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6.2: Melatonin & Clock genes





LAN = light at night KC = key characteristics of carcinogens









6.2: Melatonin & Clock genes



## Is LAN a possible risk factor for breast cancer?

- Known risk factors account for <50% of cases</li>
- Melatonin inhibits breast tumor growth
- Proposed mechanism (melatonin hypothesis)

 $LAN \rightarrow \downarrow nocturnal melatonin production \rightarrow \uparrow estrogen \rightarrow \uparrow turnover epithelial stem cells \rightarrow \uparrow breast cancer risk$ 



## Types of evidence to evaluate the melatonin hypothesis

- Human cancer studies of night shift work (Section 3)
  - Originally thought to be a surrogate for extreme LAN
- Human cancer studies of LAN exposures (Section 3)
- Human studies of melatonin (or proxies) and cancer risk
  - Cohort studies of shift workers
  - Visually impaired/blind populations
- Experimental studies of melatonin and cancer growth
- Mechanistic studies of melatonin



## Human studies: melatonin and cancer risk

- Shift workers
  - Some evidence of inverse association with breast cancer
  - Stronger evidence in post-menopausal women (2 independent cohorts)
  - Limited number of studies, inconsistencies



## Human studies: melatonin and cancer risk

- Shift workers
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  - Limited number of studies, inconsistencies
- Totally blind/visually impaired
  - Melatonin is not suppressed by LAN in totally blind people
  - Melatonin rhythms: free running/abnormally entrained
  - Breast cancer: Inverse association with blindness and degree of visual impairment (6 studies)
  - Prostate cancer: lower risk (non-significant) (2 studies)



#### LAN suppresses melatonin and promotes tumor growth



MLT = melatonin



#### **Exogenous melatonin suppresses tumor growth**



MLT = melatonin

a = Blood collected from humans at night (no LAN) or synthetic MLT added to rat blood



#### **Exogenous melatonin suppresses tumor growth**



cAMP= cyclic adenosine monophosphate

13-HODE= 13-hydroxyoctadecadienoic acid

MLT = melatonin

a = Blood collected from humans at night (no LAN) or synthetic MLT added to rat blood



#### Low MLT blood or high MLT blood + MLT receptor antagonist do not suppress tumor growth



MLT= melatonin

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#### Melatonin is oncostatic via multiple pathways

Mechanism/Pathway	Key events and effects
Estrogen receptor & enzyme modulator	↓ Estrogen receptor (ERα) activation & expression ↓ Estradiol
Antioxidant, oxidative stress response	↓ ROS, NOS ↑ GSH, SOD, catalase
Immune activation	↑ NK cells, leukocytes, monocytes, cytokines, IFN-γ, TNFα ↑ Immunosurveillance
Cell cycle, differentiation & apoptosis	$\uparrow$ G1, cell cycle length, p53, p21, caspases, differentiation, apoptosis $\downarrow$ Cyclin D1, cell proliferation
Telomerase inhibition	↓ hTERT, estradiol-induced telomerase activity ↓ Number of neoplastic cell replication cycles
Angiogenesis inhibition	$\downarrow$ VEGF, HIF-1 $\alpha$ , ROS, neovascularization
Metastasis inhibition	↓ response to estradiol, cell invasiveness/metastasis ↑ E-cadherin, ß₁-integrin, MT1 receptor
Fatty acid uptake and metabolism	↓ Linoleic acid uptake, 13-HODE ↓ EGFR/MAPK activity



## LAN/Shift work effects > melatonin suppression

- Core clock genes
  - Control expression of 2% -10% of the genome
  - Mutations/deregulated expression common in cancers
  - SNPs: increased risk of breast and other cancers



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Desynchronizes central clock/SNS/peripheral clock

- Disrupted cell signaling pathways and regulatory circuits
- Loss of cell cycle control and altered metabolism
- $\uparrow$  Cell proliferation and  $\downarrow$  apoptosis
- $-\downarrow$  Tumor suppression and DNA repair



## Mutant mice exhibit a cancer-prone phenotype and accelerated tumor growth

Mutant gene	Tumors	Effect
<i>Bmal1</i> or <i>Per</i> 2	Lung	Accelerated tumor growth/progression, ↑ c-Myc, metabolic dysregulation
Bmal1 or Per2	Colon	Accelerated tumor growth in vivo/in vitro
<i>Bmal1, Per1,</i> <i>Per2</i> , <i>Cry1</i> , and <i>Cry</i> 2	Liver Ovarian Lymphoma	Increased incidence of spontaneous and radiation-induced tumors
Per2, Cry1, and Cry2	Liver Bile duct	Developed 4-8X more tumors than WT mice



## **Outline: Mechanistic Data**

### Shift work/LAN, circadian disruption and cancer



LAN = light at night KC = key characteristics of carcinogens



## LAN/Shift work are associated with KC/other effects





## The circadian clock is regulated at the epigenetic level





#### **Melatonin regulates sex hormone rhythms**









#### Night shift work is a complex exposure scenario



Light at Night



Altered Meal Timing







## Vitamin D regulates many of the same biological processes as melatonin



- 90% from sunlight exposure
- Regulates > 2000 genes
  - Metabolism
  - DNA repair
  - Antioxidant activity
  - Immune function/inflammation
  - Cell proliferation/differentiation
- Deficiency and cancer
  - Risk factor in human cancers
  - Role in breast cancer uncertain
    - VDR knockouts: ↑ preneoplasia
    - VDR SNPs: ↑ breast cancer risk

VDR = vitamin D receptor SNPs = single nucleotide polymorphisms



# The sleep/wake cycle is bidirectionally associated with the circadian system



**Sleep Disruption** 

- Misalignment with LD cycle
- Disruption affects function of multiple systems:
  - Inflammation and immune response
  - Metabolic (insulin, glucose, leptin, ghrelin)
  - Cellular (DNA damage/oxidative stress, epigenetic)
  - Neuroendocrine
- Role in breast cancer uncertain
  - Mixed results from human studies
  - Plausible mechanisms
  - More studies needed



## Meal timing is an important non-photic zeitgeber



Altered Meal Timing

- Peripheral clock entrainment
- Gene expression/biomarkers
  - Glucose homeostasis & energy metabolism
  - Inflammation & immune function
  - Tyrosine kinase signaling
  - DNA damage checkpoints
  - C-reactive protein
  - Oxidative stress
- Role in cancer
  - Restricted feeding  $\downarrow$  tumor growth
  - After 10:00 PM ↑ breast cancer

## Summary

- Melatonin and clock genes
  - Maintain tissue and cellular homeostasis
  - Multiple oncostatic pathways
- LAN, shift work, jet lag induce circadian disruption
  - Melatonin suppression
  - Altered clock gene and clock controlled gene expression
  - Associated with multiple key characteristics of carcinogens
- Complex exposures/interactions
  - Sunlight and vitamin D
  - Sleep disruption
  - Meal timing



## Night Shift Work and LAN: Mechanistic Data

## **Clarification questions?**



## **Reviewer Comments**

- Comment on whether the information provided in the Mechanistic and Other Relevant Data section is clear, technically correct, and objectively presented.
- Identify any information that should be added or deleted.
- Provide any scientific criticisms of NTP's synthesis of the mechanistic data for assessing effects of night shift work and light at night.
- Comment on whether the summary captures the key information for each topic.