

edited by
Stanley T. Crooke and
Archie W. Prestayko

Cancer and Chemotherapy

VOLUME III

ANTINEOPLASTIC
AGENTS

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CANCER AND CHEMOTHERAPY

Volume III

Antineoplastic Agents

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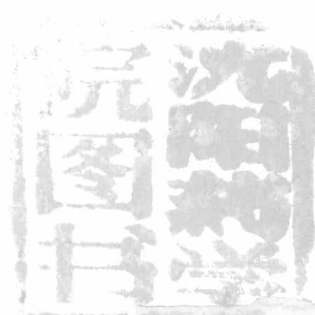
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GENERAL PREFACE

With the rapid development of new chemotherapeutic approaches and new agents used in the treatment of patients with cancer, a basic textbook describing in some detail the drugs currently employed, current therapeutic approaches, and agents in development is essential. However, to understand fully cancer chemotherapeutic agents and their use, one must understand various aspects of anticancer drug development, the molecular and cellular biology of malignant disease, and the clinical characteristics of the most common neoplasms. Only with this information can a detailed discussion of anticancer drugs be presented.

It was with these thoughts in mind that "Cancer and Chemotherapy" was developed; the goal: to provide in a single text the information necessary for a detailed understanding of the major antineoplastic agents. Thus, Volume I is designed to provide the fundamental information concerning the molecular and cellular biology of cancer, carcinogenesis, and the basics of anticancer drug development. Volume II provides clinical information relative to the most common human malignancies and discusses the use of chemotherapeutics in the treatment of those diseases. In Volume III the antineoplastic agents are discussed. It contains reviews of all the major anticancer drugs and a review of agents in development. Furthermore, in two sections—the molecular pharmacology of selected antitumor drugs, and the clinical pharmacology of selected antitumor drugs—significantly more detailed discussions of certain drugs are provided. These drugs were selected because they have interesting characteristics and adequate data are available to allow a more detailed discussion. These two sections should be of particular value to individuals who have an interest in certain aspects of particular drugs.

Stanley T. Crooke
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PREFACE TO VOLUME III

In this volume, a discussion is presented in Part I of clinically useful anticancer drugs with respect to their mechanism of action, pharmacology, and pharmacokinetics, clinical utility, and associated toxicities. The various drug classes include alkylating agents (cyclophosphamide, nitrosoureas, mitomycin C, and others), plant alkaloids (vinca alkaloids, podophyllotoxin derivatives, maytansine), antibiotics (bleomycin, anthracyclines), platinum-containing complexes, antimetabolites and hormones. A brief description of investigational agents is provided. This section is concluded by a discussion of a new technique that is used to grow tumor cells in culture and to test the sensitivity of these cells to various anticancer drugs.

Part II presents a detailed discussion of the molecular pharmacology of several major drug classes.

Part III presents an in-depth discussion of the clinical pharmacology of several antitumor drugs. This section is limited to the drugs for which suitable assays have been developed and sufficient clinical data have been obtained.

Stanley T. Crooke
Archie W. Prestayko

CONTENTS

List of Contributors	xi
General Preface	xiii
Preface to Volume III	xv

PART I GENERAL REVIEWS

1 Nucleoside Analogues

Bruce A. Chabner

I. Introduction	3
II. Cytosine Arabinoside	4
III. 5-Azacytidine	8
IV. 5-Fluorouracil	9
V. Other 5-Fluoro Pyrimidines	15
VI. 3-Deazauridine	16
VII. Purine Analogs	17
VIII. Arabinosyl Adenine	20
IX. Conclusions	21
References	21

2 Cyclophosphamide and Analogues

Michael Colvin

I. Introduction	25
II. Structure and Metabolism	25
III. Clinical Pharmacology	27
IV. Toxicities	31
V. Clinical Activity and Dose Schedules	34
VI. Analogues	34
References	35

3	Nitrosoureas	
	<i>Philip S. Schein</i>	
	I. Introduction	37
	II. Decomposition and Metabolism	38
	III. Mechanism of Action	39
	IV. Clinical Use	41
	V. Clinical Toxicities	44
	VI. Discussion	46
	References	47
4	Mitomycin C—An Overview	
	<i>Stanley T. Crooke</i>	
	I. Introduction	49
	II. Chemistry	50
	III. Structure–Activity Relationships	50
	IV. Molecular Pharmacology	51
	V. Pharmacology	53
	VI. Clinical Effects	54
	VII. Conclusions	58
	References	58
5	Other Alkylating Agents	
	<i>Steven D. Reich</i>	
	I. Introduction	61
	II. Mechanism of Action	63
	III. Other Alkylating Agents	65
	IV. Conclusions	74
	References	75
6	The Vinca Alkaloids and Similar Compounds	
	<i>William A. Creasey</i>	
	I. The Vinca Alkaloids	79
	II. The Podophyllotoxin Derivatives	91
	III. Maytansine	94
	References	95
7	Bleomycin—An Overview	
	<i>Stanley T. Crooke</i>	
	I. Introduction	97
	II. Chemistry	97
	III. Molecular Pharmacology	99
	IV. Clinical Pharmacology	100
	V. Clinical Activities	102

VI. Clinical Toxicities	104
VII. Conclusions	107
References	107
8 The Anthracyclines	
<i>Stanley T. Crooke</i>	
I. Introduction	112
II. Chemistry	112
III. Molecular Pharmacology	113
IV. Clinical Pharmacology	117
V. Clinical Activities of Adriamycin and Daunorubicin	120
VI. Toxicities of Adriamycin	123
VII. Anthracyclines in Development	125
References	128
9 Cisplatin and Analogues: A New Class of Anticancer Drugs	
<i>Archie W. Prestayko</i>	
I. Introduction	133
II. Antitumor Activity in Animal Tumors	134
III. Animal Toxicology	134
IV. Efficacy	136
V. Toxicity	147
VI. Cisplatin Analogues	150
VII. Conclusion	150
References	150
10 Investigational Cancer Drugs	
<i>Manuel L. Gutierrez</i>	
I. Introduction	156
II. Alkylating Agents	156
III. Anthracycline Analogues	159
IV. Tubulin Binding Agents	160
V. Antitumor Antibiotics	163
VI. Nitrosoureas	166
VII. Antimetabolites	168
VIII. Miscellaneous	171
IX. Summary	174
References	180
11 Hormone Therapy	
<i>Elwood V. Jensen</i>	
I. Basis of Endocrine Therapy	187
II. Prostatic Cancer	189

III. Breast Cancer	192
IV. Cancer of the Uterine Endometrium	200
V. Lymphomas	201
VI. Summary	202
References	203
 12 A Human Tumor Stem Cell System: Concepts, Methodology, and Application	
<i>Daniel D. Von Hoff</i>	
I. Introduction	207
II. Methodology	210
III. Applications	212
IV. Conclusions	216
References	217
 PART II MOLECULAR PHARMACOLOGY OF SELECTED ANTINEOPLASTIC AGENTS	
 13 The Molecular Pharmacology of Bleomycin	
<i>Stanley T. Crooke</i>	
I. Introduction	221
II. Chemistry	222
III. The Interactions of Metals with Bleomycin and Analogues	222
IV. Effects of Bleomycin on Isolated DNA	225
V. Cellular Effects	228
VI. Effects on the Cell Cycle	229
VII. Morphological Effects	229
VIII. Intracellular Fate and Metabolism	230
IX. Conclusions	230
References	231
 14 Molecular Pharmacology of Anthracycline Antitumor Antibiotics	
<i>Virgil H. DuVernay</i>	
I. Introduction	234
II. Chemistry	235
III. Studies on the Mechanism of Action of Anthracyclines	238
IV. Anthracycline Structure-Activity Relationships	254
V. Conclusions	267
References	268
 15 Vinca Alkaloids: Molecular and Clinical Pharmacology	
<i>Richard A. Bender</i>	
I. Introduction	273
II. Molecular Structure	275

III. Molecular Pharmacology	276
IV. Clinical Pharmacology	279
V. Conclusion	284
References	284
16 Molecular Pharmacology of Alkylating Agents	
<i>Michael Colvin</i>	
I. Introduction	287
II. Chemistry of the Alkylating Reactions	288
III. Clinically Effective Alkylating Agents	289
IV. Reactions with Biological Molecules	295
V. Discussion	301
References	301
17 Molecular Pharmacology of Cisplatin	
<i>Archie W. Prestayko</i>	
I. Introduction	303
II. Chemistry	304
III. Biochemistry and Mechanism of Action	304
IV. Conclusion	309
References	309
18 Methotrexate: Molecular Pharmacology	
<i>J. R. Bertino</i>	
I. Introduction	311
II. Chemistry	313
III. Mechanism of Action and Structure-Activity Relationships	313
IV. Transport of Methotrexate and Related Compounds	317
V. Mechanisms of Resistance to Folate Antagonists	317
VI. The Future for Folate Antagonists	319
References	320
 PART III CLINICAL PHARMACOLOGY OF SELECTED NEOPLASTIC AGENTS	
19 Introduction to Clinical Pharmacology	
<i>Steven D. Reich</i>	
I. Introduction	325
II. Pharmacokinetics	326
III. Mathematical Modeling	327
IV. Clinical Correlations of Pharmacokinetics	336
V. Discussion	339
References	339

20 Clinical Pharmacology of Bleomycin*Stanley T. Crooke*

I. Introduction	343
II. Newer Clinical Pharmacological Assays for Bleomycin	344
III. Absorption	345
IV. Distribution	347
V. Elimination	347
VI. Conclusions	350
References	350

21 Clinical Pharmacology of Cisplatin*Archie W. Prestayko*

I. Introduction	351
II. Cisplatin Pharmacokinetics	351
III. Cisplatin Stability	356
IV. Conclusion	356
References	356

22 Methotrexate: Clinical Pharmacology and Therapeutic Application*J. R. Bertino*

I. Introduction	359
II. Pharmacology	360
III. Clinical Applications	363
IV. Discussion	371
References	372

23 Clinical Pharmacology of Nitrosoureas*Steven D. Reich*

I. Introduction	377
II. Molecular Structure	378
III. Biochemistry and Metabolism	379
IV. Clinical Pharmacology	381
V. Discussion	386
References	386

Index

389

Part I

General Reviews

1

NUCLEOSIDE ANALOGUES

Bruce A. Chabner

I. Introduction	3
II. Cytosine Arabinoside	4
A. Mode of Action	4
B. Pharmacokinetics	6
C. Dose Schedule and Clinical Toxicity	7
III. 5-Azacytidine	8
A. Mode of Action	8
B. Pharmacokinetics in Humans	8
C. Clinical Toxicity	9
IV. 5-Fluorouracil	9
A. Mechanism of Action	10
B. Metabolism and Elimination	11
C. Pharmacokinetics	12
D. Dosage Schedule and Clinical Toxicity	14
V. Other 5-Fluoro Pyrimidines	15
VI. 3-Deazauridine	16
A. Mode of Action	16
B. Pharmacokinetics	17
C. Toxicity and Schedule Dependency	17
VII. Purine Analogues	17
A. Mechanism of Action and Metabolism	18
B. Pharmacokinetics and Elimination in Man	19
C. Clinical Toxicity	20
VIII. Arabinosyl Adenine	20
A. Mechanism of Action	20
B. Pharmacokinetics	21
IX. Conclusions	21
References	21

I. INTRODUCTION

The nucleoside analogues form a chemically large group and represent attempts to prepare new antineoplastics by rational synthesis. They can be divided into several structural groups, and a number of the agents are important drugs.

II. CYTOSINE ARABINOSIDE

Cytosine arabinoside (1- β -D-arabinofuranosylcytosine) (Fig. 1), also known as ara-C, was synthesized in 1959 and has since been recognized as the most active antimetabolite for remission induction in adult nonlymphocytic leukemia (Ellison, 1968). It is currently used with anthracyclines in the standard induction regimens for this disease, achieving 60–70% complete remissions in unselected cases (Kremer, 1975). It has also found limited usefulness in the treatment of meningeal leukemia or lymphoma for patients resistant to methotrexate or in patients experiencing methotrexate-related neurotoxicity (Band *et al.*, 1973).

A. Mode of Action

Cytosine arabinoside functions as an analogue of the naturally occurring nucleoside 2'-deoxycytidine (Fig. 1). The primary cytotoxic effect of cytosine arabinoside is believed to be inhibition of DNA polymerase by cytosine arabinoside triphosphate (ara-CTP), although the drug is also known to be incorporated into both RNA and DNA to a limited extent (Chu, 1971; Momparler, 1972; Rashbaum and Cozzarelli, 1976). Both semiconservative, or replicative, DNA synthesis, and unscheduled, or "repair," synthesis are inhibited, although the former appears to be more sensitive to inhibition; although maximum sensitivity of cells occurs during the S- or DNA-synthetic phase of the cell cycle, treatment of cells in other phases, such as G₂ or G₁, leads to chromatid deletions (Brewen and Christie, 1967; Hiss and Preston, 1978). Cells exposed to ul-

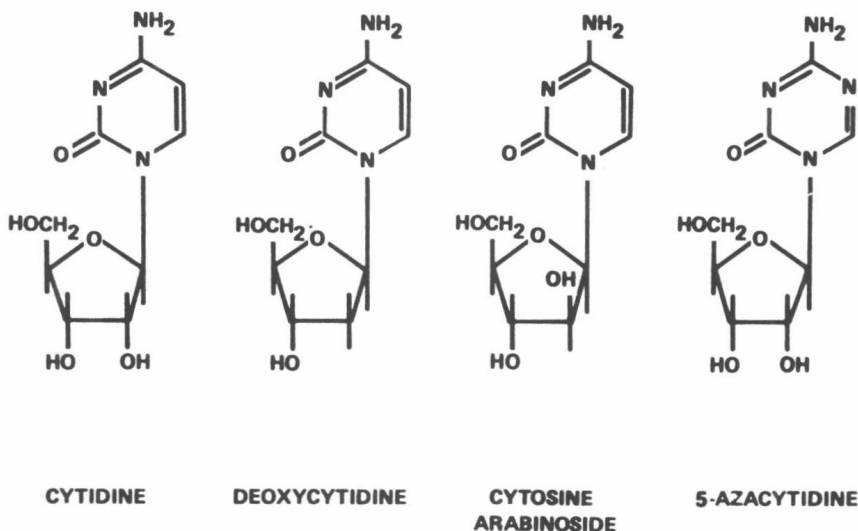


Fig. 1. Structure of cytidine, deoxycytidine, and antitumor analogues.

traviolet irradiation are unable to repair single-strand-breaks in DNA in the presence of ara-C (Hiss and Preston, 1978).

In order to achieve activation to ara-CTP, the nucleoside must enter the target cell, a process believed to occur by facilitated diffusion. Thereafter, a series of phosphorylation steps occurs (see Fig. 2), utilizing the same enzymes required by the physiologic nucleoside deoxycytidine in its activation to a triphosphate. The slight alteration in structure of the sugar moiety of ara-C renders it a somewhat less favorable substrate for deoxycytidine kinase, but a more active substrate for deoxycytidine monophosphate kinase (the second step in the pathway) (Hande and Chabner, 1978). The drug is also susceptible to degradation by cytidine deaminase, an enzyme found in liver, gastrointestinal tract, plasma, and some tumor cells and by deoxycytidine monophosphate deaminase, which is also found in leukemic cells as well as spleen and liver. The products of deamination of ara-C and cytosine arabinoside monophosphate (ara-CMP) are both inactive in terms of cytotoxicity. The nucleoside deaminase, found in high concentrations in human liver (Stoller *et al.*, 1978), is primarily responsible for ara-C elimination, but the possible role of these enzymes in resistance of tumors to ara-C requires further evaluation. Preliminary studies (Stoller *et al.*, 1975) indicate that the monophosphate deaminase is present in higher concentrations than the nucleoside deaminase in malignant cells.

Multiple mechanisms of drug resistance have been described in animal tumor systems, including deletion of the activating enzyme, deoxycytidine kinase (Draharosky and Kreis, 1970), and increased *de novo* synthesis of dCTP

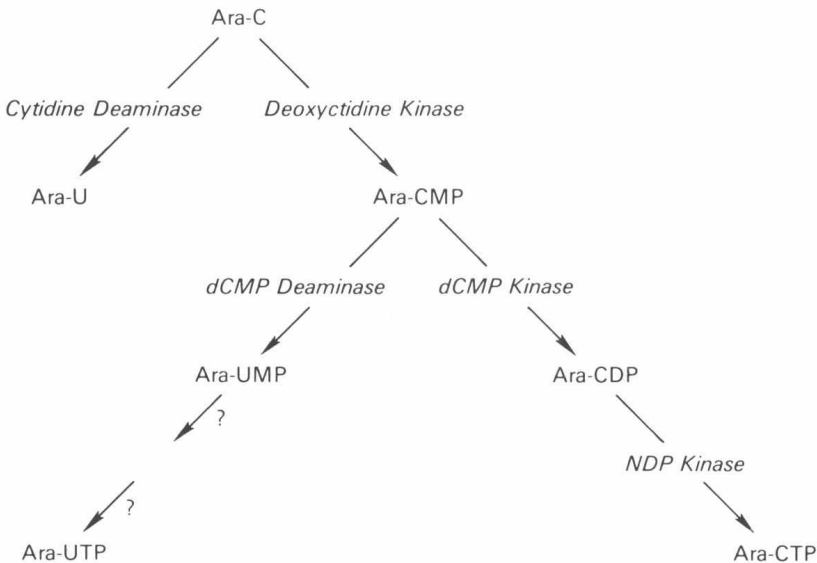


Fig. 2. Intracellular metabolism of cytosine arabinoside. Enzymes are indicated by italics. Tetrahydrouridine blocks cytidine deaminase, the first catabolic enzyme in the pathway.