LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Re: Specific targeting of Wnt/β-catenin signaling in human melanoma cells by a dietary triterpene lupeol

Travis L. Biechele and Andy J. Chien*
The University of Washington School of Medicine, Seattle, WA 98195, USA
*To whom correspondence should be addressed. Tel: +1 206 542 5290;
Fax: +1 206 543 2489;
Email: andchien@uw.edu

Dear Editors,

We were surprised during our reading of the recent article by Tarapore et al. (published online on 23 August) regarding the specific targeting of Wnt/β-catenin signaling in melanoma by dietary lupeol. In the abstract, the authors state that the one-third of melanomas with active Wnt/β-catenin signaling have a poor prognosis, an assertion that is not supported by the literature (see ref. 1 for review of this topic). In fact, multiple publications have reported just the opposite, namely that the presence of active Wnt/β-catenin signaling (as measured by nuclear β-catenin) actually portends an unexpected IMPROVED survival, suggesting that the role of this pathway in melanoma (and other cancers) may be more complex than previously thought. None of these reports are addressed by the authors, and their failure to acknowledge these findings compromises the interpretation of their results in the larger context of what is known about melanoma progression. It is unfortunate that this oversight was not caught by either the authors themselves or the peer reviewers responsible for ensuring the scientific quality of the work.

Reference


Received September 14, 2010; revised September 14, 2010; accepted October 15, 2010