Spotlight on the Transformation of Metastatic Melanoma Care

Over the past four decades, research has significantly improved our understanding of metastatic melanoma – the most serious and life-threatening form of skin cancer. Innovative new treatments are transforming the way we care for patients with this disease. While research must continue, take a look at how far we’ve come.

Mechanisms of Melanoma Uncovered

1970s

Little is known about the molecular makeup; a link to sun exposure discovered1-3

Chemotherapy is the only treatment option; patients survive approximately 7 months4

Sentinel lymph node biopsy is introduced to assess if melanoma has spread and to predict the risk for recurrence5

1990s

Melanoma gene mutations are discovered prompting new areas of research6

Chemotherapy and interleukin-2 are treatment options for metastatic melanoma7

2000s

Melanoma is diverse with >30 subtypes identified to date8

7 genes identified as having ‘driver’ mutations that promote progression9 Select mutations include:

• BRAF: occurs in about 50% of all melanomas
• NRAS: occurs in about 20% of all melanomas
• KIT: seen more frequently in those that begin on the palms, soles of the feet, under the nails, and inside the mouth and areas of chronic sun exposure

TODAY

In 2011, the FDA approves the first test to detect BRAF mutations10; BRAF testing is now recommended for patients with metastatic melanoma11 Treatment options include targeted therapy and immunotherapy12,13 Biomarkers have become important to help determine treatment options for metastatic melanoma14

Melanoma is one of the cancers with the highest frequency of mutations, resulting in varied disease from person to person15

Patients are living three times longer than in the 1970s16,17

Precision oncology evolves our understanding of how cancer develops on a genomic level. We are committed to the discovery and development of broadly available therapies that improve the lives of patients with cancer, including metastatic melanoma and other cancers.

Learn more about innovations in precision oncology at www.NovartisOncology.com

REFERENCES