Is Merck’s Keytruda Cancer Drug an Antiparasite?

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Merck has created a TV ad promoting a “TRU” story about their drug called Keytruda. The spot it titled “It’s TRU: Sharon’s Story - Living Longer Is Possible.” Keytruda is marketed as an alternative to chemotherapy. The woman in the ad is named Sharon who talks about the “Tru story” of her lung cancer. Sharon resembles actress Patricia Neal who died of lung cancer in 2010. A Web site called iSpot.tv contains a Web video version with a list of actors who play her family members.

There is important information that Merck has left out of their “TRU” story. Keytruda is an antiparasite drug Google Keytruda and the word antiparasite. The links returned contain no evidence that Keytruda has antiparasite properties. However, the following news article was returned:

“Repurposing an Antiparasitic Drug to Treat Brain Tumors,” GEN News Highlights, GEN: Genetics Engineering and Biotechnology News, April 12, 2017.

When you Google the title of this news article with the letters nih to search for peer-reviewed studies in the PubMed database, the following studies are returned:


As you can see from the titles of these studies, Mebendazole is an antiparasite drug being used to treat brain tumors and other cancers. The Wikipedia page for Mebendazole says it is similar to Albendazole, a drug I have seen mentioned in many parasite studies. Albendazole is made by GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) and it’s classified as an Anthelmintic that expels parasitic worms.

There are three categories of worms that infest animals, plants and humans: nematode or roundworm, trematode, or flatworm (also called flukes) and cestodes, or tapeworms. Worms, also known as helminths, are identified with names that reflect a binomial nomenclature system introduced by scientist Carl Linnaeus in the mid-Eighteenth Century. A two-part name identifies the genus and species that are italicized with the species name beginning with a lower-case letter. The abbreviation spp., when placed after a genus name, can be used to refer to several species.

Many scientists who have noticed the connection between helminth infections and cancer seem to sidestep the controversial nature of the subject by identifying “helminth infections that mimick malignancy.” In scientific publications, a review article, called a “roundup article” in mainstream magazine publishing, organizes other scholars’ related work. In 2010, Dr. Florian H. Pilsczek and his colleagues published a paper titled, “Helminthic infections mimicking malignancy: a review of published case reports” that contains an impressive chart of more than two dozen cancers and the related helminths. Valerie Harper’s related cancers, first lung cancer in 2009 and later brain cancer in 2013, appear in the chart as carcinomatosis next to a trematode called Fasciola hepatica. In 2005, researchers Jennifer Kaiser and Jürg Utzinger wrote a paper identifying what they called “emerging food trematodiasis” that they feel is the result of an
exponential increase in aquaculture (also known as fish farming). Fasciola hepatica is a trematode and the word trematodiasis means “infection with a trematode.” It is possible that Valerie Harper ate farm-raised seafood infected with the trematode.

Readers will most likely ask: “Why has this information not been more available to the public?” They may also ask, “Does my doctor know?” or, “Does my doctor read the latest scientific studies?” “Is he/she looking for a parasite infection before diagnosing the problem as cancer?”

In his book, I, Candidate for Governor: And How I Got Licked (1935), author Upton Sinclair wrote:

It is difficult to get a man to understand something, when his salary depends upon his not understanding it!

Doctors who diagnose cancer will say that they relied on a pathologists report that identified cancer cells. When cancer is suspected, doctors routinely take a small tissue sample from a lump or, suspected tumor, and send the sample to a pathologist. The procedure is known as a biopsy. In 1974 a scientist named Sydney Brenner introduced a nematode called Caenorhabditis elegans (often abbreviated C. elegans) into genetics research because the worm’s genome overlaps the human genome. If a nematode’s genome overlaps the human genome, how does a pathologist differentiate nematode tissue from human tissue?

Surgeons sometimes find live worms in the body. In 2008, Fox television in Phoenix, Arizona produced an extensive report about a patient named Rosemary Alvarez whose doctor thought she had a brain tumor. Rosemary’s surgeon, Dr. Peter Nakaji, told reporters that when he opened up Rosemary’s brain stem, he found a live worm. In the television news story, he explains that he has had five other patients with a similar condition. The story, produced by Lauren Cox, is available on YouTube.

Lauren Cox and Rosemary Alvarez’s doctor report that the parasite may have originated in pork. This conclusion is false because all plants, animals and humans are equally vulnerable to parasitic worms and single-celled parasites. There is also evidence that parasites have existed for thousands of years. Paleoparasitologists have identified tapeworms (cestodes) and flatworms (trematodes) in predynastic Egyptian mummies more than 5,200 years old. The Greek physician Galen, who worked in Rome (130 A.D. - 200 A.D.), was familiar with a roundworm called Ascaris lumbricoides, a roundworm called Enterobius Vermicularis and a tapeworm called Taenia spp.. Although parasitic worms can move through the bloodstream and become established anywhere in the body, there are species that seem to have preferred locations. For example, Ascaris lumbricoides has been linked to asthma and tapeworm has been linked to epilepsy, a problem that is associated with the brain.

The roundworm Enterobius vermicularis is the scientific name for Strongyloides stercoralis. The name Enterobius vermicularis, or pinworm, are names used in the UK and Australia and Strongyloides stercoralis, or threadworm, are names used in the United States. This roundworm can live in the body for 60 or 70 years and can be transmitted in sheets and bed clothes. If left untreated, the worm can cause congestive heart failure. Elizabeth Taylor (1932-2011) died of congestive heart failure at the age of 79. During her life, she also had a stroke, a brain tumor, asthma and 100 hospitalizations. John H. Cross, author of Medical Microbiology, says, “everyone has had pinworms.”

Stroke is an under-recognized complication of neurocysticercosis (NCC) which is the scientific name for tapeworm infection of the brain. In 2000, Drs. S. Jha and V. Kumar, published a paper titled” Neurocysticercosis presenting as stroke,” describing six stroke patients, ages 7 to 30, whose neuroimaging and serological tests were positive for Taenia. All of the patients recovered with Albendazole.

Searches in the National Library of Medicine’s PubMed database turn up seven different types of parasites that cause dementia. As of this writing, there are more than 30 Alzheimer’s foundations. It would be a financial conflict of interest for these nonprofits, or any disease-related nonprofits to review research that connects parasites to disease. Nonprofits and the most famous hospitals are complicit in what may be one of the planet’s biggest scandals. For example, Johns Hopkins Hospital has a Web page devoted to epilepsy that says the “cause is usually unknown and that there is no real prevention.” Johns Hopkins staff members John M. Freeman M.D., Zahava Turner RD CSP, LDN, and James E. Rubenstein M.D. have co-authored a book about the Ketogenic
Diet that the hospital has used to treat epilepsy since the 1920s. The diet, which is 5 percent carbohydrates, 20 percent protein, and 75 percent fat, works because the liver converts fat to ketones which are an extremely efficient fuel alternative that worms cannot use. This point is not explained in the book which is now in its 5th edition.

References:
