Vaccines for metastatic hormone-refractory prostate cancer

Canadian Coordinating Office for Health Technology Assessment

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Authors' objectives
The aim of this study was to summarize the available information on the use of Sipuleucel-T [Provenge (formerly APC8015)] and granulocyte macrophage-colony stimulating factor (GM-CSF) gene-transduced tumour vaccine (GVAX) as therapeutic vaccines in men with metastatic hormone-refractory prostate cancer (HRPC).

Authors' conclusions
There are no therapeutic vaccines approved for use for prostate cancer in Canada or the US. To be effective, a therapeutic vaccine must demonstrate the ability to elicit an appropriate tumour-specific response, and have a favourable safety profile.

Provenge is safe and well-tolerated. It targets a specific protein for prostate cancer and demonstrates a statistically significant survival benefit. Further clinical trials should compare Provenge with the current treatment standard (Taxotere plus prednisone), as is being done in the GVAX clinical trials.

GVAX is safe and well-tolerated. Because it is not patient specific, it will be available on an outpatient basis to any patient. If GVAX makes it to the market, it could prove to be a convenient addition to the limited treatment arsenal that is available for men with metastatic HRPC.

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