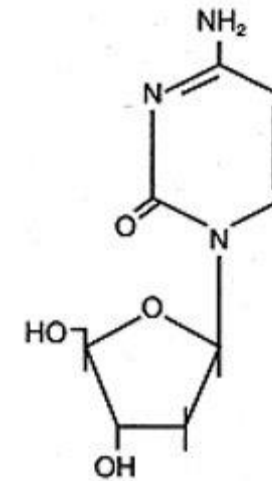


**cladribine**

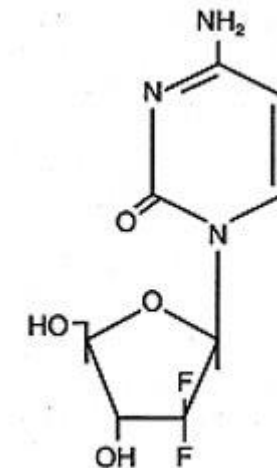


**fludarabine**

*purine analogs*

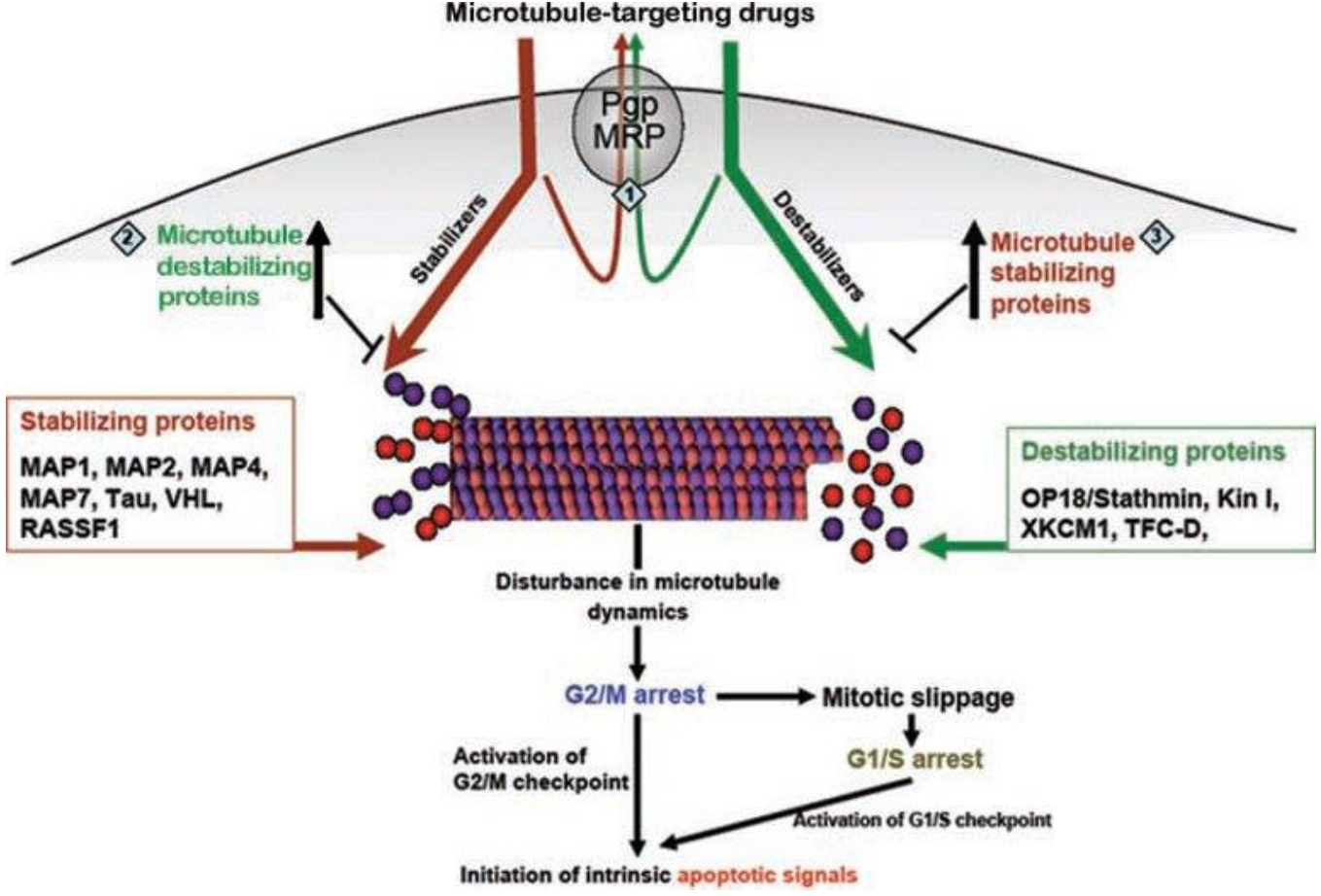


**Deoxycytidine**



**Gemcitabine**

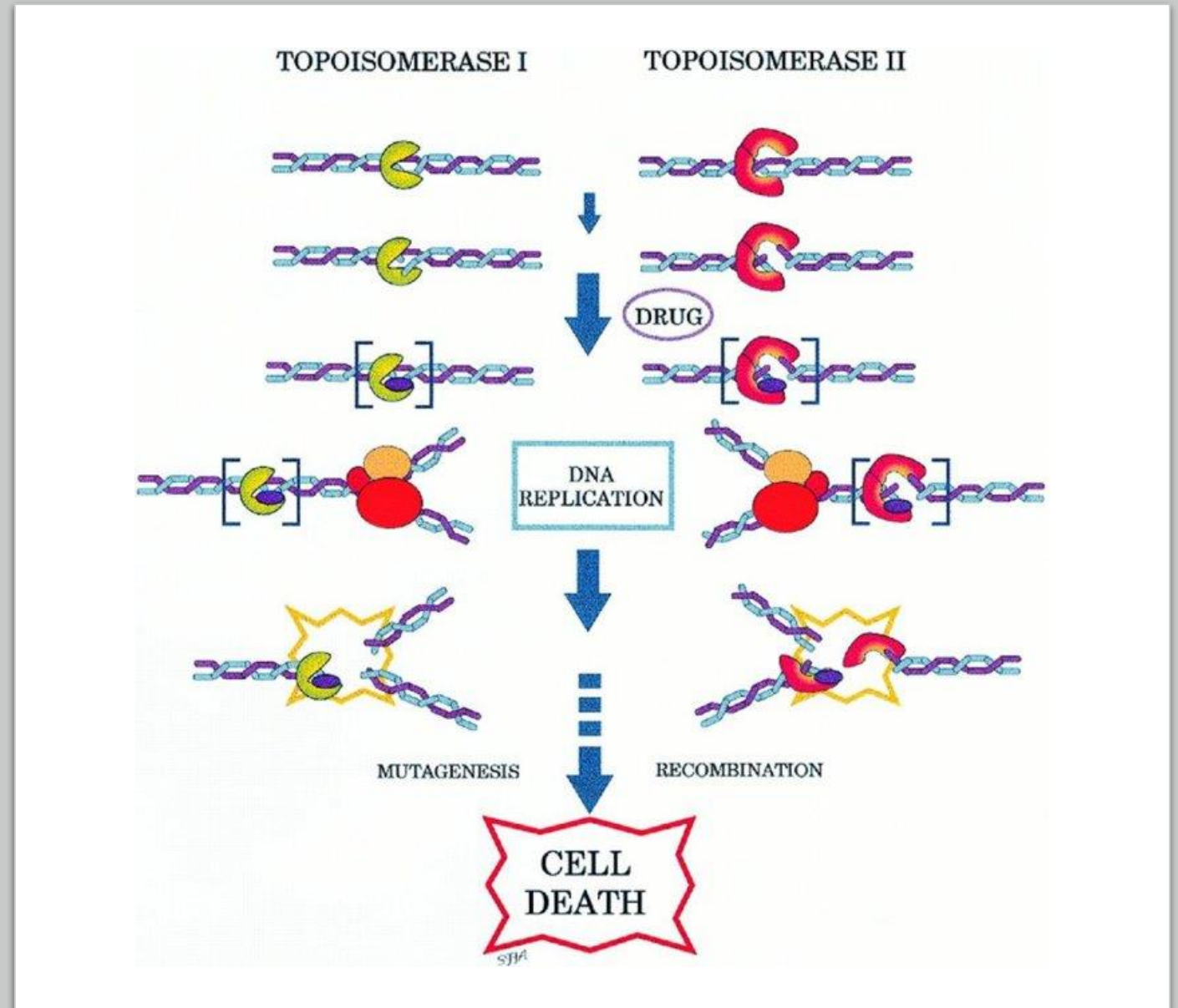
# Microtubule Inhibitors





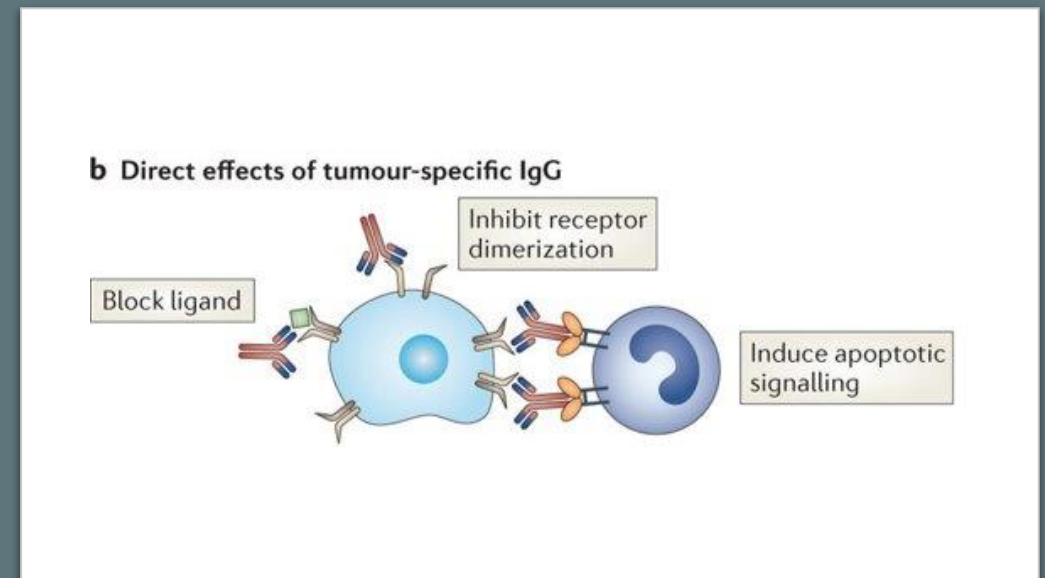
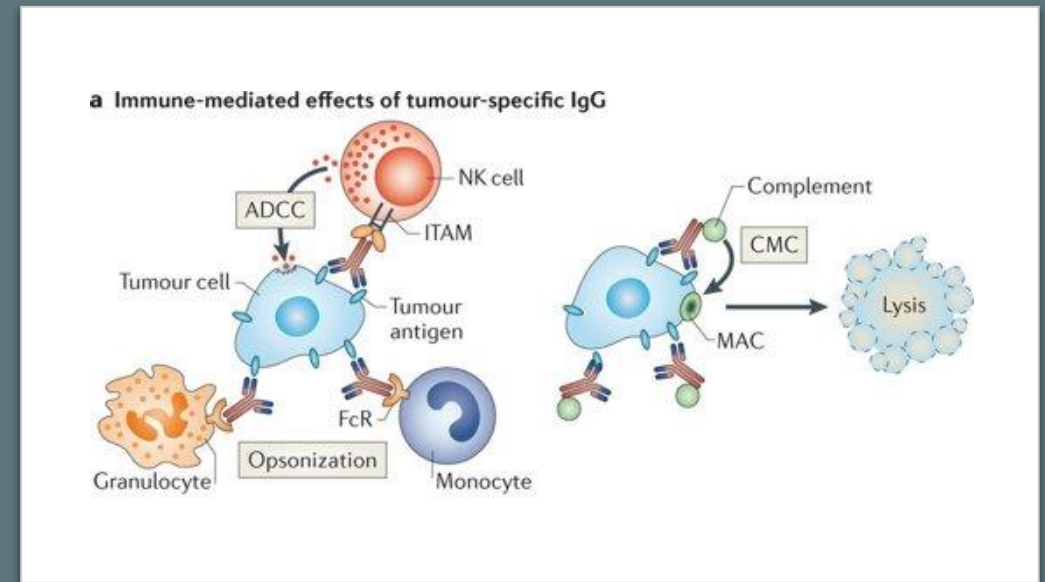
# Topoisomerase Inhibitor

- Topoisomerase I inhibitors stabilize the topo-DNA complex and prevents re-ligation of the cleaved DNA strand leading to single strand breaks
- Topoisomerase II inhibitors stabilize the topo-DNA complex and prevents re-ligation of DNA strands leading to double strand breaks



# Monoclonal Antibody (mAb) Overview

- Mechanism of action
- Engineered antibody binds target transmembrane protein
- Direct effects on malignant/target cells to disrupt cell signaling and growth
- Blocks binding of a ligand or inhibits dimerization of a receptor
- Mediate antibody-dependent cellular cytotoxicity
- Mediate complement mediated cytotoxicity
- Enhance responsiveness to chemotherapy or radiation

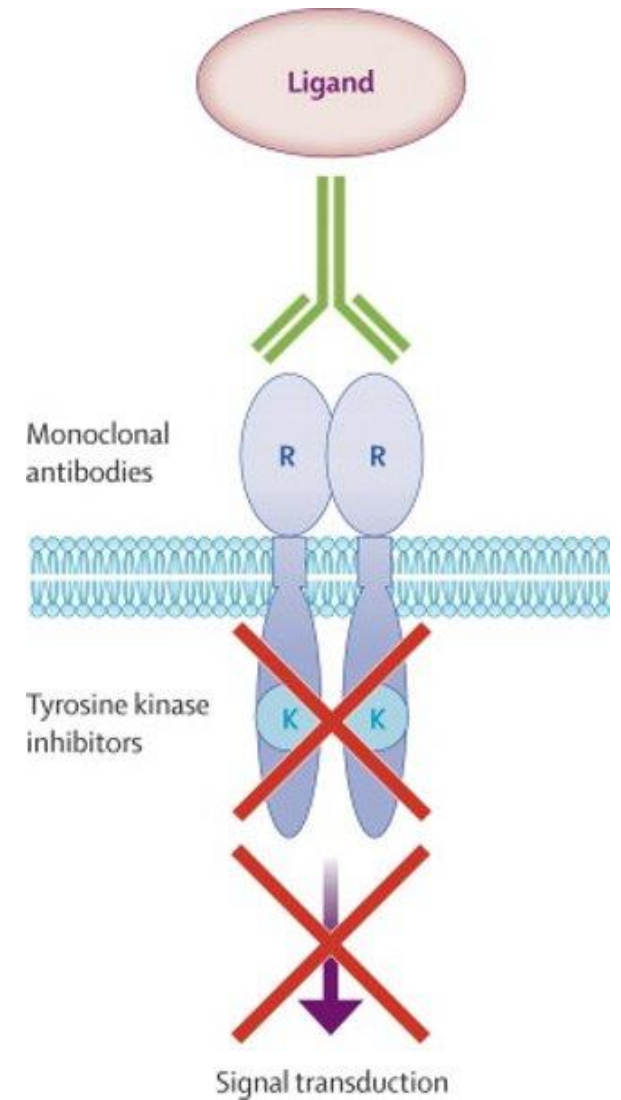


# Monoclonal Antibody (mAb) Overview

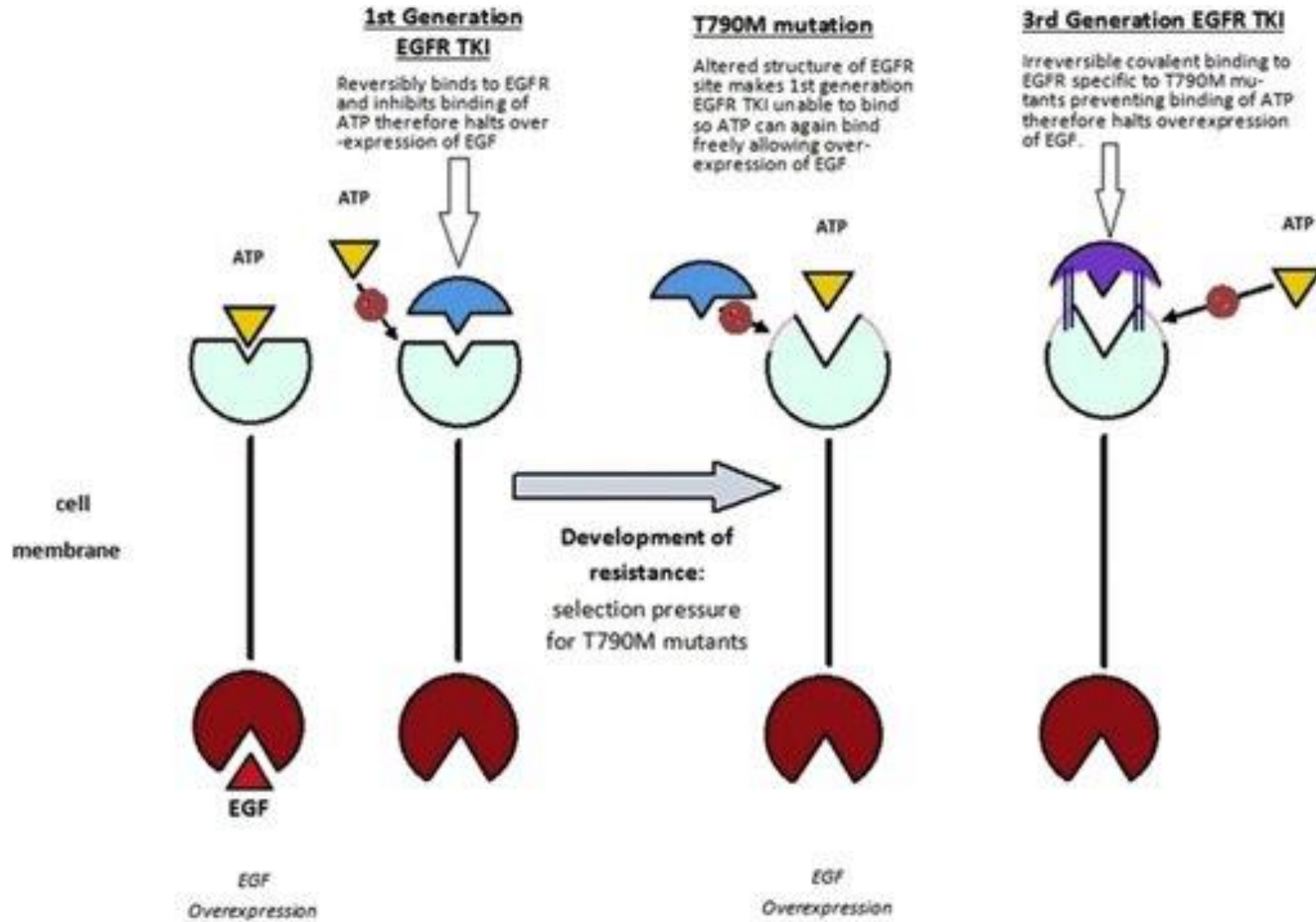
- Most do not require dose adjustments (or not studied) for renal or hepatic impairment
- Many mAbs carry a **Black Box Warning** for infusion reactions
- Premedications: H1 blocker, H2 blocker, corticosteroid, acetaminophen
  - Varies by agent
  - 1st infusion vs. all infusions
- Monitoring period post-infusion suggested for some agents
- Management of infusion reactions:
  - Stop infusion
  - Medication management includes agents above if not given initially, additional steroid (hydrocortisone), meperidine for rigors, oxygen, epinephrine, etc.
  - Grade 1-2: resume at 50% of previous rate after symptom resolution

# Tyrosine Kinase Inhibitors (TKI) Overview

- Mechanism:
  - Inhibition of tyrosine kinase enzyme results in blockade of multiple cell signal transduction pathways
  - Affects cell proliferation, survival, and invasion
- Must consider timing of administration in relation to food
- Must consider patient compliance
  - Multiple tablets per doses
  - Multiple doses per day
  - Ability to take tablets
- Must consider drug-drug interactions (DDIs) that require specific dose adjustment



# TKI Binding



# TKIs and QTc prolongation

- FDA considers any drug that prolongs the QTc by 5msec to be a QTc prolonging agent
  - QTc varies by up to 60 msec in the same patient throughout the day
- Some TKIs have specific dose adjustments/parameters for QTc:  
Nilotinib
  - Dose dependent effect
  - Obtain baseline EKG, 7 days after any dose change, and periodically
  - Contraindicated in hypokalemia, hypomagnesemia, or long QT syndrome
  - Correct electrolyte imbalances prior to initiation



# TKIs as CYP P450 substrates

- Food to avoid: grapefruit juice, pomegranate juice, starfruit, Seville oranges
- Smoking is a CYP1A2 inducer
- Most common interaction is through CYP3A4

## Strong 3A4 inhibitors

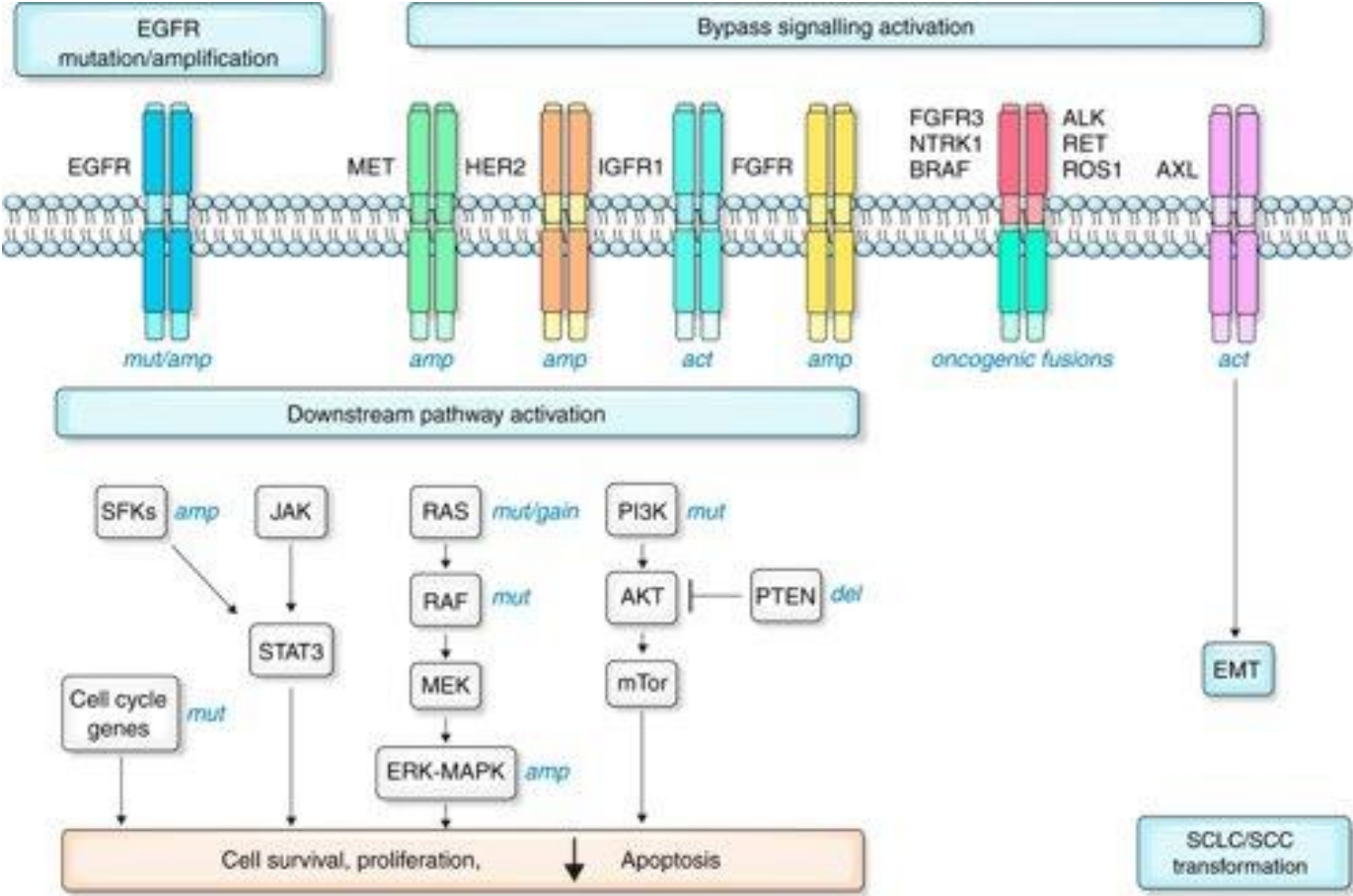
Voriconazole, ritonavir, posaconazole, ketoconazole, itraconazole, clarithromycin, diltiazem, idelalisib

## Strong 3A4 inducers

Rifampin, carbamazepine, enzalutamide, phenytoin, St. John's wort



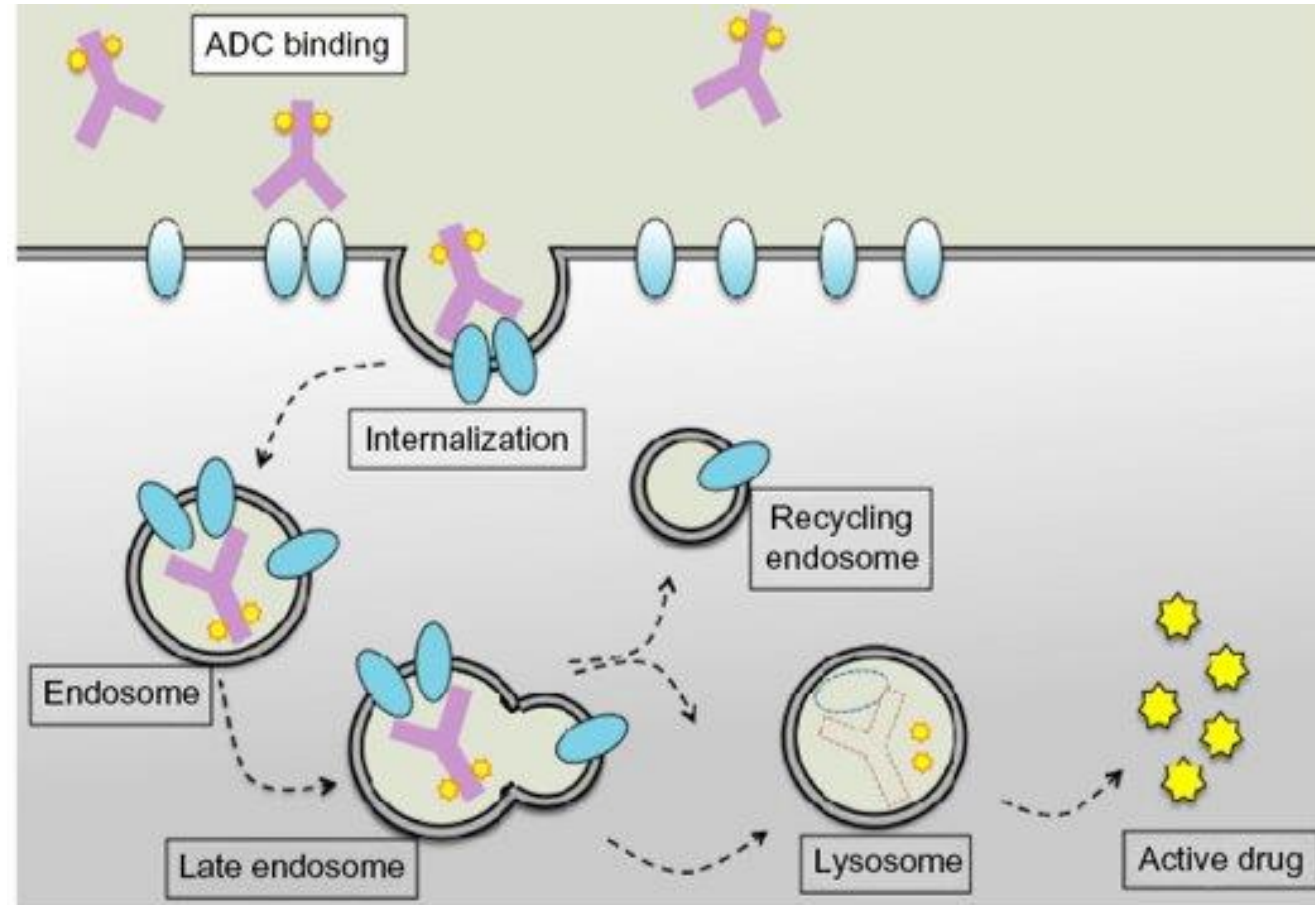
# TKI Resistance Mechanisms







# Mechanism of ADCs

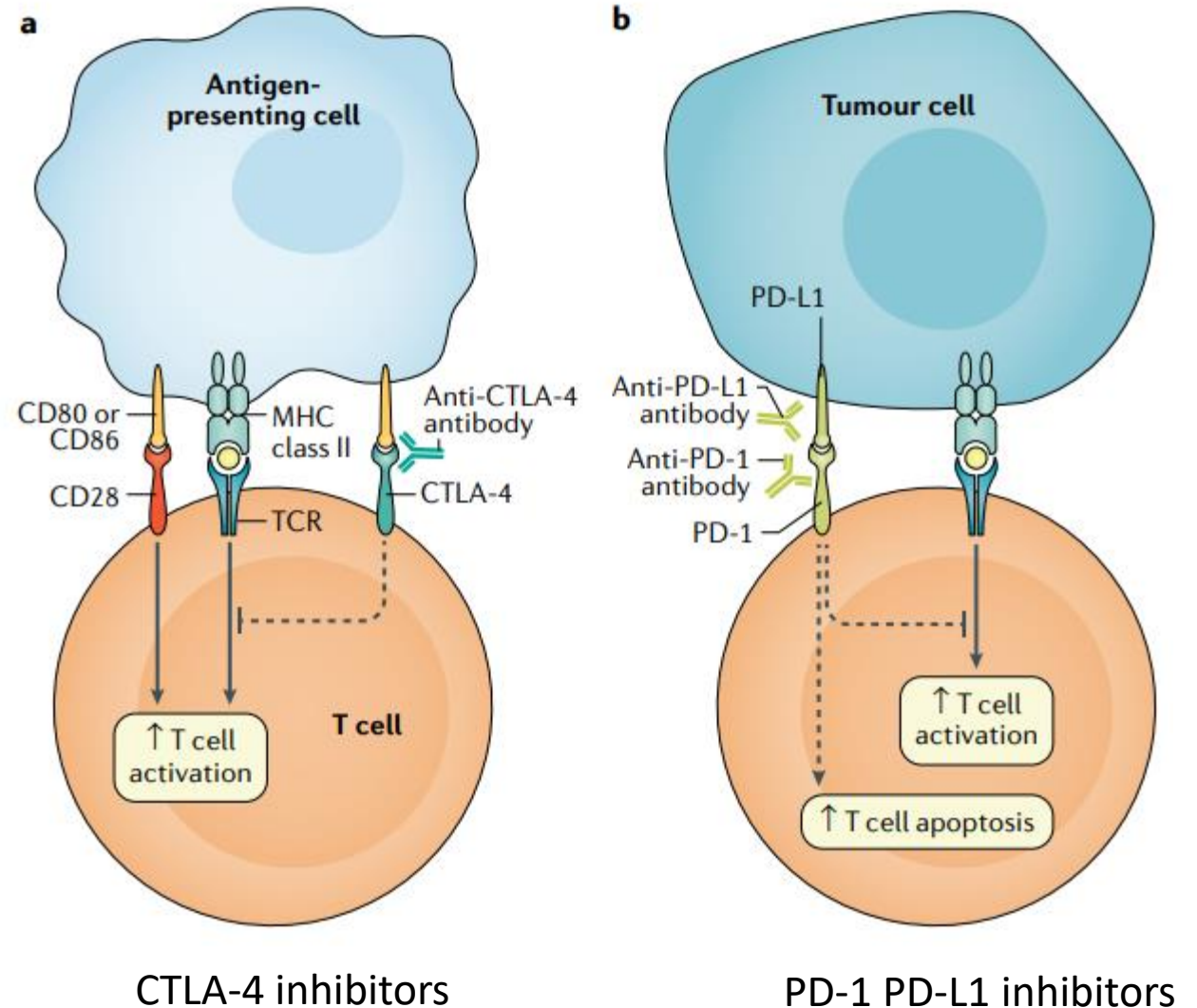


# Antibody-drug conjugates

- No dose loading with antibody-drug conjugates
- Most require premedication regimens
- Knowing the cytotoxic agent can predict side effect profile

# Immunotherapy

- Immune checkpoint therapy
- Bispecific antibodies
- Vaccine therapy
- Talimogene laherparepvec
- CarT cell therapy
  - Sipuleucel-T



# Biosimilars

- Per FDA, the biosimilar product is:
  - Expected to produce the same clinical result as the reference product
  - Switching between products does not increase safety risks or decrease effectiveness
- Interchangeability depends on your health system
- Insurance coverage of the drug varies by insurance company

# Current Oncology Biosimilars

Originator product	Biosimilar
Filgrastim (Neupogen)	Filgrastim-sndz (Zarxio) Filgrastim-aafi (Nivestym) <b>Filgrastim-ayow (Releuko)</b> Tbo-filgrastim (Granix) is not a biosimilar
Pegfilgrastim (Neulasta)	Pegfilgrastim-jmdb (Fulphila) Pegfilgrastim-cbqv (Udenyca) Pegfilgrastim-bmez (Ziextenzo) Pegfilgrastim-apgf (Nyvepria)
Trastuzumab (Herceptin)	Trastuzumab-dkst (Ogivri) Trastuzumab-pkrb (Herzuma) Trastuzumab-dttb (Ontruzant) Trastuzumab-qyyp (Trazimera) Trastuzumab-anns (Kanjinti)
Rituximab (Rituxan)	Rituximab-abbs (Truxima) Rituximab-pvvr (Ruxience) Rituximab-arrx (Riabni)
Bevacizumab (Avastin)	Bevacizumab-awwb (Mvasi) Bevacizumab-bvzr (Zirabev) <b>Bevacizumab-maly (Alymsys)</b>

# Order of Administration

- Administer the agent with the highest concern for extravasation first
- Administer biologic agents first
- Administer taxanes before platinum

# Patient Case

- MS is a 45 year old female with cervical cancer
- She is starting treatment with cisplatin + paclitaxel + pembrolizumab + bevacizumab
- At her prechemotherapy visit, she has a few questions:
  - Are all these agents necessary? What is the rationale behind combining these agents?
  - Which one will be given first?
  - Why am I getting biosimilar for bevacizumab? Will it work the same?



# New Formulations

- Drug with different formulations must undergo FDA approval for the specific formulation
- Hyaluronidase reversibly opens up interstitial space in SubQ tissue to deliver volumes >2.3ml
- Currently approved drugs with new formulations:
  - Rituximab hyaluronidase (Rituxan Hycela)
  - Trastuzumab hyaluronidase (Herceptin Hylecta)
  - Daratumumab hyaluronidase (Darzalex Faspro)
  - Pertuzumab, trastuzumab, hyaluronidase (Phesgo)



# Common Toxicities and Management

# Common Toxicities and Management

Skin Toxicities

# EGFR Dermatologic Toxicity Management

- Rash correlated with drug response
  - Dose reductions only for severe reactions
- Develops within first 2 weeks of treatment
- Limit sun exposure, use sunscreen
- Moisturize
- Topical or systemic antibiotics
- May use topical corticosteroids, sparingly



# VEGF Dermatologic Toxicity



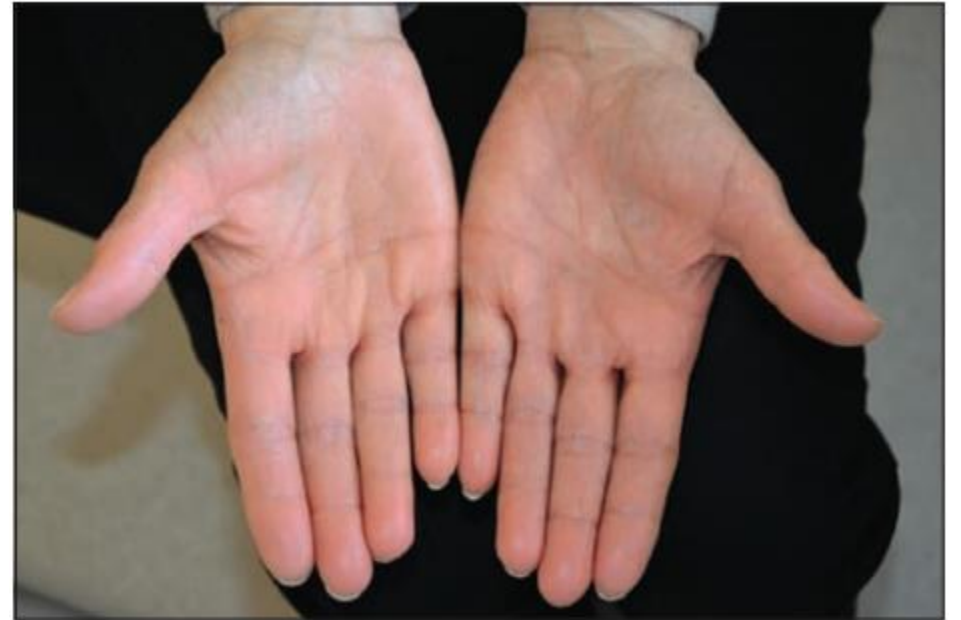
Hand-foot skin reaction



Hair discoloration

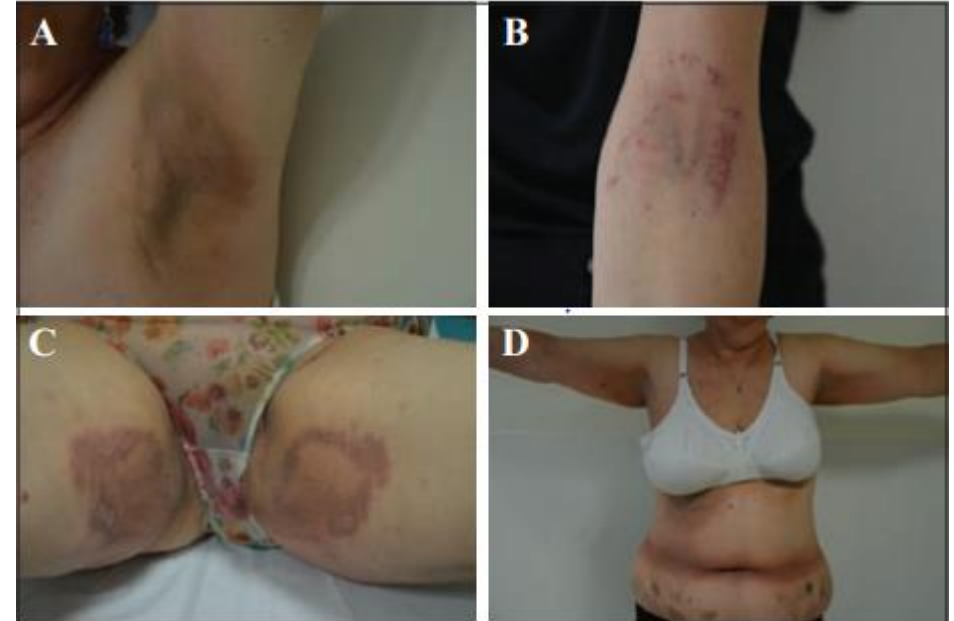
# Hand-Foot Syndrome

- Common agents that cause HFS:
  - Capecitabine
  - Liposomal doxorubicin
  - Everolimus
  - Multikinase inhibitors
- Microtrauma



# Taxane Skin Reactions

- Macular and papular eruption
- Warm sites prone to trauma



# Taxane Skin Reactions

Severity (CTCAE v.4)	Intervention
Grade 0	Gentle skin care instructions given
Grade 1	Continue drug at current dose and monitor for change in severity
	Topical low/moderate-strength steroid to affected areas bid <sup>1</sup> AND If infection is suspected, apply topical antibiotic or anti-fungal agent  Reassess after 2 weeks (either by healthcare professional or patient self-report); if reactions worsen proceed to next step
Grade 2	Continue drug at current dose and monitor for change in severity; obtain bacterial/viral/fungal cultures if infection is suspected; continue treatment of skin reaction with the following:
	Topical moderate-strength steroid to affected areas bid <sup>1</sup> AND If infection is suspected, apply topical antibiotic or anti-fungal agent  Reassess after 2 weeks (either by healthcare professional or patient self-report); if reactions worsen or do not improve proceed to next step
Grade 3	Interrupt treatment until severity decreases to Grade 0-1; obtain bacterial/viral/fungal cultures if infection is suspected; and continue treatment of skin reaction with the following:
	Topical moderate-strength steroid to affected areas bid <sup>1</sup> AND If infection is suspected, apply topical antibiotic or anti-fungal agent  Reassess after 2 weeks; if reactions worsen or do not improve, consider dose interruption or discontinuation per protocol and switch to another antineoplastic agent <sup>2</sup>

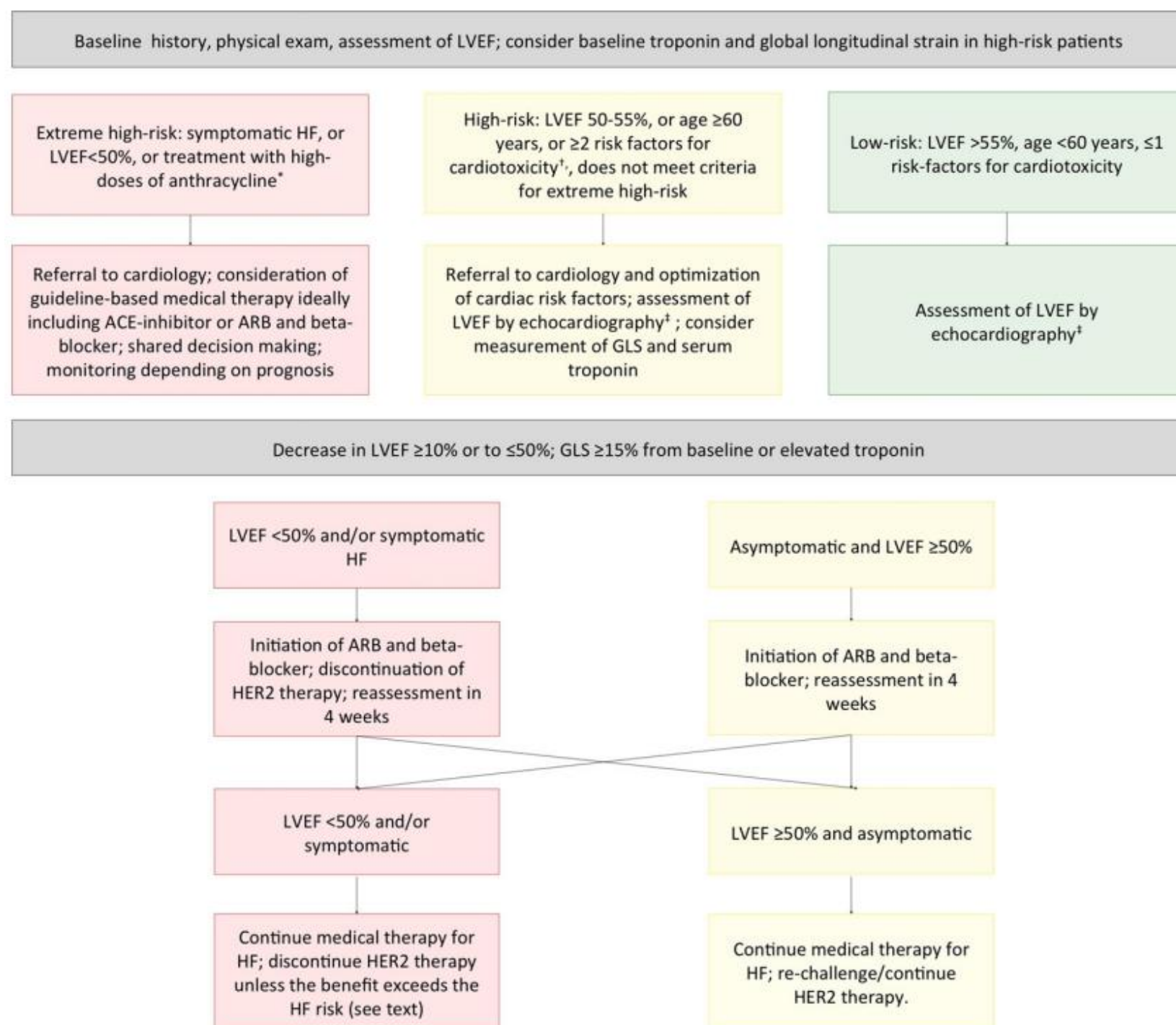


# Common Toxicities and Management

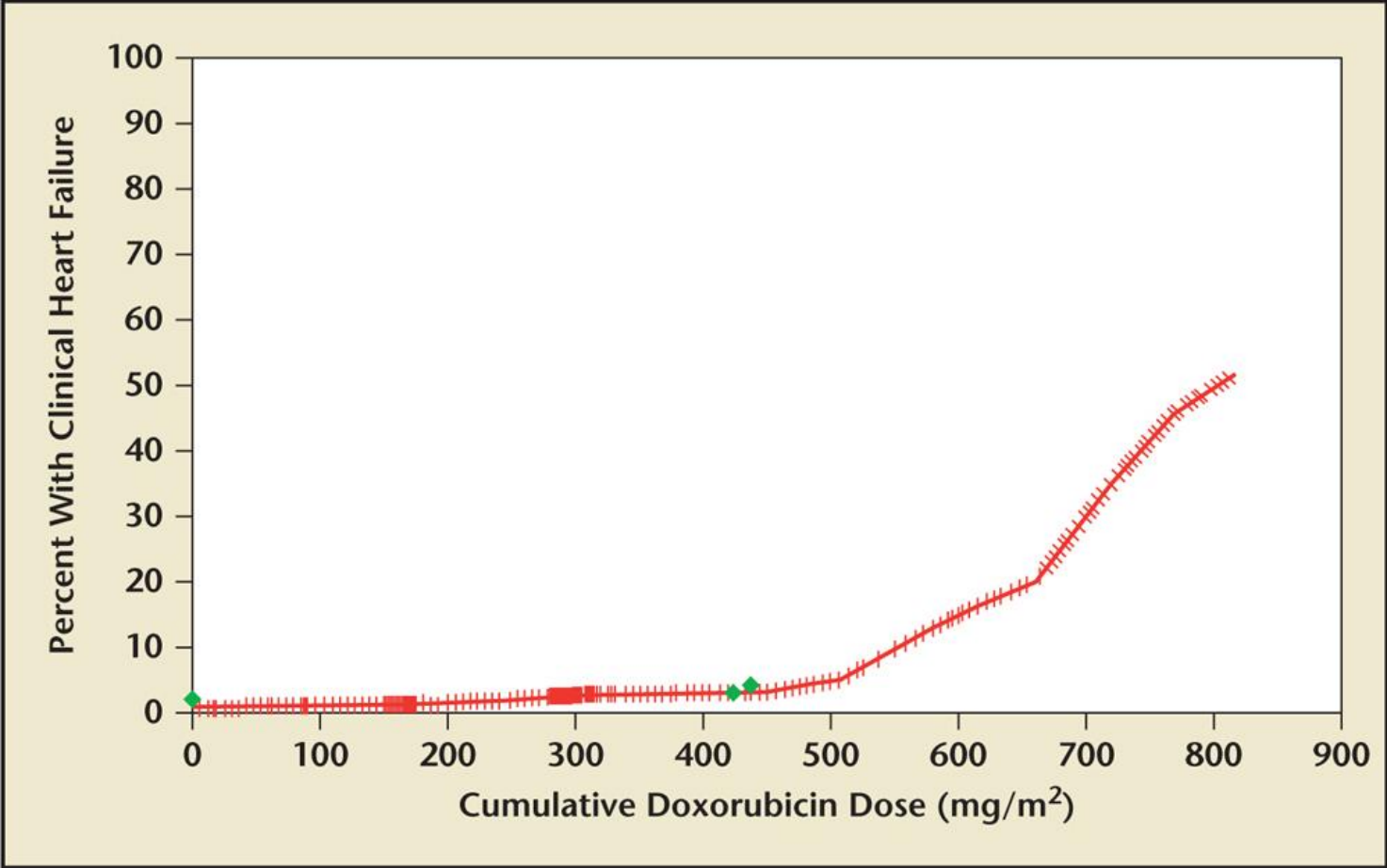
Cardiotoxicity

# HER2 Therapy Related Cardiotoxicity

- Generally reversible
- Monitoring every 3 months while on therapy
- Increase risk when combined with anthracyclines



# Anthracycline Cardiotoxicity

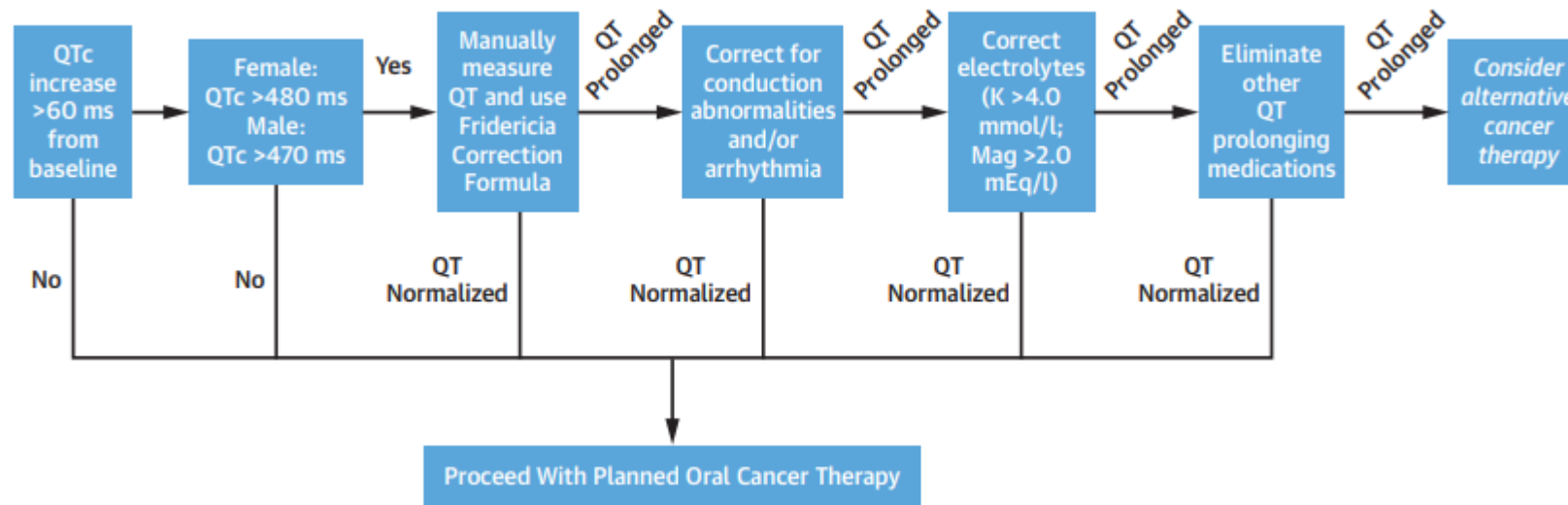


# 5FU/Capecitabine Coronary Vasospasm

- More common with continuous infusion 5FU and capecitabine
- Effects endothelial nitric oxide synthase leading to coronary spasm and vasoconstriction
- Presentation: chest pain/angina, ECG changes
- Management:
  - Calcium channel blockers or nitroglycerin for immediate symptom management
  - Consider verapamil/nifedipine or nitrates

# Cardiotoxicity of Chemotherapy Agents

- QTc prolongation



# Cardiotoxicity of Chemotherapy Agents

- Hypertension
- VEGF-targeting agents

Before bevacizumab therapy				
Clinic BP (mmHg) ABPM/ HBPM <sup>a</sup> (mmHg)	<160/100 <150/95	≥160/100 ≥150/95		
Bevacizumab administration	Start		Delay	
Antihypertensive treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not required in antihypertensive-naïve patients</li> <li>• No change to existing treatment required by the oncology team in patients receiving antihypertensive drugs</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrange ABPM/ HBPM and review at next clinic</li> <li>• If BP remains ≥150/95 mmHg, follow treatment algorithm (Fig. 2) and reassess at next clinic</li> </ul>	
During bevacizumab therapy				
Clinic BP (mmHg)	<160/100	≥160/100 or an increase of ≥20 systolic or 10 diastolic	≥180/110	Hypertensive crisis
ABPM/ HBPM <sup>a</sup> (mmHg)	<150/95	≥150/95	n/a	n/a
Bevacizumab administration	Continue/re-start	Omit dose	Omit dose	Discontinue
Antihypertensive treatment	<i>In antihypertensive-naïve patients</i>			• Emergency admission for in-patient care
	• Not required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reassess clinic BP or ABPM/ HBPM<sup>b</sup> and review at next clinic</li> <li>• If clinic BP remains ≥160/100 and/or ABPM/ HBPM ≥150/95 mmHg, follow treatment algorithm (Fig. 2) and reassess at next clinic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start amlodipine 5 mg daily and reassess clinic BP or ABPM/ HBPM after at least 2 weeks</li> <li>• Follow treatment algorithm (Fig. 2) until BP &lt;160/100 mmHg<sup>b</sup></li> </ul>	
	<i>In patients already receiving antihypertensive drugs for pre-existing hypertension</i>			
	• No change to existing treatment required by the oncology team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reassess clinic BP or ABPM/ HBPM<sup>b</sup> and review at next clinic</li> <li>• If clinic BP remains ≥160/100 and/or ABPM/ HBPM ≥150/95 mmHg, step up treatment in accordance with NICE guidelines<sup>50</sup> and reassess at next clinic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Step up treatment in accordance with NICE guidelines<sup>50</sup> and reassess clinic BP or ABPM/ HBPM after at least 2 weeks</li> <li>• Follow NICE guidelines until BP &lt;160/100 mmHg<sup>b</sup></li> </ul>	
Referral to clinician with special interest in hypertension	• Not required	• Not required	• Consider referral if BP not <160/100 mmHg on ≥3 drugs or multiple drug intolerances	• Emergency admission

# Common Toxicities and Management

Peripheral Neuropathy

# Chemotherapy Induced Peripheral Neuropathy

## Cryotherapy

- Frozen gloves and booties
- Conflicting data, ongoing studies

## Pharmacotherapy for Treatment

- Duloxetine
- Gabapentin, venlafaxine, pregabalin

## Treatment Changes

- Dose reduction, dose holds
- Changing therapy

## Prevention

- No data to support pharmacologic interventions for prevention



# Patient Case

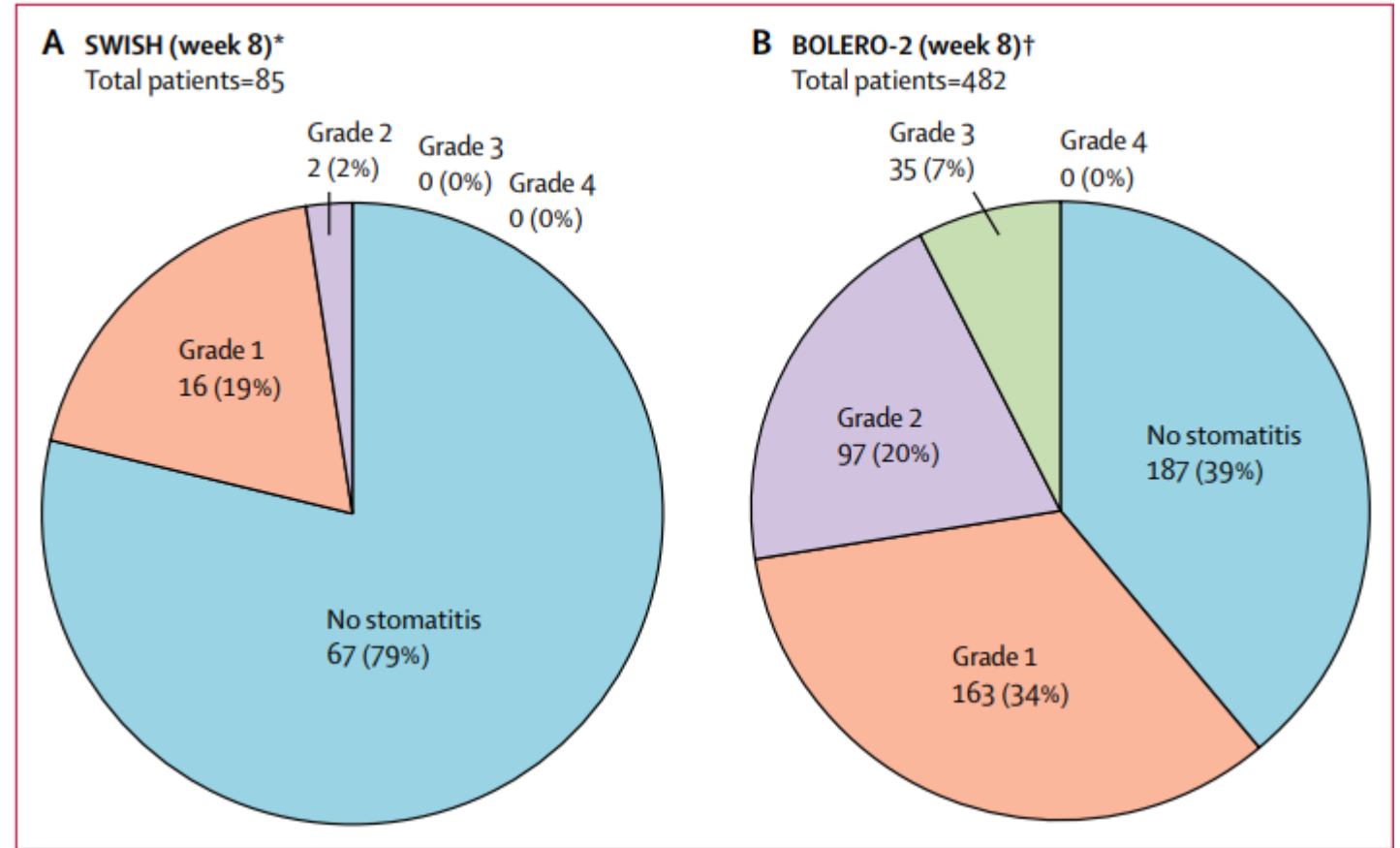
- MS is a 45 year old female with cervical cancer
- She is starting treatment with cisplatin + paclitaxel + pembrolizumab + bevacizumab
- At her prechemotherapy visit prior to cycle 2, she reports tingling and numbness in her fingers and toes.
  - What agent could this be related to?
  - What treatment options are available to her?

# Common Toxicities and Management

GI Toxicity

# Mucositis

- Supportive care
  - Brush and floss twice daily
  - Baking soda/salt water rinses
  - Good dental hygiene
  - Avoiding irritants
- Everolimus: SWISH trial





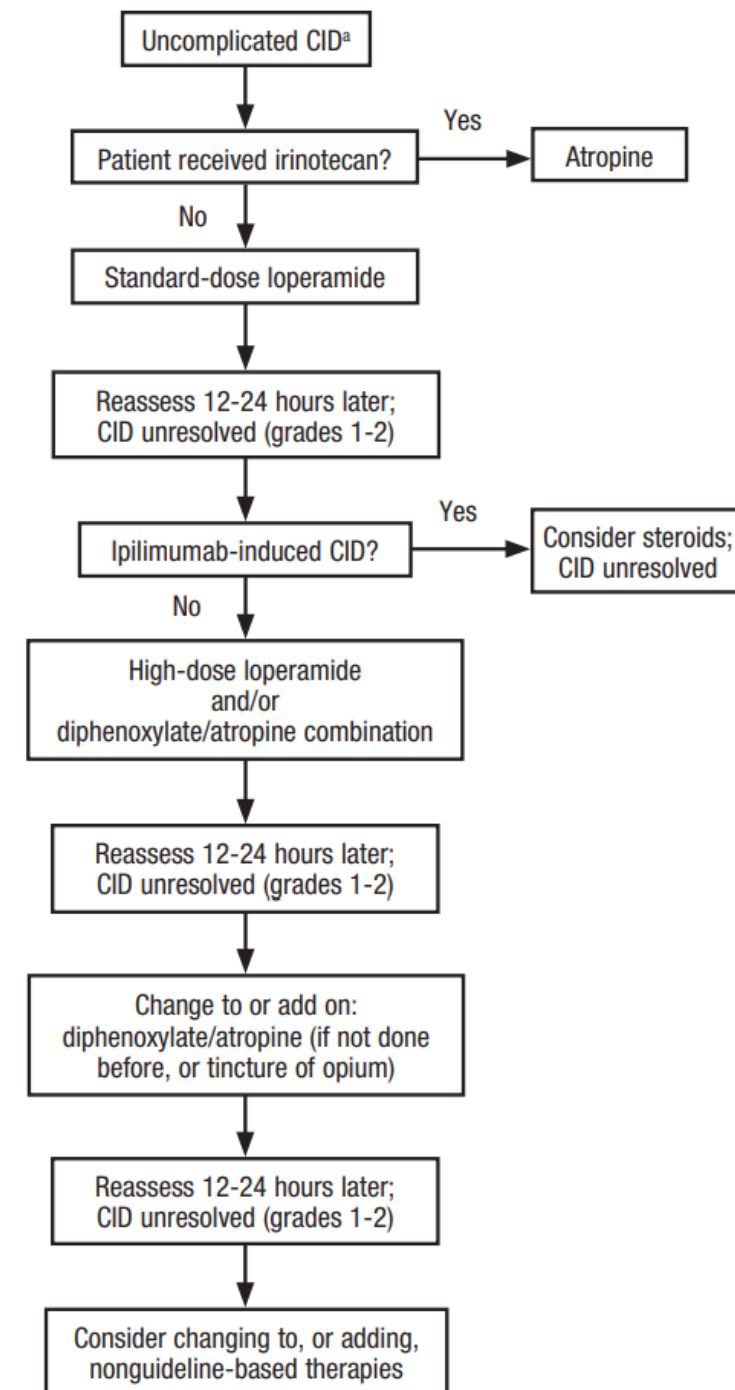


# Chemotherapy Induced Constipation and Diarrhea

CTCAE Term	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
Diarrhea	Increase of <4 stools per day over baseline; mild increase in ostomy output compared to baseline	Increase of 4 - 6 stools per day over baseline; moderate increase in ostomy output compared to baseline; limiting instrumental ADL	Increase of $\geq 7$ stools per day over baseline; hospitalization indicated; severe increase in ostomy output compared to baseline; limiting self care ADL	Life-threatening consequences; urgent intervention indicated	Death
<p><b>Definition:</b> A disorder characterized by an increase in frequency and/or loose or watery bowel movements.</p> <p><b>Navigational Note:</b> -</p>					
<a href="#">Constipation</a>	Occasional or intermittent symptoms; occasional use of stool softeners, laxatives, dietary modification, or enema	Persistent symptoms with regular use of laxatives or enemas; limiting instrumental ADL	Obstipation with manual evacuation indicated; limiting self care ADL	Life-threatening consequences; urgent intervention indicated	Death
<p><b>Definition:</b> A disorder characterized by irregular and infrequent or difficult evacuation of the bowels.</p> <p><b>Navigational Note:</b> -</p>					

# Chemotherapy Induced Diarrhea

- Irinotecan induced diarrhea
- IRAE diarrhea
- EGFR related diarrhea
- Layering loperamide and lomotil
- Refractory: tincture of opium, octreotide



# Chemotherapy Induced Constipation

- Causes: anti-emetics, chemotherapy adverse effect, opioids, disease
  - Vincristine, temozolomide

Drug therapy	Mechanism of action	Onset of action
Psyllium, methylcellulose	Bulk-forming – stimulates peristalsis, reduce GI transit time	Up to 72h
Miralax, lactulose, magnesium hydroxide, glycerin	Osmotic – retains water in gut lumen	24-72h
Senna, bisacodyl	Stimulative – increase peristalsis resulting in reduced net absorption of water from lumen	Senna: 6-24h Bisacodyl: 6-12h (PO), <1h (suppository)
Mineral oil	Lubricant – coat feces and rectum for easier passage	6-8h (PO), <15min (rectal)
Bisacodyl, glycerin suppositories	Rectal – avoid with neutropenic or thrombocytopenic patients	



# Patient Case

- MS is a 45 year old female with cervical cancer
- She is starting treatment with cisplatin + paclitaxel + pembrolizumab + bevacizumab
- At her subsequent prechemotherapy visit, she has a few questions:
  - I have constipation starting a couple days after chemotherapy. What is this due to? How can I prevent it?

# Common Toxicities and Management

Hematologic Toxicity

# Hematologic Toxicity

CTCAE Term	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
Neutrophil count decreased	<LLN - 1500/mm <sup>3</sup> ; <LLN - 1.5 x 10 <sup>9</sup> /L	<1500 - 1000/mm <sup>3</sup> ; <1.5 - 1.0 x 10 <sup>9</sup> /L	<1000 - 500/mm <sup>3</sup> ; <1.0 - 0.5 x 10 <sup>9</sup> /L	<500/mm <sup>3</sup> ; <0.5 x 10 <sup>9</sup> /L	-
<b>Definition:</b> A finding based on laboratory test results that indicate a decrease in number of neutrophils in a blood specimen. <b>Navigational Note:</b> -					
Platelet count decreased	<LLN - 75,000/mm <sup>3</sup> ; <LLN - 75.0 x 10 <sup>9</sup> /L	<75,000 - 50,000/mm <sup>3</sup> ; <75.0 - 50.0 x 10 <sup>9</sup> /L	<50,000 - 25,000/mm <sup>3</sup> ; <50.0 - 25.0 x 10 <sup>9</sup> /L	<25,000/mm <sup>3</sup> ; <25.0 x 10 <sup>9</sup> /L	-
<b>Definition:</b> A finding based on laboratory test results that indicate a decrease in number of platelets in a blood specimen. <b>Navigational Note:</b> -					
Anemia	Hemoglobin (Hgb) <LLN - 10.0 g/dL; <LLN - 6.2 mmol/L; <LLN - 100 g/L	Hgb <10.0 - 8.0 g/dL; <6.2 - 4.9 mmol/L; <100 - 80g/L	Hgb <8.0 g/dL; <4.9 mmol/L; <80 g/L; transfusion indicated	Life-threatening consequences; urgent intervention indicated	Death
<b>Definition:</b> A disorder characterized by a reduction in the amount of hemoglobin in 100 ml of blood. Signs and symptoms of anemia may include pallor of the skin and mucous membranes, shortness of breath, palpitations of the heart, soft systolic murmurs, lethargy, and fatigability. <b>Navigational Note:</b> -					

- Treatment holds
- Dose reductions
- Granulocyte colony stimulating factor (GCSF?)

# Common Toxicities and Management

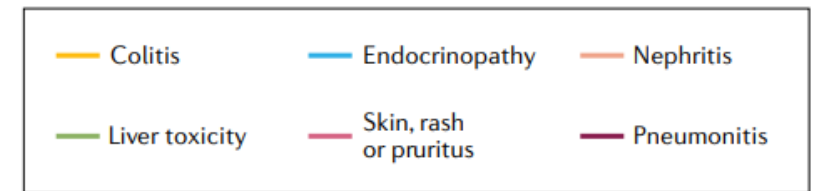
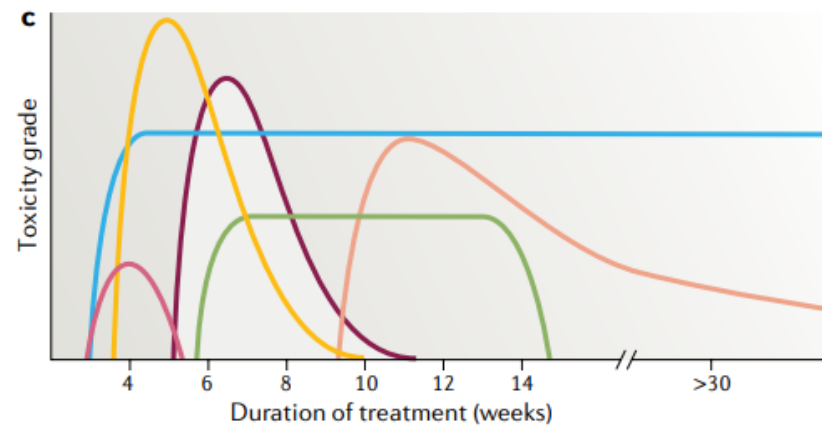
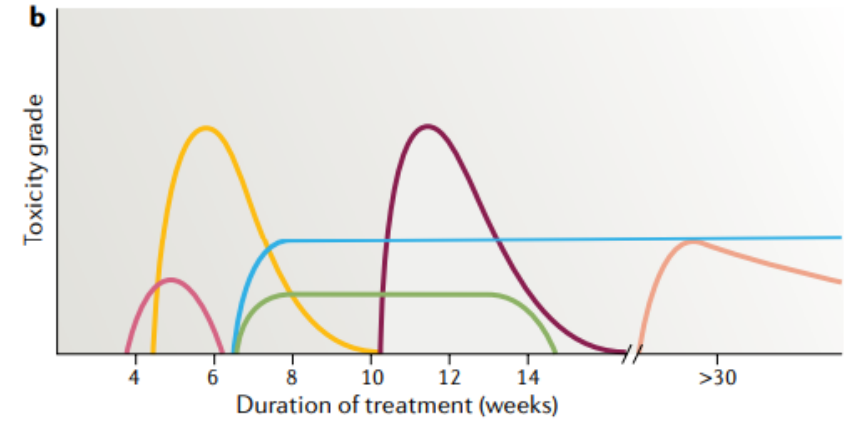
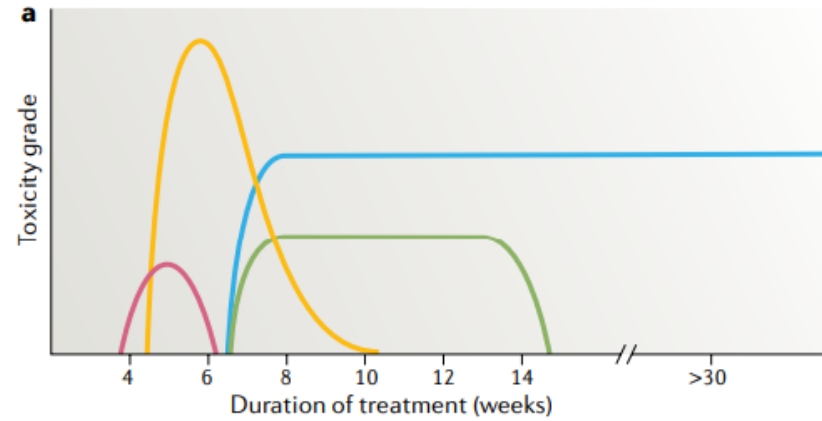
Immune Related Adverse Events

# Time Course of Common IRAEs

A: Ipilimumab

B: anti-PD-1 or anti-PD-L1

C: Ipilimumab + anti-PD-1



# Patient Case

- MS is a 45 year old female with cervical cancer
- She is starting treatment with cisplatin + paclitaxel + pembrolizumab + bevacizumab
- At her prechemotherapy visit prior to cycle 3, she reports having 6 stools a day for the past day.
  - What agent could this be related to?

# Questions?

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