Review Article: DNA Methylation in Cancer Immunity

Istikrar M. Hade¹, Yasir B. Qaddoori², Rakad M. Kh AL-Jumaily^{*3}

¹ National Cancer Research Centre, University of Baghdad, Baghdad, Iraq

^{2,3} Departments of Biology, College of Science, University of Baghdad, Baghdad, Iraq

Correspondence Author: rakad.aljumaily@sc.uobaghdad.edu.iq

ABSTRACT

Received: 07/11/2023 Accepted: 01/04/2024 Online: 22/05/2024

2024. This is an open access article under the CC by licenses http://creativecommons .org/licenses/by/4.0



Background: The transcriptional control of various cell types, especially in the development or functioning of immune system cells involved in either promoting or inhibiting the immune response against cancer, is significantly influenced by DNA or RNA methylation. Multifaceted interconnections exist between immunological or cancer cell populations in the tumor's microenvironment (TME). TME alters the fluctuating DNA (as well as RNA) methylation sequences in these immunological cells to change their development into pro- or anti-cancer cell categories (such as T cells, which are regulatory, for instance). **Objective**: This review highlights the impact of DNA and RNA methylation on myeloid and lymphoid cells, unraveling their intricate role in immune response orchestration within both oncological and non-oncological milieus. Deciphering this complex transcriptional regulation holds promise for identifying and demonstrating therapeutic avenues that take advantage of the modulation of DNA and RNA methylation with the goal of alleviating the number of cancer-related morbidity and mortality cases. Conclusion: While more research is required towards fully understanding the effectiveness of epigeneticbased treatments aimed at tumor as well as immune cell populations, there is compelling proof that indicates that they will be successful in slowing the advancement of malignancy as well as lowering cancer-related complications as well fatalities.

Keywords: DNA Methylation, Immunology, Cancer Immunity https://DOI.org/10.24126/jobrc.2024.18.1.806

1-INTRODUCTION

Epigenetic variations are inherited adjustments that control cell-specific transcription sequences essential for the healthy emergence or upkeep of distinct tissue functionalities. While aberrations in the methylation landscapes can result in modified gene regulation or operation, genomic unpredictability, or aggressive transformation of cells. Hereditary changes can occur during the activation or inactivation of particular proteins that have an essential role in tumorigenesis (1). A change in DNA methylation, histone adaptation, or in the synthesis of non-coding transcripts (ncRNA) represents the three most researched morphological pathways that lead to malignancy as shown in Figure 1.



Figure (1): A healthy equilibrium between malignancy immune surveillance with tumorigenesis (2)

The unusual regulation for chromosomes as well as amino acids caused by inappropriate changes in genetics, which include genetic material alterations, eliminations of amplifications, copy-number variations (CNVs), chromosomal aberrations or unpredictability, as well as genetic material combinations, may allow cells that are normally developed to progress from a pre-cancerous to a cancerous phase. In a comparable manner, atypical epigenetics including aberrant DNA imprinting trends, epigenetic adaptations, as well as ncRNA transcript of expression (including miRNA), can contribute to the development of tumors. The most prevalent reversible process, DNA methylation, has been connected to malignancy since the 1980s. Abnormal DNA methylation plays an important role in cancer. The promoter region of most genes contains stretches of cytosine and guanine nucleotides linked by a phosphate group. These regions are called CpG islands. In healthy cells, CpG islands are not methylated. However, in cancer cells, CpG islands in the promoter regions of tumor suppressor genes or cell cycle regulators are excessively methylated. Methylation turns off the expression of these genes, allowing cancer cells to divide rapidly and uncontrollably (3).

The covalent insertion by a methylation (-CH3) group at the cytosine (C) nucleotide next to a guanosine (G) base is known as DNA methylation. S-adenosylmethionine (SAM) serves as the methyl source during the methylation process. Over twenty-eight million CpG dinucleotides are found in mammalian genomes, with 60-80% of them displaying modification in each particular CpG island, on the other hand, have particular areas wherein dinucleotides from CpG are abundant and frequently discovered close to transcription for genes (4-5). The DNA methyltransferase (DNMT) 1, DNMT3A, or DNMT3B add dimethyl of methyl groups onto Chromatin in creatures, transforming unaltered C into 5-methyl-cytosine (5mC). While DNMT1 maintains a hemimethylated DNA structure by adding methyl members to it as well as by replicating DNA methylation sequences from the maternal strands into its descendant thread throughout cellular splitting, of cells, DNMT3A as well as DNMT3B add methyl categories to DNA with no reference DNA being present or so conduct entirely new activation (6-7). S-adenosylmethionine, an accessible methyl donor or co-factor during this process, provides reporters can identify DNA methylation by looking for complexes with methyl-CpG-binding domains (MBDs), likely transcriptional variables, and zinc finger (ZNF) enzymes. Overall, CpG modification may interfere with the attachment of expression elements to a regulating region, which results in translational silence, which impacts the transcription of genes (8). Methyl groups may be either actively or passively eliminated from DNA. Ten-eleven translocation (TET) "erasers" that actively demethylated DNA do so by oxidizing the methylated unit that ranges from 5mC to 5hmC (5-hydroxymethylcytosine), 5fC (5-formylcytosine), or 5caC (5-carboxylcytosine)(9-10).

1.1 Hypo-and Hyper-methylation as a mechanism of cancer development

Several articles have shown that the regulation of gene expression throughout maturation is influenced by tissue- or cellular type-specific DNA hypermethylation or hypomethylation at cis-acting transcriptional regulating sites. Gene transcription seems more significantly impacted by hypermethylation within CpG-rich promoter areas that are specific to tissue promoters. On the contrary, regulators experience tissue-specific DNA hypermethylation more often in continuously translated gene domains as well as intragenic and intergenic regulators (11). It will be critical to comprehend the functions that differentiation-related tissue- as well as cellular type- or population composition-specific hypermethylation of genetic material plays (Figure 2).

Some of the pathways for DNA hypermethylation regulating gene expression



Figure (2): Genomic hypermethylation linked to illness and growth may affect gene transcription in a number of manners (12).

The inhibition of gene production by DNA hypermethylation (whether it's starting or maintaining gene suppression) is shown in (a) or (b). The beneficial associations between DNA hypermethylation and gene regulation are seen in (c) with (d). Attractive versus adverse associations with the expression of genes are shown in (e) and (g). Effects changing the RNA isoform's structure that may take place without altering the transcript's level of stability are listed in item (f). Modifications in DNA methylation are thought to play a role in malignancy, according to a vast number of studies. For example, malignancies often exhibit localized hypermethylation of the genome, along with broad hypomethylation of DNA repetitions or large areas of DNA. A DNA region that is typically only partially modified may exhibit hypermethylation in certain tumor samples or hypomethylation in others (13-14).

Similarly, it has been demonstrated that an identical genomic DNA region for a gene-promoting area might be hypomethylated for a certain neurological condition and hypermethylated for another. The promoters, which are frequently encased in CpG-rich areas of around 1-2 kb referred to as CpG islands or CGIs, have been the site of the most intensive research on cancer hypermethylation of DNA (15-16). More than 22% of vertebrate

regulators are CpG-enriched, despite fitting the criteria associated with a CGI, or almost 50% of human regulators (both of which are DNA segments directly downstream or upstream from the TSS) intersect CGIs. Regardless of the degree of transcription for that corresponding genetic material, over 95% of all CGI promoters remain largely inactive for typical mammalian cells. CGIs frequently appear inside places other than TSSs and partially overlapped supporters, such as transcriptional structures, intergenic areas, CGI coasts (i.e., inside 2 kb of a different CGI), and even in regulators (17). Similar to CGI promoters, CGIs in regulators are prone to DNA hypermethylation linked to malignancy.

A numerical methylation evaluation (bisulfite pyrosequencing) for nineteen cancer-associated hypermethylation indicators within incurable carcinomas, such as breast cancers, nearby histologically typical tissues, or elimination mammoplasty controls, revealed cancer-associated hypermethylation at non-promoter areas in addition to CGI promoters (18-19). Four CGI-promoter areas, two intronic CGIs, two CpG-enriched areas that did not meet the criteria for a CGI but are near CGI shores, and one far-upstream CGI have been shown to have cancer-linked hypermethylation during this investigation. The last one was located 5.6 kb downstream of EN1's 5' end, where a homeobox TF is encoded. In contrast with numerous typical cells and organs where EN1 wasn't expressed, a similar far-upstream CGI was likewise elevated within typical EN1-expressing myoblasts from the skeleton's muscles (20). This finding suggests a significant correlation between genomic DNA and the transcriptional activity of genes in typical specimens, potentially through the process illustrated in Figure 2. Conversely, this hypermethylation was linked to transcriptional silence in mammary malignancy, most likely primarily as a result of contamination extending to the promoter region.

2. DNA Methylation in Regulating Innate & Adaptive Immune Response in Cancer, the Pros and Cons. 2.1 Dendritic Cells (DCs)

The initial intrinsic immune cell kinds that are activated for defense against infection by pathogens are DCs as well as monocytes. Skilled antigen presentation cells (APCs) called DCs are crucial for eliciting antigenspecific adaptive T-cell reactions. Despite diverse stressors or inflamed circumstances, DCs may experience noticeable alterations in their phenotypic or functioning. To stimulate various functional "CD4 (Th1, Th2, Th17) or CD8 (cytotoxic) T cells, these DCs may be polarized to produce certain types of cytokines (such as IL-12, IL-23) or Notch receptors (e.g., DLL1/4). The significance of DNA modification for regulating DC development and stimulation is still not completely understood, especially when it comes to TME (21-22). However, during the development of monocytes into DCs as well as immature DCs (iDCs) becoming mature DCs (mDCs)", DNA methylation alterations have been observed. Bullwinkel et al. examined epigenetic methylation that takes place within their CD14 as well as CD209 genetic loci, deemed crucial for the functioning of monocytes as well as DCs, correspondingly (23). They discovered that when macrophages differentiate into DCs, CD14 regulation is decreased while CD209 transcription is increased the histone alterations that occurred at the CD14 locus that led to CD14 silence are related by reverse transcriptional shifts between CD14 or CD209, while its absence of "repressive" chromatin markings or Genomic of DNA at the CD209 region produced transcription stimulation of CD209. Human monocytes, as well as iDCs or mDCs generated from monocytes, were thoroughly investigated regarding DNA methyl alterations at a base molecule's precision by Zhang et al. There have been identified to be many established genes or mechanisms controlling DC proliferation or maturity (24-25).

The number of variably methylated sites (DMPs) from monocytes to iDCs as well as iDC towards mDCs was 1608 as well as 156 sequentially. At the attachment regions of the expression elements of proteins associated with DC development or functioning, there was significant DNA demethylation, which eventually boosted the expression of the aforementioned genes. Additionally, the demethylation was locus-specific or linked to modifications in the DNA methyl controllers TET2 or its DNMT1 family of molecules (26-27). Surprisingly, it has been demonstrated that this DNA methylation reader MBD2 within DCs plays an essential part in driving CD4+ T cell development towards the Th 2 cellular category. Deletion of Mbd2 particularly impaired DC

phenotypic activating as well as the capacity to start Th2 response against allergies as well as helminths. Additionally, TET2 was shown to be the primary controller of DNA the demethylation of transcription sequences unique to dendritic cell populations or pathogens throughout IL-4-mediated transformation by human neutrophils into these cells, primarily in intergenic sequences or transcriptional bodies. Even though with aforementioned findings clearly show that DNA methylation controls DC activation as well as macrophage to DC differentiating themselves, their function in the TME still requires further investigation (27).

2.2 Macrophages

Myeloid cells called monocytes exhibit a range of morphologies, including their M1 or M2 variants representing the extremes. Nitric oxide, type 1 cytokines, as well as chemical messengers, are produced by M1 tissues once they are 'classically triggered' by IFN to kill tumor tissues. Additionally, M1 functions as APCs to trigger antigen (Ag)-specific activation of cytotoxic CD8+ T cells. Through 'alternative' mechanisms involving IL-4, IL-13, as well as TGF, M2 cells are stimulated. M2 generates type II chemokines or cytokines, which aid in the formation as well as the growth of tumors (28-29). Dekkers *et al.* observed significant DNA activation alterations throughout neutrophil-into-leukocyte conversion after comparing worldwide DNA activation between individual monocytes, naive macrophages, with active cells (30). In contrast to upregulation with DNMT3B, 7 cell lines had a stronger polarization towards the M2 macrophage phenotype as opposed to M1, which suppresses inflammation. The gene expression of DNMT1 grows throughout prolonged illness and has been linked to DNA hypermethylation. In a research investigation, it was investigated how TAMs affected the DNA methylation of the tumor suppressor gene gelsolin (GSN) while stomach carcinoma developed (31).

Initially, it has been demonstrated that DNMT1 upregulation methylates and silences the GSN gene, whereas secondly, it has been linked to increasing TAM recruitment in the TME of gastrointestinal gastric. Further investigation indicated that TAMs released CCL5, which caused gastrointestinal lymphocytes to produce DNMT1 overly, suppressing GSN, and promoting cancer by stimulating the JAK2/STAT3 cascade (32-33). On the other hand, in healthy myeloid tissues, TET enzymes seem to play a part in reducing pro-inflammatory genes. When stimulated, it has been demonstrated that TET2-deficient monocytes or DC express more IL-6. By communicating with Ib, a nuclear IB relative, or connecting to the IL-6 promoter's area along with enlisting the enzyme histone deacetylase 2 (HDAC2), it has been demonstrated that TET2 lowers IL-6 transcription (34-35). Additionally, TET2 suppresses immunological systems that fight malignancy, acting as an activator in the development of malignant tumors. It is in line with the hypothesis that the TET enzyme inhibits inflammation in myeloid cells. Ultimately, such investigations demonstrate that DNA methylation controls the transformation of monocytes into macrophages or the polarization of macrophages (36-37).

2.3 Natural Killer (NK) Cells

MHC class I-deficient cancerous cells may be effectively lysed by NK cells. The stimulating sensors on NK cells may recognize tumors that contain stress-induced ligands such as MICA. By producing mortality receptors (such as the Fas ligand) and generating enzymes like perforin, NK cells can destroy malignant cells by inducing apoptosis (38). It is still unclear how DNA methylation affects the proliferation or maturation of these cells. Subsequently, it has been shown that methylation regulates the MHC-I cytotoxicity of NK tissues, which is controlled by the KIR (killer cell Ig-like receptors) group. KIR transcripts are suppressed by primordial units through histone alteration or hypermethylation, but they are demethylated or produced by KIR-expressing units like lymphocytes. As a consequence of DNA hypermethylation, HCMV-associated NK cell lines also exhibit reduced concentrations of signaling connectors such as EAT-2, FCER1G, or the transcriptional regulator PLZF. The genetic material methylome of individual naive NK cells was compared to the DNA methylome of activating NK cells, indicating repeatable alterations in DNA methylation were discovered. When NK cells are activated, methylated research typically reveals CpG low methylation (81% of relevant sites) (39).

The highly prioritized gene BHLHE40, which has been suggested as a possible diagnostic indicator of NK stimulation with peripheral blood, is demonstrated to have a significant demethylation process for engaged NK units compared to low demethylation for naive NK cells. A DNA methyltransferase inhibitor (DNMTi), AzaC, has been employed to treat a mouse epithelium ovaries carcinoma approach, which has been demonstrated to boost NK cells or CD8+ T lymphocyte tumor invasion despite decreasing tumor weight. Histone deacetylase inhibitors (HDACi) cause a decrease in pro-tumor macrophages throughout a TME with greater stimulation for those immunological system cells that fight cancer. In addition, gliomas or hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC) tissues, via DNA methylation and histone methylation, accordingly, downregulate the expression of agonists (including ULBPs or MICA) of the lymphocyte-stimulating receptors NKG2D that is necessary for NK cell catalytic activities. It has been shown that the use of DNMTi or an EZH2 antagonist increases the levels of NKG2D ligands, leading to the destruction of glioma or HCC cells by NK cells, respectively. Such results demonstrate that DNA methylation governs the replication by crucial elements in NK cells that control their development or stimulation, as well as proteins within malignant lymphocytes that govern the tumor-lytic action of NK lymphocytes (40-41).

3. ADAPTIVE IMMUNITY

The stimulation of naïve T cells depends on the T cell receptor (TCR) on T cells interacting with the antigen/MHC combination (signal 1) produced on APCs. Subsequent stimulation is aided by the interaction of beneficial co-stimulatory substances on stimulated APCs, known as signaling 2 (such as CD80/86 or B7RP1 on APCs onto CD28 and correspondingly, ICOS on T lymphocytes). TCR stimulation is a complex procedure that culminates in intracellular signaling cascades, causing T cells to become activated, differentiate, multiply (clonally expand), or become executioner cells that produce cytokines. These processes are significantly regulated by genomic methylation (42-43). For example, IL-2 is abundantly produced when T cells are stimulated by TCRs, which is necessary for mice T cell activity and clonal growth. A promoter-enhancer domain of the IL-2 locus, which

is actively demethylated during T cell activation and persistently demethylated subsequently, is the site of the increased IL-2 cytokine. This will be detailed below; DNA methylation also contributes significantly to the triggering, expansion, or functional capabilities of CD4 or CD8 T lymphocytes, in addition to the IL-2 cytokine. However, Unlike other T cells, CD4+ T lymphocytes may develop into distinct variants, such as supporter T cell 1, 2, or 17 (Th1, Th2, or Th17), as well as Tregs, which based on the Ag signal or kind of cytokine stimulation (Figure 3). Th1 cells release kind I cytokines, such as IL-2 or IFN, which aid CD8+ T cells in expanding, trafficking, or performing their impact roles to their full potential, slowing the development or spread of tumors.

Conversely, Th2 polarizes resistance towards tumor growth or produces kind II cytokine (IL-4, IL-5, or IL-13). Following differentiation (44), developed CD4 T cells control subsequent immune processes, including the development of CD8 T cells, phagocytes, B cell activation activities, or immunological recollection. FOXP3 is demethylated in many places, notably its promoters or enhancers, in Tregs, which significantly increases FOXP3 transcription. DNMT1, DNMT3A, or TET2 sustain these mutation rates (45). The chemicals secreted by differentiating lymphocytes are shown in green boxes. These immunological cells or the cytokine they produce may also promote or inhibit the growth of tumors.



Figure (3): DNA imprinting has a function in controlling the development of Th1, Th2, Th17, or Treg effector cell subtypes from naive CD4+ T cells (3).

Variations in DNA methylation throughout maturation may result in the development of several subgroups of CD4+ T lymphocytes. The cytokines shown in black boxes aid in the separation or stimulation of each category. The IFN gene a marketer, for example, stays hypomethylated or IFN is notably produced whenever naive CD4+ lymphocytes get activated by IL-12 or IFN cytokines. IFN is methylation or repressed while the IL-4 gene is demethylated or abundantly released in the Th2 subgroup. The IL-17 gene is demethylated as well as substantially expressed by Th17 lymphocytes.

4. Pro- and Anti-Cancer Immunity.

The adaptable immunity response is very precise and creates biological memories. Lymphocytes, T, or B cells are part of adaptive immunology and generate cytokines or autoantibodies to fight infections. During responses against alien infections, an extensive amount of T cell ligands (TCRs) or B cell receptors (BCR) on T cells or B cells is tremendously helpful. These proteins recognize and distinguish owned from non-self-proteins. When confronted with the identical disease again, long-lasting memory cells created following the elimination of the pathogen offer quick but effective pathogenic suppression. Subsequently, it has now been shown, following many years of debate that a functioning cancer immune surveillance system does indeed exist and functions as a tumor suppressant or killer (46). It's noteworthy that both intrinsic and adaptable immunity responses may identify or destroy cancerous cells. The immune system's elements in the tumor microenvironment (TME) can be either pro- or anti-tumor, aiding the tumor's advance or regress. TME is a complicated interplay of stromal, immunological, or malignant cells that is controlled by several variables, such as inflammatory conditions, chemokines, cytokines, extracellular matrix, or tissue-specific variables. TME variables, which might be pro- or anti-tumorigenic, determine whether a tumor is inhibited from growing or advances. The tumor's immune surveillance response slows and stops the expansion of malignancy, but cancerous individuals may adapt or create defenses to avoid or outsmart the immunological response (46).

The three primary immune system evasion pathways include The loss of immunogenicity—tumor cells generate a substantial amount of immune-suppressive ligands (e.g., PD-L1) and lower the number of immunological tumor antigens, leading to the lower appearance of antigenic substances to innate immune cells; The depletion of antigenicity—tumor cells modify chemotherapy as well as tumor suppression genes to boost inflammation and attract greater numbers of immune cells. Loss of immunogenicity—tumor cells generate inadequate levels of immunological tumor antibodies (47).

5. DNA Methylation as a Diagnostic & Prognostic Tool.

Cytidine methylation of DNA at sites known as CpG across the entire genome is an inherited marker that helps control how genes are expressed. DNA methylation levels are distinct for each type of cell membrane, persisting throughout life, and may indicate alterations during carcinogenesis. Using a mix of retained embryonic or mutation-induced signals, DNA methylation is currently used as an indicator for classifying tumors. DNA methylation information can be applied to categorize tumors, evaluate and replicate the amount variations, determine the booster DNA methylation position of particular genetics, like MGMT and MLH1, deconvolute their tumor microenvironment, alongside evaluating the tumor immune invade as an interesting biological marker for immunotherapy, among other things. It has been demonstrated that the methylation sequences of tumors are persistent during every phase of the illness, precisely representing their cellular background that is conserved, making this an accurate indicator for tumor categorization. Important tumor categories that are not distinguishable by histopathology such as medulloblastomas, ependymomas, or supratentorial PNETs have been further subclassified with effectiveness using DNA methylation (48-49).

Tumors with identical histology may be identified atomically, including therapeutically distinctive divisions, as acknowledged from the TCGA analysis of glioma and genetic melanoma. Before the process of DNA methylation, CNS primitive neuroectodermal tumors (CNS-PNETs) were a diverse group of tumors distinguished by tiny, rapidly differentiating units that resembled embryonal tissue or had both gli or neural differentiation. Among the 323 tumors that had been histologically classified as PNETs, DNA methylation profiling showed that all except 77 tumors were classified as distinct cancers, such as medulloblastoma, advanced tumors like carcinomas, or pyramidal tumors. However, according to further studies, DNA methylation could offer a solution 50% of the time for complex circumstances wherein the prognosis is frequently prescriptive. The inclusion of DNA methylation caused an immediate alteration in medical care in 15% of instances, according to research that concentrated on for diagnosis of difficult patients (50).

6. DNA Methylation as Cancer Therapeutic Target

It has not always been easy to treat malignancy by focusing on DNA methylation. Initial studies on DNA methylation alterations in cancer showed a widespread reduction of methylation that was theorized to be the primary factor in carcinogenesis by either activating carcinogenic enzymes or causing instability in chromosomes. Decreasing DNA methylation was seen in this context as a tumor-promoting occurrence as opposed to a potential cancer treatment. Following research revealed that, in addition to worldwide methylation reduces, multiple genesmany of which were crucial to a tumor phenotype-displayed increases in methylation within their promoters through tumor formation, which was connected to epigenetic modification conveying suppressing as well as degradation of protein functioning (51-52). This resulted in a resurgence of interest in medications that were revealed to be powerful genetic methyltransferase antagonists generations earlier. Finally, these medications have received medical authorization for the management of myelodysplastic syndromes throughout the USA, and genomic therapy—a wholly novel way of treating cancer—is now possible. Descriptive investigations of the epigenetic modifications for healthy or malignant cells led to the first inference that DNA modification has a function in the genesis of cancer (53-54). Early research that measured the worldwide concentration of 5methylcytosine revealed that methylation reduction has been a frequent hallmark of tumorigenesis. The loss of methyl eventually became apparent in certain DNA, where it has been proposed as a method for activating gene transcription. Additionally, it has been demonstrated that substantial loss of 5-methylcytosine causes chromosome breakage or raises the risk of malignancy in certain instances in animals (55).

DISCUSSION:

Naturally, none of these inspires much excitement for administering medications to people that will further decrease DNA methylation concentrations. When it was discovered that DNA methylation variations in malignancy had two distinct appearances, the circumstance was altered. One part of the story had worldwide hypomethylation. Simultaneous with this, it was discovered that several gene regulators experienced changes in DNA methylation. These rises were connected to the silence of gene transcription or loss of function of proteins. According to estimates, each tumor silences numerous genes, several of which are crucial for the development or maintenance of the oncogenic phenotype (56-57).

The idea that epigenetic suppression represents a workable method of deactivating tumor-suppressor proteins in carcinoma, which has been repeatedly proven over the last several years, was prompted by the consistent aspect of transcriptional suppression. Last but not least, it has been demonstrated in mice models that lowering DNA methylation could prevent the development of cancer in some situations, offering additional confirmation that elevated DNA methyl plays a harmful function in malignancy (58). The aforementioned treatment area is likewise very generic regarding its impact due to the abundance of proteins or processes that DNA methylation affects. For instance, the retinoic acid receptor or all-trans retinoic acid receptor agonists. That appears to be quite particular (59). There has been a treatment ratio for a low methyl treatment which is connected to the observation that tumors are significantly more reliant on genetic silence (for example, of tumor suppression proteins) for their phenotypic than regular human tissues are. As a result, the consequences of hypomethylation treatment are a total of many impacts on the physiological functioning of cells; therefore, it is probable that the overall treatment outcome is positive.

Although being aware of its possible drawbacks (possible risk of toxic effects, cancer inductive reasoning, etc.), its non-specificity might be seen as favorable (many flaws are addressed concurrently). Since genome methyl involves a post-synthetic process, DNA methyltransferases have to be expressed throughout order for DNA methyl to occur in place in reproducing tissues. Consequently, preventing the production of such proteins would lead to a gradual decrease in DNA methyl by recently split individuals (Figure 4), a process connected with the resumption of gene transcription in hypomethylated individuals (60-61). There is a lot of attention to finding methods to hypomethylate certain genes, as there are theoretical methods to achieve this using unmethylated in nature oligonucleotides or other methods; unfortunately, none of them are currently useful in clinical applications.



Figure (4): DNA imprinting inhibitors' suggested mode of effect in treating malignancy (62).

It has been demonstrated that a hypothesized tumor-suppressor gene regulator switches from being unmethylated or functioning in healthy tissue to being hypermethylated or repressed in cancerous tissues. DNA methyltransferases (DNMT) that are necessary for preserving the hypermethylated condition following each round of DNA replicating; must be active for this flip to occur.

7. CONCLUSION

The ability to control immunological cell maturation and function inside the TME is essential for determining whether a tumor will develop or be suppressed. Immune cell populations that generate pro-tumor cytokines within a pro-cancer TME promote the formation and growth of tumors, while the opposite is true with an anti-cancer TME. Specialized immune system cell subgroups are produced as a result of specific epigenetic sequences changing gene transcription. The equilibrium of pro- versus anti-cancer immune systems inside the TME is essential for either tumor development or inhibition, as was previously stated. Nevertheless, the majority of research regarding the function of imprinting has been looked at as one class of immune cells. Prospective research should concurrently examine many immune subgroups. This extensive research is going to shed more light on how the immune system or cancer interacts, which will make it possible to develop new epi-therapies that can strengthen the immune system's defenses against cancer as well as other illnesses. Although it is continually changing and reversed, addressing methylated is a very alluring anti-cancer therapy.

REFERENCES

- 1. Garcia-Martinez L, Zhang Y, Nakata Y, Chan HL, Morey L. "Epigenetic mechanisms in breast cancer therapy and resistance". Nat Commun. (2021); 12:1786.
- 2. Mehdi A, Rabbani SA. "Role of Methylation in Pro- and Anti-Cancer Immunity". Cancers. (2021); 13(3): 545.
- **3.** Jingyao C, Xiangyu P, Feifei N, Xuelan C, Chong C. "Epigenetic reprogramming in small cell lung cancer". Cancer Biol Med. (2022); 19:1111–6.
- 4. Mehta A, Dobersch S, Romero-Olmedo AJ, Barreto G. "Epigenetics in lung cancer diagnosis and therapy". Cancer Metastasis Rev. (2015); 34:229–41.
- **5.** Van der Pol Y, Mouliere F. "Toward the early detection of cancer by decoding the epigenetic and environmental fingerprints of cell-free DNA". Cancer Cell. (2019); 36:350–68.
- 6. Bates SE. "Epigenetic cancer therapies". N Engl J Med. (2020); 383:650-63.
- 7. Hadi YA, ALlami RH, Suleiman A A. "Associations of Epigenetic methylation with vitamin D receptor level in Iraqi Gestational diabetes mellitus patients". Journal of Biotechnology Research Center, (2023); 17(2).
- **8.** Hogg SJ, Beavis PA, Dawson MA, Johnstone RW. "Targeting the epigenetic regulation of antitumor immunity". Nat Rev Drug Discov. (2020); 19:776–800.
- **9.** Jones PA, Ohtani H, Chakravarthy A, De, Carvalho DD. "Epigenetic therapy in immune-oncology". Nat Rev Cancer. (2019); 19:151–61.
- **10.**Xuan L, Liu Q. "Maintenance therapy in acute myeloid leukemia after allogeneic hematopoietic stem cell transplantation". J Hematol Oncol. (2021); 14:4.
- **11.**Cortes J, Cescon DW, Rugo HS, Nowecki Z, Im SA, Yusof MM, *et al.* "Pembrolizumab plus chemotherapy versus placebo plus chemotherapy for previously untreated locally recurrent inoperable or metastatic triple-negative breast cancer (KEYNOTE-355): a randomized, placebo-controlled, double-blind, phase 3 clinical trial". Lancet. (2020); 396:1817–28.

- **12.** Ehrlich M. "DNA hypermethylation in disease: mechanisms and clinical relevance. Epigenetics". (2019); 14(12):1141-63.
- **13.** Nishiyama A, Nakanishi M. "Navigating the DNA methylation landscape of cancer". Trends Genet. (2021); 37:1012–27.
- 14. Al-Rubaye RA and Al-Jumaily RMKH. "Evaluation of oxidative stress activity and the levels of homocysteine, vitamin B12, and DNA methylation among women with breast cancer". J Adv Biotechnol Exp Ther. (2022); 6(1): 149-160
- Greenberg MVC, Bourc'his D. "The diverse roles of DNA methylation in mammalian development and disease". Nat Rev Mol Cell Biol. (2019); 20:590–607.
- **16.** Yang X, Han H, De Carvalho DD, Lay FD, Jones PA, Liang G. "Gene body methylation can alter gene expression and is a therapeutic target in cancer". Cancer Cell. (2014); 26:577–90.
- 17. Yin Y, Morgunova E, Jolma A, Kaasinen E, Sahu B, Khund-Sayeed S, *et al.* "Impact of cytosine methylation on DNA binding specificities of human transcription factors". Science. (2017); 356:eaaj2239.
- Grady WM, Yu M, Markowitz SD. "Epigenetic alterations in the gastrointestinal tract: current and emerging use for biomarkers of cancer. Gastroenterology". (2021); 160:690–709.
- **19.** Álvarez-Errico D, Vento-Tormo R, Sieweke M, Ballestar E. "Epigenetic control of myeloid cell differentiation, identity, and function". Nat Rev Immunol. (2015); 15:7–17.
- **20.**Su J, Huang YH, Cui X, Wang X, Zhang X, Lei Y, *et al.* "Homeobox oncogene activation by pan-cancer DNA hypermethylation". Genome Biol. (2018); 19:108.
- 21. Jordà M, Díez-Villanueva A, Mallona I, Martín B, Lois S, Barrera V, *et al.* "The epigenetic landscape of Alu repeats delineates the structural and functional genomic architecture of colon cancer cells". Genome Res. (2017); 27:118–32.
- 22. Yang PW, Jiao JY, Chen Z, Zhu XY, Cheng CS. "Keep a watchful eye on methionine adenosyltransferases, novel therapeutic opportunities for hepatobiliary and pancreatic tumors". Biochim Biophys Acta Rev Cancer. (2022); 1877:188793.
- 23.Bray JK, Dawlaty MM, Verma A, Maitra A. "Roles and regulations of TET enzymes in solid tumors". Trends Cancer. (2021); 7:635–46.
- 24. Rasmussen KD, Helin K. "Role of TET enzymes in DNA methylation, development, and cancer". Genes Dev. (2016); 30:733–50.
- 25. Ji H, Ehrlich LI, Seita J, Murakami P, Doi A, Lindau P, *et al.* "Comprehensive methylome map of lineage commitment from hematopoietic progenitors". Nature. (2010); 467:338–42.
- 26. Schuyler RP, Merkel A, Raineri E, Altucci L, Vellenga E, Martens JHA, *et al.* "Distinct trends of DNA methylation patterning in the innate and adaptive immune systems". Cell Rep. (2016); 17:2101–11.
- 27.Li Y, Chen G, Ma L, Ohms SJ, Sun C, Shannon MF, *et al.* "Plasticity of DNA methylation in mouse T cell activation and differentiation". BMC Mol Biol. (2012); 13:16.
- 28. Yue X, Trifari S, Äijö T, Tsagaratou A, Pastor WA, Zepeda-Martínez JA, et al. "Control of Foxp3 stability through modulation of TET activity". J Exp Med. (2016); 213:377–97.
- **29.** Yue X, Lio CJ, Samaniego-Castruita D, Li X, Rao A. "Loss of TET2 and TET3 in regulatory T cells unleashes effector function". Nat Commun. (2019); 10:2011.
- **30.** Durek P, Nordström K, Gasparoni G, Salhab A, Kressler C, de Almeida M, *et al.* "Epigenomic profiling of human CD4(+) T cells supports a linear differentiation model and highlights molecular regulators of memory development". Immunity. (2016); 45:1148–61.
- **31.** Youngblood B, Hale JS, Kissick HT, Ahn E, Xu X, Wieland A, *et al.* "Effector CD8 T cells dedifferentiate into long-lived memory cells". Nature. (2017); 552:404–9.
- **32.** Klug M, Schmidhofer S, Gebhard C, Andreesen R, Rehli M. "5-Hydroxymethylcytosine is an essential intermediate of active DNA demethylation processes in primary human monocytes". Genome Biol. (2013); 14:R46.
- **33.** Vento-Tormo R, Company C, Rodríguez-Ubreva J, de la Rica L, Urquiza JM, Javierre BM, *et al.* "IL-4 orchestrates STAT6-mediated DNA demethylation leading to dendritic cell differentiation". Genome Biol. (2016); 17:4.

- **34.**Zhang X, Ulm A, Somineni HK, Oh S, Weirauch MT, Zhang HX, *et al.* "DNA methylation dynamics during ex vivo differentiation and maturation of human dendritic cells". Epigenetics Chromatin. (2014); 7:21.
- **35.**Rodríguez-Ubreva J, Català-Moll F, Obermajer N, Álvarez-Errico D, Ramirez RN, Company C, *et al.* "Prostaglandin E2 leads to the acquisition of DNMT3A-dependent tolerogenic functions in human myeloid-derived suppressor cells". Cell Rep. (2017); 21:154–67.
- **36.**Sasidharan Nair V, Saleh R, Toor SM, Taha RZ, Ahmed AA, Kurer MA, *et al.* "Transcriptomic profiling disclosed the role of DNA methylation and histone modifications in tumor-infiltrating myeloid-derived suppressor cell subsets in colorectal cancer". Clin Epigenetics. (2020); 12:13.
- 37. Karpf AR, Peterson PW, Rawlins JT, Dalley BK, Yang Q, Albertsen H, *et al.* "Inhibition of DNA methyltransferase stimulates the expression of signal transducer and activator of transcription 1, 2, and 3 genes in colon tumor cells". Proc Natl Acad Sci USA. (1999); 96:14007–12.
- **38.** Karpf AR, Lasek AW, Ririe TO, Hanks AN, Grossman D, Jones DA. "Limited gene activation in tumor and normal epithelial cells treated with the DNA methyltransferase inhibitor 5-aza-2'-deoxycytidine". Mol Pharm. (2004); 65:18–27.
- 39. Jones PA, Issa JP, Baylin S. "Targeting the cancer epigenome for therapy". Nat Rev Genet. (2016); 17:630-41.
- **40.** Chiappinelli KB, Strissel PL, Desrichard A, Li H, Henke C, Akman B, *et al.* "Inhibiting DNA methylation causes an interferon response in cancer via dsRNA including endogenous retroviruses". Cell. (2015); 162:974–86.
- **41.**Chen YG, Hur S. "Cellular origins of dsRNA, their recognition and consequences". Nat Rev Mol Cell Biol. (2022); 23:286–301.
- **42.** Chen YG, Hur S. "Cellular origins of dsRNA, their recognition and consequences". Nat Rev Mol Cell Biol. (2022); 23:286–301.
- **43.**Roulois D, Loo Yau H, Singhania R, Wang Y, Danesh A, Shen SY, *et al.* "DNA-demethylating agents target colorectal cancer cells by inducing viral mimicry by endogenous transcripts". Cell. (2015); 162:961–73.
- 44. Kong Y, Rose CM, Cass AA, Williams AG, Darwish M, Lianoglou S, *et al.* "Transposable element expression in tumors is associated with immune infiltration and increased antigenicity". Nat Commun. (2019); 10:5228.
- **45.**Robbez-Masson L, Tie CHC, Conde L, Tunbak H, Husovsky C, Tchasovnikarova IA, *et al.* "The HUSH complex cooperates with TRIM28 to repress young retrotransposons and new genes". Genome Res. (2018); 28:836–45.
- **46.**Zhao Y, Oreskovic E, Zhang Q, Lu Q, Gilman A, Lin YS, *et al.* "Transposon-triggered innate immune response confers cancer resistance to the blind mole rat". Nat Immunol. (2021); 22:1219–30.
- 47. Mehdipour P, Marhon SA, Ettayebi I, Chakravarthy A, Hosseini A, Wang Y, *et al.* "Epigenetic therapy induces transcription of inverted SINEs and ADAR1 dependency". Nature. (2020); 588:169–73.
- **48.** Ku Y, Park JH, Cho R, Lee Y, Park HM, Kim M, *et al.* "Noncanonical immune response to the inhibition of DNA methylation by Staufen1 via stabilization of endogenous retrovirus RNAs". Proc Natl Acad Sci USA. (2021); 118:e2016289118.
- **49.**Lai J, Fu Y, Tian S, Huang S, Luo X, Lin L, *et al.* "Zebularine elevates STING expression and enhances cGAMP cancer immunotherapy in mice". Mol Ther. (2021); 29:1758–71.
- **50.**Berglund A, Mills M, Putney RM, Hamaidi I, Mulé J, Kim S. "Methylation of immune synapse genes modulates tumor immunogenicity". J Clin Invest. (2020); 130:974–80.
- **51.**Hussein D, khudhair, Al-Jowari S, A.-K. Rahmah A. M. "Determination of the Level of IL-6 and Vaspin in Hyperthyroid Patients Treated with arbimazole". Iraqi Journal of Science, (2022); 63(5), 1909–1917.
- **52.** Lafta FM, Al-Jumaily RMK, Rasoul LM. "Global DNA Methylation Levels in Epstein-Barr-Virus-Positive Iraqi Patients with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukaemia". Iraqi Journal of Science. (2023); 64(3):1109-18.
- 53.Merino A, Zhang B, Dougherty P, Luo X, Wang J, Blazar BR, et al. "Chronic stimulation drives human NK cell dysfunction and epigenetic reprograming". J Clin Invest. (2019); 129:3770–85.
- **54.**Zhang X, Rao A, Sette P, Deibert C, Pomerantz A, Kim WJ, *et al.* "IDH mutant gliomas escape natural killer cell immune surveillance by downregulation of NKG2D ligand expression". Neuro Oncol. (2016); 18:1402–12.
- **55.**Hoffmann F, Zarbl R, Niebel D, Sirokay J, Fröhlich A, Posch C, *et al.* "Prognostic and predictive value of PD-L2 DNA methylation and mRNA expression in melanoma". Clin Epigenet. (2020); 12:94.

- **56.** Cho JW, Hong MH, Ha SJ, Kim YJ, Cho BC, Lee I, *et al.* "Genome-wide identification of differentially methylated promoters and enhancers associated with response to anti-PD-1 therapy in non-small cell lung cancer". Exp Mol Med. (2020); 52:1550–63.
- **57.**Zayr, *et al.* "DNA Methylation Patterns of Interferon Gamma Gene Promoter and Serum Level in Pulmonary Tuberculosis: Their Role in Prognosis". Baghdad Science J. (2019); 16(1(Suppl.)):0178.
- 58. Chakravarthy A, Furness A, Joshi K, Ghorani E, Ford K, Ward MJ, et al. "Pan-cancer deconvolution of tumor composition using DNA methylation". Nat Commun. (2018); 9:3220.
- **59.** Jeschke J, Bizet M, Desmedt C, Calonne E, Dedeurwaerder S, Garaud S, *et al.* "DNA methylation-based immune response signature improves patient diagnosis in multiple cancers". J Clin Invest. (2017);127:3090–102.
- **60.** Al-Attar MM, Al-Awadi SJA-A, Abdulfattah SY. "Gene Expression and Methylation Levels of PCSK9 Gene in Iraqi Patients with Coronary Artery Disease". Baghdad Science J. (2023); 20(6).
- **61.**Meng Q, Lu YX, Ruan DY, Yu K, Chen YX, Xiao M, *et al.* "DNA methylation regulator-mediated modification patterns and tumor microenvironment characterization in gastric cancer". Mol Ther Nucleic Acids. (2021); 24:695–710.
- **62.** Issa J-PJ. "DNA methylation as a therapeutic target in cancer". Clinical cancer research: an official journal of the American Association for Cancer Research. (2008);13 6:1634-7.

مقالة مراجعة: مثيلة الحمض النووي في مناعة السرطان استقرار مسلم هادي¹، ياسر باسم عبدالوهاب²، ركاد مجد خماس الجميلي³ المركز الوطني الريادي لبحوث السرطان، جامعة بغداد، بغداد، العراق ^{3.2} قسم علوم الحياة، كلية العلوم، جامعة بغداد، بغداد، العراق

الملخص:

خلفية عن الموضوع: يتأثر التحكم النسخي لأنواع الخلايا المختلفة بشكل كبير بمثيلة الحمض النووي الريبي DNA أو الحمض النووي الريبي RNA ، وخاصة في تطوير أو عمل خلايا الجهاز المناعي المشاركة في تعزيز أو تثبيط الاستجابة المناعية ضد السرطان. توجد صلات متعددة الأوجه بين مجموعات الخلايا المناعية أو السرطانية في البيئة الدقيقة للورم TME، تغير هذه البيئة تسلسل مثيلة الحمض النووي DNA (وكذلك الحمض النووي مجموعات الخلايا المناعية أو السرطانية في البيئة الدقيقة للورم TME، تغير هذه البيئة تسلسل مثيلة الحمض النووي DNA (وكذلك الحمض النووي (RNA) المتغير في هذه الخلايا المناعية لتغيير تطور ها إلى انواع الخلايا المحفزة أو المصادة للسرطان (مثل الخلايا التائية، والتي هي تنظيمية، على سبيل المثال). الهدف يسلط هذا المقال الضوء على تأثير مثيلة الحمض النووي الريبي DNA والحمض النووي الريبي RNA في الخلايا النخاعية والخلايا اللمفاوية، ويكشف عن دور ها المعقد في تنسيق الاستجابة المناعية داخل كل من البيئات السرطان (مثل الخلاية المتاتج: إن فهم هذا والخلايا اللمفاوية، ويكشف عن دور ها المعقد في تنسيق الاستجابة المناعية داخل كل من البيئات السرطانية وغير السرطانية والديبي RNA والخلايا اللمفاوية، ويكشف عن دور ها المعقد في تنسيق الاستجابة المناعية داخل كل من البيئات السرطانية وغير السرطانية. الاستنتاج: إن فهم هذا والخلايا اللمفاوية، ويكشف عن دور ها المعقد في تنسيق الاستجابة المناعية داخل كل من البيئات السرطانية وغير السرطانية. الاستنتاج: إن فهم هذا التنظيم النسخي المعقد يحمل امكانية واعدة لتحديد وإثبات الطرق العلاجية التي تستفيد من تعديل مثيلة الحمض النووي الريبي DNA والحمض النووي الربيي RNA ، بهدف التخفيف من معدلات الإمر اضية والوفيات المرتبطة بالسرطان.

الكلمات المفتاحية: مثيلة الحمض النووي، المناعة، مناعة السرطان.