

Universitat Autonoma de Barcelona

**PAPEL DE LOS FACTORES DE CRECIMIENTO Y DE LA VIA DE
SEÑALIZACIÓN PI3K/Akt EN LOS MECANISMOS DE INVASIÓN Y
DE RESPUESTA A TRATAMIENTO DEL CÁNCER DE MAMA.**

Memoria presentada por:

Alberto Gallardo Alcañiz

2012

Para optar por el grado:

Doctor en Medicina y cirugía por la Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona.

Tesis realizada bajo la dirección del Dr. Enrique Lerma Puertas en el servicio de
Patología del Hospital de la Santa Creu i Sant Pau.

Tesis en Morfología y Patología Estructural y Molecular adscrita al departamento
de ciencias morfológicas de la facultad de Medicina de la
Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona.

Agradecimientos:

Durante estos años han sido muchas personas las que me han ayudado a finalizar esta tesis doctoral, a todos ellos les agradezco sinceramente su apoyo, comprensión e infinita paciencia.

INDEX

I Introducción.

1 EL CANCER DE MAMA (Pág.7).

 1.1 Anatomía e histología (Pág.7).

 1.2 Epidemiología (Pág.10).

 1.3 Factores pronósticos del carcinoma de mama (Pág.11).

 1.4 Subtipos histológicos del carcinoma de mama (Pág.17).

 1.5 Estadio del cáncer de mama (Pág.20).

 1.6 Tratamiento (Pág.22).

 1.7 Clasificación molecular del carcinoma de mama (Pág.24).

2 Factores de crecimiento en el carcinoma de mama (Pág.26).

 2.1 Receptores de crecimiento epidérmico (EGFR, HER2, HER3, HER4) (Pág.26).

 2.2 Factor de crecimiento similar a insulina (IGFR) (Pág.31).

3 La vía de señalización PI3K/AKT en el carcinoma de mama (Pág.32).

4 El receptor relacionado con la lipoproteína de baja densidad 1 (LRP-1) y metabolismo del colesterol en el carcinoma de mama (Pág.35).

II Objetivos (Pág.39).

III Resumen global y discusión. (Págs.41).

IV Publicaciones (Pág.47).

V Conclusiones (Pág. 70).

VI Material suplementario (Pág.72).

VII. Bibliografía (Pág.81).

- Relación de figuras: 10

- Relación de tablas: 4

I Introducción.

1 EL CANCER DE MAMA

1.1 Anatomía e histología.

La mama femenina “normal” pesa entre 50 y 400 gramos, la mama no lactante entre 150 y 250 gramos. Las medidas habituales son entre 10 y 12 cm de diámetro y de 5 a 8 cm de grosor. Se localiza habitualmente entre las costillas 2^a y 6^a. El tejido mamario se divide en los cuadrantes superior, inferior, interno, externo, región retroareolar y la “cola” axilar. Las arterias que irrigan las mamas son la arteria axilar, la intercostal y la mamaria interna. El drenaje venoso se realiza mediante la vena axilar y mamaria interna.

Estructura de la glándula mamaria

La glándula mamaria está constituida por entre 15 y 20 lóbulos mamarios. Estos se distribuyen de forma cónica con el apex situado en la proximidad del pezón. Los ductos colectores, que son los de mayor tamaño próximo al pezón, se continúan por los senos lactóforos que se dividen en los ductos segmentarios y subsegmentarios que posteriormente originan pequeños dúctulos. Los dúctulos se dividen en pequeñas proyecciones glandulares digitiformes que formarán parte del lobulillo mamario. La unidad ducto terminal-lobulillo está constituida por los ductos extralobillares que se dividen en los lobulillos (acinos). Estos constituyen la porción secretora del árbol glandular.

Histología del arbol glandular

La parte más externa de los ductos colectores están recubiertos por un epitelio escamoso estratificado que está en continuidad con la epidermis. El epitelio escamoso finaliza antes del seno lactóforo. El resto de la glándula está revestida por un epitelio bicúbico constituido por células luminales y mioepiteliales rodeadas por una membrana basal.

La célula luminal

La célula luminal puede ser columnar o cuboidea, están ancladas a la membrana basal o las células mioepiteliales. El citoplasma es abundante y contiene la habitual dotación de organelas incluidos gránulos secretores en la porción luminal. El núcleo está localizado en la porción media de la misma. La citoqueratina 19 aparece en los “buds” mamarios en la semana 19 de gestación y su expresión se mantiene constante desde la semana 16 de la vida fetal (1). Las citoqueratinas 8, 15, 16 y 18 también están presentes en las células luminales (2).

La célula mioepitelial

Localizada entre las células secretoras y la membrana basal a la que se ancla. Se extienden desde los ductos colectores hasta los acinos y finalizan abruptamente en la unión escamo-columnar. Las células mioepiteliales son contráctiles y aparecen en la semana 23-24 de gestación. Facilitan el flujo de las secreciones al incrementar la presión intraluminal en la unidad excretora. La contracción esta inducida por la oxitocina para la que tiene receptores (3). Las células mioepiteliales pueden no ser visibles en las tinciones de hematoxilina eosina. El núcleo es delgado y沿长ado y está centrado circunferencialmente con el citoplasma. Cuando la glándula está dilatada o es atrófica las células mioepiteliales tienen un núcleo redondo con citoplasma eosinofílico. Las tinción inmunohistoquímica para p63 y miosina sirven para detectar las células mioepiteliales (4).

La célula apocrina

Las células apocrina son columnares, cuboidales o aplanadas dependiendo de la localización en acinos o quistes. Se pueden diferenciar en dos tipos; la tipo A muestra citoplasma eosinofílico o granular con una vacuola supranuclear (5). La tipo B se puede incluir dentro de la categoría de las células claras. El citoplasma es granular y microvacuulado y corresponden a vesículas vacías (6).

Células madres (“stem cells”)

Aunque todavía no está totalmente establecida cual es la célula madre de la mama si que se han realizado numerosos estudios para identificarlos. Estudios de pérdida de heterozigosidad han encontrado el mismo patrón en las células mioepiteliales y luminales lo que sugiere que se trata de una población clonal y por lo tanto del mismo origen (7) y que probablemente existe una única célula que dio origen a ambas poblaciones. Sapino y colaboradores obtuvieron dos líneas celulares una epitelial y otra mioepitelial de un tumor que posteriormente transplantaron a animales singénicos que, a su vez, originaron células epiteliales y mioepiteliales. Por lo tanto concluyeron es posible que las células epiteliales y mioepiteliales tiene capacidad de diferenciarse entre si (8).

Drenaje linfático del parénquima mamario

El drenaje linfático de la mama es complejo porque resulta de la conexión del plexo subepitelial y del drenaje linfático del parénquima mamario. No esta claro si los dos sistemas linfáticos están interconectados o fluyen separadamente. Los vasos linfáticos se localizan en el estroma especializado periductal, la linfa fluye hacia el plexo retroareolar profundo y a los ganglios linfáticos regionales. Estos están constituidos por los ganglios axilares en un 97% de los casos y por extra-axilares en el 3%. Los ganglios linfáticos intramamarios están presentes en el 28% de los casos (9). Los ganglios linfáticos de la mama interna suelen ser de pequeño tamaño (de 2 a 5 mm). En la práctica clínica los ganglios linfáticos axilares se subdividen en los niveles I a III de acuerdo con el drenaje linfático. Sin embargo se han detectado ganglios linfáticos centinelas en el nivel II hasta el 23% de los pacientes sin afectación del nivel I (10). En un estudio que incluía 195 linfadenectomías la media de ganglios linfáticos fue de 24 (11).

1.2 Epidemiología.

El carcinoma de mama es la neoplasia maligna mas frecuente de la mujer y es la segunda causa mas frecuente de muerte en la mujer. Representa el 23% de todos los canceres diagnosticados en 2008, y el 14% de las muertes debidas por tumores (12).

La incidencia muestra amplias variaciones con la mayor tasa en Europa y la menor en África y Asia (13). La incidencia del carcinoma de mama se ha ido incrementando en los países desarrollados. Por ejemplo la tasa Europea estandarizada por edad se ha incrementado el 65% desde los del año 1979 (75 casos por 100.000) hasta el 2008 (124 por 100.000).

El incremento de la incidencia del cáncer de mama registrado entre las décadas de los 80 y 90 en los países occidentales se ha relacionado con el cambio de los hábitos reproductivos (incluida la terapia hormonal en la postmenopausia) y a la implementación de técnicas de cribado (12). Parte del incremento observado en los años 90 se ha atribuido al empleo de la terapia hormonal sustitutiva (14). Sin embargo, desde el año 2002 se ha observado una leve disminución de la incidencia del cáncer de mama a raíz del menor uso de tratamiento hormonal combinado en la postmenopausia, que se relacionaba con mayor riesgo de cáncer de mama (15).

La disminución del número de muertes atribuidas al cáncer de mama en los países desarrollados se ha relacionado con la detección precoz por los programas de cribado y a la mejora en el tratamiento (16).

1.3 Factores pronósticos del carcinoma de mama.

Los factores pronósticos son aquellos datos obtenidos en el momento del diagnóstico que se relacionan con el pronóstico en ausencia de terapia adyuvante. Los factores predictivos son los que están relacionados con el grado de respuesta al tratamiento. Habitualmente el valor de cualquiera de ellos se establece en relación a la supervivencia en el análisis multivariado. Los factores pronósticos y predictivos más aceptados en el cáncer de mama son la edad, afectación de los ganglios linfáticos, tamaño tumoral, grado histológico, tipo tumoral y receptores hormonales (17).

Edad

En el carcinoma de mama la edad de presentación del tumor se ha asociado clásicamente al pronóstico; por ejemplo la supervivencia a los 5 años en pacientes con carcinoma de mama antes de los 40 años es del 84% mientras que la supervivencia a los 5 años de las pacientes de 40 o más es 90%, estos hallazgos pueden ser debidos a mayor agresividad de los tumores o a peor respuesta a tratamiento (18, 19). Múltiples estudios han corroborado la menor mortalidad en las pacientes de mayor edad con carcinoma de mama (20-22). Sin embargo, recientemente algunos estudios han observado una mayor incidencia de mortalidad debida a enfermedad en las pacientes de edad avanzada (23, 24).

Ganglios linfáticos

La afectación de los ganglios linfáticos axilares se ha considerado el factor pronóstico aislado más importante que predice la supervivencia global y libre de enfermedad (25). Mientras que solo el 20-30% de las pacientes con ganglios negativos desarrollarán metástasis en los 10 años siguientes. Hasta el 70% de las pacientes con metástasis ganglionares presentarán recidivas o recurrencias de su enfermedad. La presencia de mayor número y el tamaño de los ganglios linfáticos afectos se ha relacionado con peor pronóstico (26). El nivel de afectación axilar

también influye y las pacientes con afectación del nivel III axilar presentan peor pronóstico. Aunque la afectación extracapsular de la neoplasia no está totalmente aceptada como factor de mal pronóstico, la presencia de tumor en los linfáticos aferentes se ha relacionado con peor pronóstico

El estudio del ganglio linfático centinela es un test diagnóstico para establecer el estado del primer ganglio linfático al que drena el tumor. Se realiza mediante la inyección de un contraste radiactivo en el tumor o en la región periareolar, este se desplaza hasta el primer ganglio linfático que recibe el drenaje del tumor (27). Todavía no se ha establecido cual es el mejor método para evaluar el ganglio centinela, algunos autores han propuesto el uso exclusivo de cortes congelados, otros secciones congeladas y posterior estudio en material parafinado, otros estudio citológico y finalmente la detección mediante técnicas moleculares de citoqueratina 19. La mejor manera de cortar el ganglio linfático es mediante secciones perpendiculares al eje mayor del ganglio. El uso de anticuerpos antíctoqueratina incrementa la sensibilidad en el 20% (10).

Tamaño tumoral

El tamaño tumoral es uno de los marcadores más fidedignos que predicen la presencia de metástasis ganglionares y la supervivencia. Los tumores son de menor tamaño en la población sometida a cribado (28). Se recomienda medir el tumor macro y microscópicamente, el tamaño del tumor infiltrante es el que mejor se correlaciona con la supervivencia (25). El informe patológico debe incluir también el tamaño del componente intraductal.

Grado histológico

Hace más de 100 años los patólogos ya conocían que el alto índice mitótico así como el pleomorfismo nuclear se relacionaban con un curso clínico agresivo en los carcinomas de mama (29). El sistema de gradación más aceptado es el propuesto

por Elston y Ellis (30), que en realidad resulta de una modificación del de Bloom y Richardson (31). El sistema se basa en la evaluación de tres categorías formación de ductos, atipia nuclear y mitosis. Las glándulas se definen como estructuras tubulares con una luz central, se ha de evaluar todo el tumor y se asigna un 1 punto a los tumores con formación de mas de 75% de glándulas, 2 a los que presentan entre 10% y menos de 75% de glándulas y finalmente 3 puntos a los tumores que forman menos del 10% de luces glandulares. La atipa celular se evalúa comparado el tamaño nuclear de las células tumorales con las normales. Cuando las células tumorales son similares a las normales se asigna una puntuación de 1. Cuando los núcleos son mayores con nucleolo único y visible se asigna un 2 y finalmente si hay una gran variabilidad nuclear y pleomorfismo franco 3. La actividad mitótica se cuenta en mitosis por 10 campos de gran aumento en la periferia del tumor, los valores asignados varían según el área del microscopio empleado (32). Finalmente para obtener el grado tumoral se obtiene una puntuación de 3 a 9 sumando la de los tres apartados. Los tumores con una puntuación de 3 a 5 son grado 1; los que tienen una puntuación de 6 a 7 grado 2 y finalmente, grado 3 los que tienen una puntuación de 8 y 9. En los tumores heterogéneos se recomienda evaluar la zona menos diferenciada. Existe una buena correlación entre el grado tumoral y el pronóstico (32).

Receptores hormonales

Los receptores hormonales son los únicos marcadores moleculares que tienen la categoría I de marcador pronóstico del colegio de Patólogos Americanos (25). El tratamiento adyuvante con inhibidores hormonales solo debe ser ofrecido si se ha demostrado que el tumor tiene expresión de receptores hormonales.

El receptor de estrógenos alfa (RE_α) esta codificado por el cromosoma 6 q25. El RE_β esta codificado por el cromosoma 14 q22-q24. A pesar que existe evidencia de que la actividad del estradiol depende de la expresión relativa de ambos receptores, al no haber un anticuerpo fiable contra el RE_β en la clínica solo evalúa la expresión del RE_α. También existen dos isoformas del receptor de progesterona

RP el α y el β , están codificados por un gen situado en el cromosoma 1. Los anticuerpos comerciales que se usan habitualmente son capaces de reconocer ambos receptores. Se recomienda incluir en el informe de patología la intensidad y el porcentaje de células positivas. Se ha demostrado que el tratamiento hormonal es efectivo hasta en las pacientes que presentan un 1 % de positividad de receptores de estrógenos (33). Habitualmente las células que son positivas para estrógenos también lo son para progesterona.

Aproximadamente el 60% de los carcinomas infiltrantes de mama son intensamente positivos para receptores de estrógenos, el 20% son débilmente positivos y el 20% negativos. La expresión de los receptores hormonales son similares en el tumor primario y en las metástasis ganglionares. El 80% de las pacientes con tumores con receptores hormonales positivos responden a terapia, mientras que las pacientes con tumores con receptores de estrógenos negativos pero de progesterona positivos responden el 45%. En el grupo de tumores de tipo HER2 positivos se ha observado una disminución del porcentaje de tumores con receptores hormonales, aun así una parte importante siguen expresándolos (34).

Invasión vascular

La presencia de invasión vascular no es exclusiva de procesos malignos en la mama. Por ejemplo se han encontrado casos de invasión vascular en casos de adenosis esclerosante (35), desplazamiento de células epiteliales en el trayecto de la biopsia (36) y también se ha demostrado que estas células pueden ser transportadas al ganglio linfático, sin que esto afecte al pronóstico de las pacientes (37). De todas maneras la presencia de invasión vascular asociada a un proceso neoplásico se ha asociado a metástasis ganglionares, mayor tamaño tumoral y alto grado histológico en el análisis univariado (38). La invasión vascular es un factor pronóstico independiente en el análisis multivariado que predice recurrencia local y supervivencia, especialmente en pacientes sin metástasis ganglionares (39). Existen dificultades a la hora de evaluar la presencia de invasión vascular o linfática. El porcentaje de casos con invasión linfática es muy variable desde el

36% al 88% en las diferentes series (38). Lo mismo ocurre para la invasión vascular. Además existe una baja concordancia entre estudios comparativos entre diferentes patólogos (40).

Angiogénesis

Angiogénesis o neoangiogénesis se define como el crecimiento de nuevos vasos asociados al tumor. Esta se puede identificar en los carcinomas de mama (mas frecuentemente en los de alto grado) (41), en procesos inflamatorios, asociados al carcinoma intraductal de alto grado, en ganglios linfáticos metastáticos y reactivos (42). La proliferación vascular se puede resaltar mediante tinciones inmunohistoquímicas para factor VII, CD31 y CD34 (43). Diferentes estudios han demostrado que la angiogénesis es necesaria para el crecimiento tumoral y para la diseminación metastásica. Sin embargo existen datos contradictorios en la literatura; mientras algunos autores han relacionado la angiogénesis con peor pronóstico (43), otros no la han encontrado (44).

El factor de crecimiento vascular-endotelial (VEGF) y sus receptores (VEGFR) juegan un papel importante en la angiogénesis tanto en la tejidos normales como tumorales. La activación de esta vía, promueve múltiples vías de señalización que resultan en supervivencia de las células endoteliales, mitosis, migración, diferenciación, permeabilidad vascular y movilización de de células progenitoras endoteliales. La sobreexpresión de VEGF se ha asociado a progresión tumoral en el carcinoma de mama (45, 46).

Células tumorales circulantes.

La presencia de células tumorales circulantes en pacientes con carcinoma de mama se ha relacionado con progresión tumoral. Aunque la presencia de células tumorales circulantes no predicen la presencia de metástasis, si que se ha observado disminución de la supervivencia y el intervalo libre de progresión en pacientes con carcinoma de mama metastático (47, 48). Recientemente, también se ha relacionado la presencia de células tumorales circulantes en pacientes con carcinoma de mama no metastático con peor supervivencia global y supervivencia libre de progresión (49). También se han observado diferentes patrones de expresión de HER2 entre las células del tumor primario y las células circulantes (50).

1.4 Subtipos histológicos del carcinoma de mama.

Los subtipos histológicos mas frecuentes del carcinoma de mama son el carcinoma ductal infiltrante y el carcinoma lobulillar infiltrante. Es importante identificar algunos subtipos histológicos de carcinoma de mama ya que se han asociado a mejor pronóstico, sobre todo cuando se presentan de forma pura (no asociados a carcinoma ductal convencional). El carcinoma tubular (51, 52), el carcinoma mucinoso (53), el carcinoma cribiforme (54, 55), el carcinoma adenoide quístico (56), el carcinoma acinar (57), y el carcinoma secretor (58) presentan mejor pronóstico y menor número de recurrencias que los carcinomas ductales convencionales. El carcinoma medular, a pesar de ser un carcinoma de alto grado , también se ha relacionado con buen pronóstico (59). Como son tumores poco frecuentes solo comentaré los tipos histológicos mas frecuentes.

Carcinoma ductal infiltrante

El carcinoma ductal infiltrante comprende un grupo heterogéneo de tumores y representa del 41% al 71% del total (60). La edad más frecuente de presentación es entre los 50 y 69 años. Solo el 6% se presenta en pacientes menores de 39 años (60). Las pacientes de menos de 39 años presentan carcinomas de grado 3 en el 65% de los casos, mientras que en las pacientes de más de 70 años representan el 38%.

Macroscópicamente en el 60% de los casos son tumores de márgenes irregulares y en el 40% son bien circunscritos (61). Microscópicamente son tumores heterogéneos, que varían desde tumores bien diferenciados hasta tumores claramente pleomórficos. Las células tumorales crecen formando nidos, cordones, trabéculas o glándulas. La presencia de invasión perineural se ha observado en el 28% de los casos (61). En el 86% de los casos se observa un área central de elastosis (62), la necrosis está presente en el 33% de los casos y las microcalcificaciones en el 60% de los casos (61). En el 30% de los casos se asocia

a carcinoma ductal in-situ (63). Se han observado mayor frecuencia de recurrencias locales cuando el componente in-situ supera el 25% del tumor (64).

Las células tumorales son positivas para citoqueratina 7/8, 18 y 19 en el 98.3%, 88.7% y 92.8% respectivamente. Prácticamente todo los casos son positivos para e-cadherina y la pérdida de expresión de esta se ha asociado a peor pronóstico (65)

Carcinoma lobulillar infiltrante

El carcinoma lobulillar infiltrante se define como un carcinoma invasor constituido por células no cohesivas (y e-cadherina negativas). La incidencia varía en las diferentes series desde el 0.7 al 14.7% de los casos según los criterios diagnósticos empleados (66). De todas maneras en la mayor parte de las series representa el 10% de los casos (67). En el 55% de los casos la primera manifestación clínica es la presencia de una masa en la mama, en el 10% se palpan múltiples nódulos mal delimitados en un área extensa de la mama y en el resto de las pacientes se observa un aumento difuso de la mama con endurecimiento de la misma. En estos casos hasta en el 46% de estos casos la mamografía puede ser negativa.

Macroscópicamente en el 50% de los casos el tumor es un nódulo de márgenes irregulares mientras que aproximadamente en el 30% de los casos la mama es macroscópicamente normal, con un sutil endurecimiento. El tamaño medio es de 1.53 cm (68). Microscópicamente el carcinoma lobulillar infiltrante en el 38% de los casos muestra un patrón de crecimiento infiltrativo que simula una “tela de araña” que se suele asociar a desmoplasia del estroma. En otros casos las células tumorales se distribuyen de forma difusa en un área extensa sin destruir el parénquima preexistente.

La variante clásica del carcinoma lobulillar infiltrante es el subtipo histológico más frecuente y representa el 3% de todos los carcinomas invasores de la mama (67).

Habitualmente muestra un patrón de crecimiento difuso, las células tienen un núcleo redondo u ovalado con ocasionales indentaciones. El citoplasma es pálido o eosinofílico y puede mostrar luces intracitoplasmáticas con una inclusión eosinofílica central. Las mitosis y la necrosis son poco frecuentes. Los receptores de estrógenos y progesterona suelen ser intensamente positivos, mientras que HER2 y EGFR suelen ser negativos (69). Otros tipos histológicos incluyen las variante alveolar, pleomórfica, histiocitoide y de células en anillos de sello.

No se han encontrado diferencias en la supervivencia entre las pacientes con carcinomas ductales y lobulillares infiltrantes del mismo estadio, tan solo se ha sugerido que las pacientes con carcinomas lobulillares infiltrantes de estadio I probablemente presenten mejor pronóstico (67). La figura 1.4-1 muestra un ejemplo de un carcinoma ductal infiltrante y un carcinoma lobulillar infiltrante.

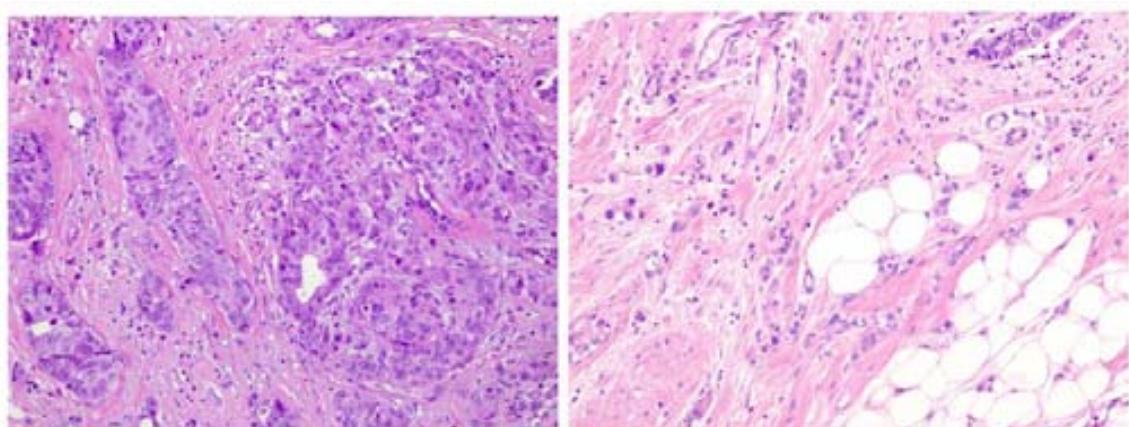


Figura 1.4-1: Ejemplo de un carcinoma ductal infiltrante (a) y un carcinoma lobulillar infiltrante (b).

1.5 Estadio del cáncer de mama.

El estadiaje de un tumor es la evaluación de la extensión de un tumor y por lo general este se correlaciona con el pronóstico. Existen limitaciones a la hora de estadiar el carcinoma de mama ya que no existe solo un tipo de cáncer de mama y que su comportamiento puede cambiar según el grado, tipo histológico y extensión anatómica. El sistema de estadiaje aceptado actualmente es el propuesto por la American Joint Committee of Cancer (AJCC) y la Union Internationale Contre le Cancer (UICC) en el año 2002 (Tabla 1.5-1). El sistema se basa en las características del tumor primario (T), la extensión a ganglios linfáticos (N) y la presencia de metástasis a distancia (M). Los cambios con respecto a la clasificación previa de 1997 son la presencia de la categoría de las micrometástasis, para las metástasis ganglionares entre 0.2 mm a 2 mm que se definen como pN1mi. Estas deben ser diferenciadas de las células aisladas, que se definen como presencia de células aisladas o pequeños grupos tumorales en los ganglios linfáticos que no superen los 0.2 mm. Este grupo se clasifica como pN0(itc). Además en la nueva clasificación se han añadido nuevos códigos que permiten identificar el método de detección de las metástasis. Cuando la detección se ha realizado mediante immunohistoquímica se añade la terminación (i+), cuando es mediante estudio molecular (mol+). Cuando la evaluación de la afectación ganglionar se ha realizado mediante ganglio centinela se añade la terminación (sn).

Clasificación de la TNM 2002.

Tumor primario (T).

T_x: El tumor primario no puede ser evaluado.

T₀: No evidencia de tumor primario.

T_is: Carcinoma "in situ". Incluye carcinoma ductal y lobulillar "in situ" y enfermedad de Paget sin tumor asociado.

T₁: Tumor de 2cm o menos.

T_{1mic}: Microinvasión de 0.1 cm o menos.

T_{1a}: Tumor de mas de 0.1 pero no mas de 0.5 cm.

T_{1b}: Tumor de mas de 0.5 pero no mas de 1 cm.

T_{1c}: Tumor de mas de 1 pero no mas de 2 cm.

T₂: Tumor de mas de 2cm pero no mas de 5 cm.

T₃: Tumor de mas de 5cm de diámetro máximo.

T₄: Tumor de cualquier tamaño con extensión directa a (a) pared torácica (b) piel.

T_{4a}: Extensión a pared torácica, sin incluir músculo pectoral.

T_{4b}: Edema ("incluye piel de naranja"), ulceración de la piel de la mama o nódulos satélites cutáneos en la misma mama.

T_{4c}: T_{4a} mas T_{4b}.

T_{4d}: Carcinoma inflamatorio.

Ganglios linfáticos regionales (N).

pN_X: No se puede determinar la afectación ganglionar.

pN₀: No metástasis ganglionar, no examen adicional para células aisladas (itc).

Nota: Las células tumorales aisladas se definen como células aisladas o pequeños grupos de células que no son mayores de 0.2 mm ni superan las 220 células. Usualmente se detectan mediante inmunohistoquímica (IHQ) o métodos moleculares que se pueden validar mediante HE.

pN_{0(i-)}: No metástasis ganglionar, IHQ negativa.

pN_{0(i+)}: No metástasis ganglionar por HE, IHQ positiva, tumor no mas grande de 0.2 mm.

pN_{0(mol-)}: No metástasis ganglionar, técnicas moleculares negativas (RT-PCR).

pN_{0(mol+)}: No metástasis ganglionar, técnicas moleculares positivas (RT-PCR).

La clasificación se basa en disección ganglionar axilar, si la clasificación se basa en el ganglio linfático centinela se debe añadir (sn).

pN₁: Metástasis de 1 a 3 ganglios linfáticos axilares, y/o ganglio linfático de cadena mamaria interna con enfermedad microscópica detectada mediante ganglio centinela pero no clínicamente aparente.

pN_{1mi}: Micrometástasis, mayor de 0.2 mm ninguna mayor de 2.0mm.

pN_{1a}: Metástasis de 1 a 3 ganglios linfáticos axilares.

pN_{1b}: Metástasis en ganglio linfático de cadena mamaria interna con enfermedad microscópica detectada mediante ganglio centinela pero no clínicamente aparente.

pN_{1C}: Metástasis de 1 a 3 ganglios linfáticos axilares y metástasis en ganglio linfático de cadena mamaria interna con enfermedad microscópica detectada mediante ganglio centinela pero no clínicamente aparente.

pN₂: Metástasis de 4 a 9 ganglios linfáticos axilares, y/o ganglio linfático clínicamente aparente de cadena mamaria interna en ausencia de metástasis ganglionares axilares.

pN_{2a}: Metástasis de 4 a 9 ganglios linfáticos (al menos una mayor de 0.2 cm).

pN_{2b}: Metástasis clínicamente aparente de ganglio de mamaria interna en ausencia de metástasis de ganglios linfáticos axilares.

pN₃: Metástasis en 10 o mas ganglios linfáticos axilares, o en ganglios infraclaviculares, o ganglios linfáticos de la cadena mamaria ipsilateral en presencia de 1 o mas metástasis ganglionar axilar; o mas de 3 ganglios linfáticos axilares positivos en ausencia clínica de metástasis en ganglios de cadena mamaria interna pero afectación microscópica; o en ganglios linfáticos supraclaviculares.

pN_{3a}: Metástasis en 10 o mas ganglios linfáticos axilares (al menos una mayor de 0.2 cm.) o metástasis de ganglios linfáticos infraclaviculares.

pN_{3b}: Metástasis en ganglios linfáticos clínicamente aparentes de la cadena mamaria ipsilateral en presencia de 1 o mas metástasis ganglionar axilar; o mas de 3 ganglios linfáticos axilares positivos en ausencia clínica de metástasis en ganglios de cadena mamaria interna pero afectación microscópica.

pN_{3c}: Metástasis en ganglios linfáticos supraclaviculares ipsilaterales.

Metastasis a distancia:

M_x: No se puede determinar la diseminación a distancia.

M₀: No metástasis a distancia.

M₁: Presencia de metástasis a distancia.

Tabla 1.5-1: Clasificación TNM 2002.

1.6 Tratamiento.

En la actualidad el tratamiento de las pacientes con carcinoma de mama intenta ser lo menos agresivo posible, lo que incluye cirugía conservadora (tumorectomía) (70, 71), biopsia de ganglio centinela (72), radioterapia (72) y tratamiento adyuvante adecuado a la necesidad de las pacientes (73-75)

Las principales guías para el tratamiento del carcinoma de mama son las guías Europeas para el control de calidad en el cribado y diagnóstico del cáncer de mama, las conferencias de St. Gallen (75) y las conferencias de consenso internacional (72). Estas guías son revisadas y actualizadas periódicamente.

La cirugía se emplea para el diagnóstico y tratamiento del cáncer de mama. El tratamiento conservador se emplea para el tratamiento de tumores unifocales y de pequeño tamaño (generalmente inferiores a 4 cm). Posteriormente se irradia la mama. La mastectomía se reserva para tumores de más de 5 cm, con metástasis ganglionares extensas (mas de 4), presencia de invasión vascular-linfática o invasión de piel o músculo.

Habitualmente la quimioterapia suele preceder a la radioterapia en el tratamiento del cáncer de mama, aunque no existe consenso sobre la secuencia del tratamiento (75). Los esquemas de tratamiento habituales suelen incluir ciclofosfamida, metrotexate, flouracilo y tamoxifen (u otro tratamiento hormonal). Las pacientes se han estratificado en según la respuesta al tratamiento hormonal basado en la expresión de los receptores hormonales del tumor (75). También se han propuesto tres categorías (alto, intermedio y bajo riesgo) en función del tamaño del tumor, la presencia de metástasis ganglionares, invasión vascular, positividad para HER2 y edad mayor o menor de 35 años (75). Las pacientes incluidas en el grupo de bajo riesgo suelen ser tratadas con terapia hormonal. Por otro lado a las pacientes de alto riesgo con receptores hormonales negativos se las trata con quimioterapia (75). El tratamiento neoadyuvante se emplea en

tumores demasiado grandes para el tratamiento conservador (76, 77). En estos casos se ha observado remisión tumoral en el 80% de los casos que es total en el 7 al 15% de los casos (76, 77).

En la conferencia de St. Gallen de 2011, se recomendaba la realización de receptores hormonales, determinación de HER2 y Ki67 para subclasificar los diferentes subtipos tumorales. No se consideró necesaria la expresión de EGFR ni la determinación de la queratina 5/6 para subclasificar los tumores (78). La siguiente tabla (tabla 1.6-1) incluye las últimas recomendaciones de las conferencias de St. Gallen 2011 en relación a los subtipos tumorales (78).

Subtipo molecular	Definición Clínico-patológica	Comentario	Tipo de tratamiento	Comentario del tratamiento
Luminal A	Positividad para RE y/o RP. Negatividad para HER2. Ki67 inferior al 14%.	El punto de corte está basado en correlación con PAM50. El control de calidad de Ki67 es importante.	Terapia endocrina.	Pocos requieren quimioterapia, solo los que presentan abundante afectación ganglionar o factores de riesgo.
Luminal B	Luminal B HER2 Negativo Positividad para RE y/o RP. Negatividad para HER2. Ki67 superior al 14%.	La expresión de genes relacionados con proliferación se asocia a mal pronóstico. En ausencia de Ki67 adecuado, se puede emplear indicadores de proliferación como el grado histológico	Terapia endocrina +/− Citolíticos.	La inclusión y el tipo de citolíticos empleados dependen del nivel de receptores hormonales, el riesgo peribido y de la preferencia del paciente.
	Luminal B HER2 Positivo Positividad para RE/RP. Positividad para HER2. Cualquier Ki67.	Posible indicación de terapia endocrina y anti-HER2.	Citolíticos + anti-HER2 + terapia endocrina	No hay datos que apoyen la omisión de terapia con citotóxicos.
ErbB2 sobreexpresado	Sobreexpresión o amplificación de HER2. Negatividad para RE y RP.		Citolíticos +antiHER2+	Las pacientes con bajo riesgo (pT1aNO) pueden ser observadas sin necesidad de otro tratamiento.
"Basal-like"	Triple negativo (ductal) Negatividad para HER2. Negatividad para RE y RP.	Aproximadamente 80% de solapamiento entre triple negativo y "basal-like". Los tumores de tipo triple negativo incluyen algunos subtipos histológicos especiales como los carcinomas adenoides quísticos y los carcinomas medulares que se asocian a bajo riesgo de recurrencia a distancia.	Citolíticos	
	Tipos histológicos "especiales" A-Respondedores a terapia endocrina B-No Respondedores a terapia endocrina		Terapia endocrina Citolíticos.	Los carcinomas adenoides quístico y medulares pueden no requerir tratamiento citotóxico si tienen ganglios negativos.

Tabla 1.6-1: Recomendaciones de las conferencias de St. Gallen 2011 en relación a los subtipos tumorales y tratamiento.

1.7 Clasificación molecular del carcinoma de mama.

El carcinoma de mama, como ya se ha comentado previamente, se ha clasificado en tres grupos de alto, intermedio y bajo riesgo dependiendo de la afectación ganglionar, grado histológico, tamaño tumoral, expresión de receptores hormonales y sobreexpresión de HER2. Sin embargo, se ha observado que aproximadamente el 15% de las pacientes de bajo riesgo recurren a pesar del tratamiento y que, por el contrario, el 15% de las pacientes de alto riesgo no presentarán recurrencias del tumor. Además se ha sugerido que aproximadamente en el 70 % de las pacientes tratadas con quimioterapia u hormonoterapia no hubiera sido necesaria (79). Por lo tanto son necesarios nuevas herramientas para el clasificar los carcinomas de mama. El estudio mediante “arrays” cDNA ha permitido una nueva clasificación del carcinoma de mama, que ha clasificado a los tumores de mama en 5 subgrupos: luminal (posteriormente subdividido en A y B), HER2 positivo, triple negativo y “normal”. Aunque esta última categoría no ha podido ser reproducida en posteriores estudios (80) y hay autores que sugieren que se trata de tejido normal.

En el primer estudio publicado por Perou y Sorlei (81) se analizó el patrón de expresión de 42 tumores constituidos por 36 carcinomas ductales infiltrantes, 2 carcinomas lobulillares, 1 carcinoma ductal *in situ*, 1 fibroadenoma y 3 muestras de mama normal. Mediante “arrays” de cDNA inicialmente seleccionaron un grupo de 1753 genes que redujeron a 496 genes. Mediante estudio de conglomerados jerárquicos se definieron 4 grupos: luminal, HER2, triple negativo y “normal”. En un trabajo posterior, publicado en 2001, aumentaron el número de tumores y se correlacionó el subtipo molecular con la supervivencia. En este estudio las pacientes con los subtipos triple negativo y HER2 presentaron el peor pronóstico. Además dentro del grupo de tumores del tipo luminal se podían subdividir en A y B, siendo estos últimos de peor pronóstico (82). Estudios posteriores han encontrado correlación entre los subgrupos tumorales definidos por las técnicas moleculares y la inmunohistoquímica (83).

Recientemente se han comercializado dos test diagnósticos basados en la expresión de diferentes genes como son MammaPrinttm Oncotype^{dx} y PAM50 que están basados en datos de expresión de diferentes genes. El MammaPrinttm analiza un conjunto de 70 genes y predice aquellas pacientes que desarrollarán recurrencias. Oncotype^{dx} incluye la expresión de 16 genes y asigna un “score” de recurrencia, tiene la ventaja que permite emplear material parafinado. Por último PAM50 analiza 50 genes y permite el empleo de material parafinado. Este test además de clasificar en los subtipos moleculares proporciona valores cuantitativos de proliferación, la expresión de genes luminal, ESR1, la PGR, y ErbB2.

Utilizando metodología similar se ha propuesto un nuevo subgrupo tumoral constituido por tumores con baja expresión de claudina (claudin-low). Este se caracteriza por una baja expresión de moléculas de adhesión (claudinas 3, 4 y 7 y e-cadherina). Estos tumores se cree que están originados por células madre y corresponden histológicamente a carcinomas metaplásicos (84).

De todas maneras la clasificación molecular del carcinoma de mama no está totalmente establecida, por ejemplo un estudio reciente que ha analizado la genómica y transcriptómica de un gran número de tumores de mama han propuesto hasta 10 subtipos tumorales con diferente con implicación pronostica (85). Además el estudio mediante ultrasecuenciación ha demostrado la presencia de un gran número de mutaciones y alteraciones moleculares en un solo tumor de mama (86, 87).

2 Factores de crecimiento en el cáncer de mama.

Diferentes modelos experimentales han demostrado que las células del carcinoma de mama requieren la activación de factores de crecimiento para proliferar, invadir y diseminarse (88). La tabla 2-1 incluye un resumen de algunos de los receptores de crecimiento descritos en el cáncer de mama.

Receptor	% de expresión	Referencia
HER2	20-25%	(89)
EGFR	18-35%	(90)
HER3	20-70%	(91)
HER4	7-18%	(91)
IGF-IR	40-82%	(92)

Tabla 2-1: Factores de crecimiento en el carcinoma de mama.

2.1 Receptores de crecimiento epidérmico humano (HER1/EGFR, HER2, HER3, HER4).

La familia de los receptores de crecimiento humano (epidermal growth factor receptors) incluye HER1 o EGFR, HER2, HER3 y HER4. Son receptores transmembrana del tipo tirosin quinasa que tienen homología parcial y regulan el crecimiento, supervivencia, adhesión, migración, diferenciación y otras respuestas celulares (93). Todos los componentes de esta familia incluyen un dominio de unión extracelular, un dominio transmembrana y, excepto HER3, un dominio funcional de tipo tirosin quinasa. Los dominios tirosin quinasa pueden ser

activados mediante homodimerización o heterodimerización que habitualmente se produce en respuesta a la unión con un ligando. El receptor de HER2 también puede adoptar una configuración similar a la activada incluso en ausencia de unión al ligando (94).

HER2.

El gen que codifica *neu* se descubrió en tumores químicamente inducidos en modelos experimentales realizados en ratas (95). El homólogo humano o *cerb2*-HER2 se identificó en tumores humanos mediante hibridación in-situ con sondas para v-erbB y EGFR en los que se observó amplificación del gen (96). El gen que codifica HER2 está situado en el cromosoma 17q11-q12 y codifica una proteína transmembrana de 185 Kd. La amplificación de este gen se traduce en un incremento de los niveles de mRNA y proteína. Se ha demostrado la amplificación de HER2 en el 20 a 25% de los carcinoma de mama y esta se ha asociado a un fenotipo agresivo con metástasis (97), peor supervivencia , intervalo libre de enfermedad más corto (89) y resistencia a quimioterapia (98). HER2 es una buena diana terapéutica ya que se asocia a mal pronóstico (89), la sobreexpresión esta presente en la mayor parte de las células tumorales (99), es difusa e intensa (100) y está presente tanto en el tumor primario como en las metástasis (101).

Trastuzumab.

Trastuzumab es un anticuerpo monoclonal humanizado dirigido contra la porción extracelular de la proteína HER2. La tasa de respuesta es del 12 al 40% dependiendo del método de detección de HER2 y el tratamiento previo recibido (102, 103). La combinación de Trastuzumab con doxorubicina y ciclofosfamida o plaxitacel en monoterapia demostraron mejores tasas de respuesta y supervivencia que la quimioterapia (104). En este estudio también se detectó que la combinación de Trastuzumab con doxorubicina y ciclofosfamida producían cardiotoxicidad severa, esto ha conducido a desarrollar terapias sin antraciclinas. La FDA aprobó el uso de Trastuzumab en el año 1998 para el tratamiento del carcinoma de mama metastásico. En el año 2005 también aprobó la indicación en el tratamiento inicial. Una de las lecciones aprendidas durante el desarrollo del trastuzumab es la importancia de la sobreexpresión de HER2, ya que está aceptado que solo las pacientes cuyos tumores sobreexpresan HER2 (ya sea mediante sobreexpresión demostrada por inmunohistoquímica 3+ o amplificación) se benefician del tratamiento (103, 105, 106). La figura 2-1 muestra un ejemplo de una tinción inmunohistoquímica para HER2 3+ y FISH amplificado.

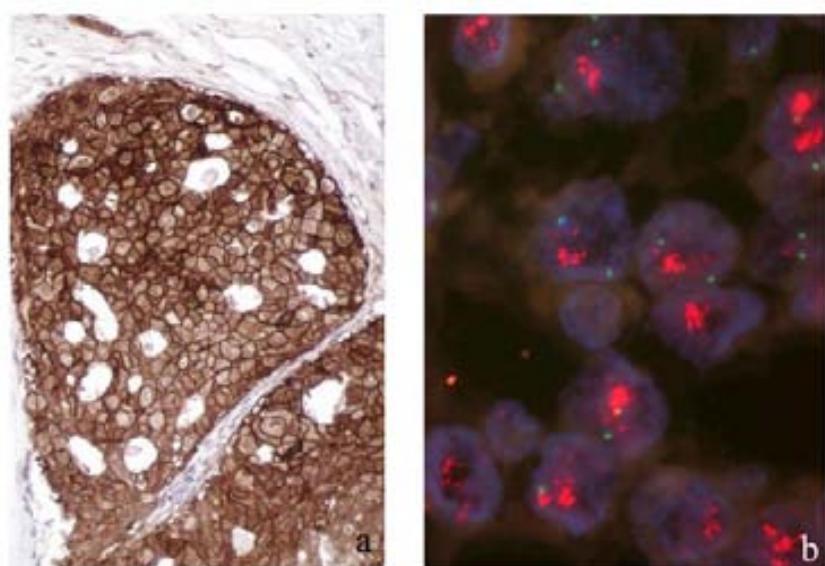


Figura 2-1: Tinción inmunohistoquímica para HER2 3+ (a) y FISH amplificado (b).

Resistencia a trastuzumab:

Los mecanismos de acción de trastuzumab incluyen citotoxicidad dependiente de unión al anticuerpo, interferencia de la vía de señalización, inhibición del ciclo celular y efecto antiangiogénico (107). Otros mecanismos propuestos son desregulación de la expresión en la superficie celular por endocitosis y degradación (108).

A pesar de la eficacia del tratamiento con trastuzumab una proporción de las pacientes con tratamiento inicial con trastuzumab y casi todas las pacientes con enfermedad metastática progresarán. Los potenciales mecanismos de resistencia a este fármaco incluyen:

- Separación del dominio extracelular. En estos casos la proteína truncada resultante (p95) retiene la actividad quinasa (109).
- Heterodimerización o interacción de la vía de IGFR-1R (110) o miembros de la familia HER (111).
- Activación de la vía PI3K (112) que puede incluir mutaciones de AKT o disminución de los niveles de PTEN (113).
- Inhibición de la unión del anticuerpo al receptor mediante la sobreexpresión de MUC4 (110).

Se han descrito un incremento del número de metástasis cerebrales en las pacientes tratadas con trastuzumab (114), aunque las causas no están claras. Se han propuesto diferentes teorías, entre ellas algunos autores sugieren que la terapia con trastuzumab selecciona células con mayor potencial metastático (115), otros que la mayor supervivencia de estas pacientes permitiría que pequeñas micrometástasis cerebrales se desarrolle. Finalmente otros autores lo atribuyen a la pobre capacidad de penetración de la barrera hematoencefálica de trastuzumab.

EGFR (HER1, Epidermal growth factor receptor).

EGFR fue relacionado con el carcinoma humano al descubrirse que tenía homología parcial con el gen *v-erb* y presentaba una actividad quinasa similar a la de SRC (116). La sobreexpresión de EGFR (Figura 2-2) y la expresión de una forma truncada de la proteína (EGFR vIII) se ha relacionado con el carcinoma de mama (90). Se ha asociado la expresión de EGFR con los tumores de tipo triple negativo (90), y se ha relacionado con peor pronóstico en el subgrupo de los tumores HER2 positivos (112).

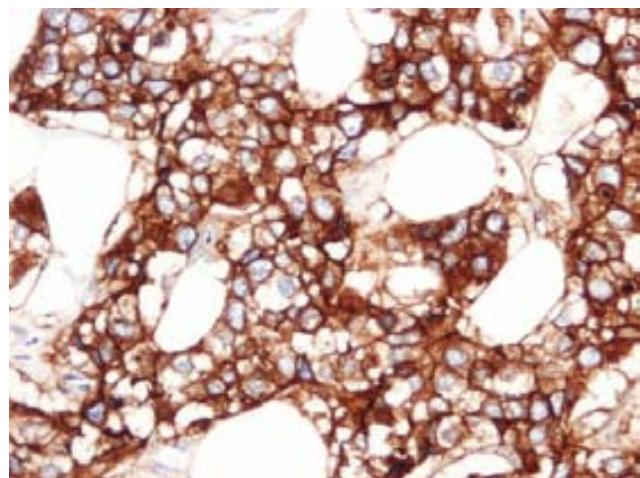


Figura 2-2: Ejemplo de sobreexpresión de EGFR mediante inmunohistoquímica de un carcinoma de mama.

2.2 Factor de crecimiento similar a insulina (IGFR).

La vía de activación del factor de crecimiento similar a la insulina (IGF) se encuentra frecuentemente activada en el carcinoma de mama y se ha asociado a proliferación celular y metástasis (117). El sistema de los IGF esta constituido por dos ligandos IGF I e IGF II y al menos seis proteínas capaces de actuar como receptores. Entre ellos el receptor IGF1R está frecuentemente expresado en el carcinoma de mama, mientras que las pérdidas alélicas para IGF2R son comunes.

IGF1R.

El receptor IGF1R se ha asociado al inicio y progresión del carcinoma de mama (118). IGF1R es un heterotetrámero constituido por dos subunidades extracelulares (subunidades a) y dos subunidades transmembrana (subunidades b) con actividad tirosin quinasa. Cuando el receptor se une a un ligando este se autofosforila activando la vía de PI3K bloqueando la apoptosis y promoviendo la proliferación celular (119). La sobreexpresión de IGF1R se ha descrito en múltiples tumores malignos humanos (120, 121). Se ha demostrado la sobreexpresión de IGF1R en el 40 al 80% de todos los carcinomas de mama (figura 2-3) (92). Además, la sobreexpresión de IGF1R se ha asociado con la resistencia a trastuzumab en líneas celulares de carcinoma de mama (122).

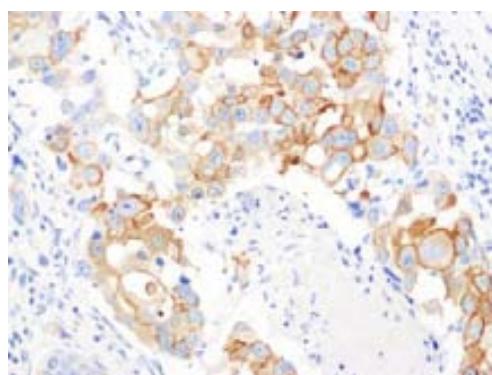


Figura 2-3: Ejemplo de sobreexpresión de IGFR1R en un carcinoma de mama (tinción inmunohistoquímica).

3 La vía PI3K/AKT.

En 1988 se co-purificó una fosfatidilinositol quinasa con receptores tirosin quinasa, además se demostró que fosforilaba lípidos de tipo fosfatidilinositol en posición 3' hidroxilo (123). Esta enzima, una fosfatidilinositol 3' quinasa de clase I (PI3K), era la responsable de fosforilar PIP2 y transformarlo en PIP3 (123). La PI3K está constituida por una subunidad catalítica (p110 α) y una subunidad reguladora (p85 β) y actúa en respuesta a múltiples factores de crecimiento. Tras la interacción de numerosos factores de crecimiento y de otros mecanismos, se produce activación de PI3K, el que a su vez activa/fosforila Akt y secundariamente a otras proteínas asociadas a vías de señalización y/o apoptosis y/o ciclo celular (Bad, caspasa-9 y caspasa-3, p53, p27, MAPK, mTOR, etc.). Todo ello resulta en un incremento de la síntesis de proteínas, de proliferación, crecimiento, supervivencia (bloqueo de la apoptosis) y de motilidad celulares (124).

***PIK3CA*.**

El gen *PIK3CA*, que codifica p110 α o la subunidad catalítica de PI3K, se identificó como un oncogén del virus del sarcoma aviar (125). Se han descrito mutaciones de este gen en múltiples neoplasias humanas (126). Las mutaciones de este gen se concentran en dos “hotspots” uno localizado en la porción helical, típicamente E542K o E545K, y otra localizada en la porción quinasa H1047R (126).

Sorprendentemente, mientras que se ha demostrado que ambas mutaciones incrementan la actividad catalítica de p110 α , presentan diferentes requerimientos para la activación *in vivo*. Las mutaciones de la porción helical dependen de la de rasGTP para la activación y no de p85 β . Lo contrario ocurre con las mutaciones de la porción quinasa que es independiente de rasGTP pero necesita de la activación de p85 β (127).

A pesar de que en el carcinoma de mama se han descrito múltiples mutaciones un pequeño porcentaje de casos (128) existen dos genes que están frecuentemente

mutados y estos son *p53* y *PIK3CA* (128). La frecuencia de mutaciones de *PIK3CA* varía desde el 18% al 40% según la serie (126, 129-136). Las mutaciones se distribuyen con la misma frecuencia en la porción helical y quinasa. Las mutaciones de *PIK3CA* se han descrito prácticamente en todos los subtipos moleculares de carcinoma de mama. Se calcula que la frecuencia de mutaciones es del 35% de los carcinomas de mama positivos para receptores de estrógenos, el 23% de los tumores HER2+ y el 8% de los carcinomas triples negativos. La mayor frecuencia de mutaciones se ha descrito en los carcinomas metaplásicos (47%) (137).

Existen datos contradictorios en la literatura en cuanto al impacto de las mutaciones de *PIK3CA* en la supervivencia. Mientras que algunos estudios han encontrado asociación de las mutaciones con peor pronóstico (131, 135), otros autores han encontrado asociación con buen pronóstico (134, 136). También hay autores que han encontrado asociación de las mutaciones de la porción helical con peor pronóstico y mejor pronóstico para las pacientes cuyos tumores presentaban mutaciones en la porción quinasa (132).

PTEN.

PTEN (MMAC1/TEP) es un gen supresor tumoral (10q23) que codifica una fosfatasa bifuncional capaz de defosforilar fosfoserinas en proteínas y los fosfatos del PI3K. Contrarresta directamente la actividad de PI3K previniendo la activación de Akt/PKB, modulando la progresión del ciclo celular y supervivencia (figura 3-1). La pérdida de su función resulta en un incremento del tamaño y crecimiento celulares (138, 139).

La inactivación del gen puede ser debida a:

- 1) Mutaciones germinales (S. de Cowden o S. de Bannayan-Zonana);
- 2) Mutaciones/deleciones somáticas en tumores esporádicos
- 3) Hipermetilación del promotor del gen.

Ellos conllevan a una pérdida de expresión de la proteína y por lo tanto de su función. La incidencia de mutaciones/ausencia de expresión más elevada se observa en carcinomas de endometrio (30-50%), y ocurren sobre todo en tumores con inestabilidad de microsatélites (121). Sin embargo, la frecuencia de mutaciones de *PTEN* es baja en el carcinoma de mama (menos del 5%) (133), lo que contrasta con la elevada pérdida de expresión de *PTEN* (30-50% de los casos) (140). Perren y cols. (141) encontraron pérdida de expresión total en 15% de los tumores y parcial en 18%, asociado a delección homocigota (LOH). La hipermetilación podría ser un alternativo de inactivación de *PTEN*, lo que tiene su importancia, considerando que éste es un fenómeno reversible. Además la perdida de expresión de *PTEN* se ha asociado a peor pronóstico en el carcinoma de mama (140).

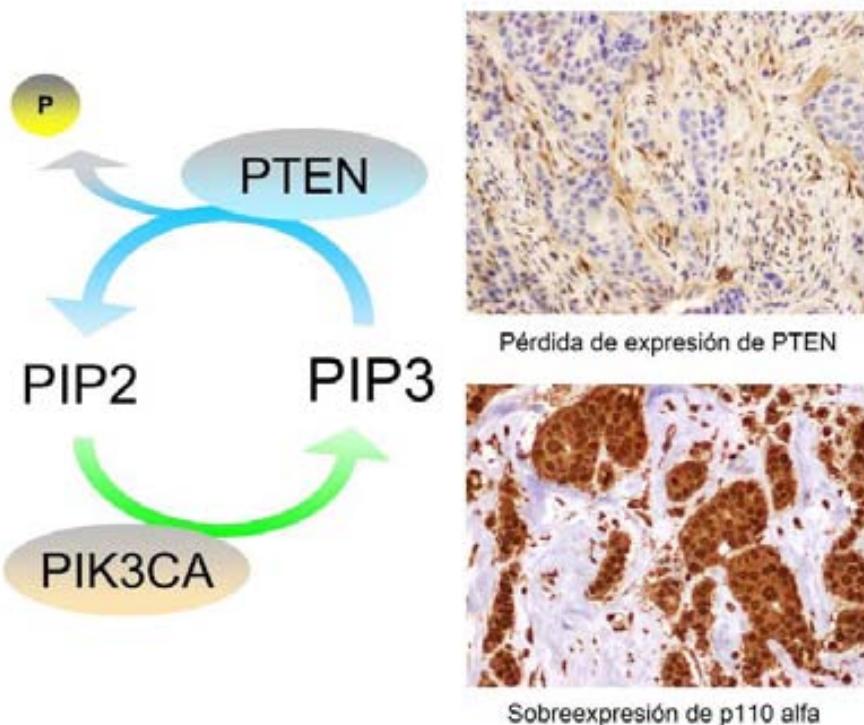


Figura 3-1: Esquema representativo de la interacción entre PTEN y PIK3CA

4 El receptor relacionado con la lipoproteína de baja densidad 1 (LRP-1) y metabolismo del colesterol en el carcinoma de mama.

LRP-1 es un receptor de membrana celular que pertenece a la familia del receptor de lipoproteína de baja densidad (LDLR). LRP-1 se expresa en gran variedad de células que incluyen macrófagos, monocitos, fibroblastos, hepatocitos, células de la placenta, adipocitos, neuronas, astrocitos, células epiteliales del tracto gastrointestinal y células del músculo liso. Se trata de un receptor multifuncional que reconoce un gran número de ligandos, incluyendo la apolipoproteína E, lipoproteínas, proteasas, complejos inhibidor de proteasas, factores de crecimiento, metaloproteasas de matriz extracelular (MMP), uroquinasa activador del plasminógeno (uPA), etc. (142). La diversidad de los ligandos y la variedad de tipos celulares que expresan LRP-1 confieren al LRP-1 un amplio espectro de funciones biológicas (figura 4-1)

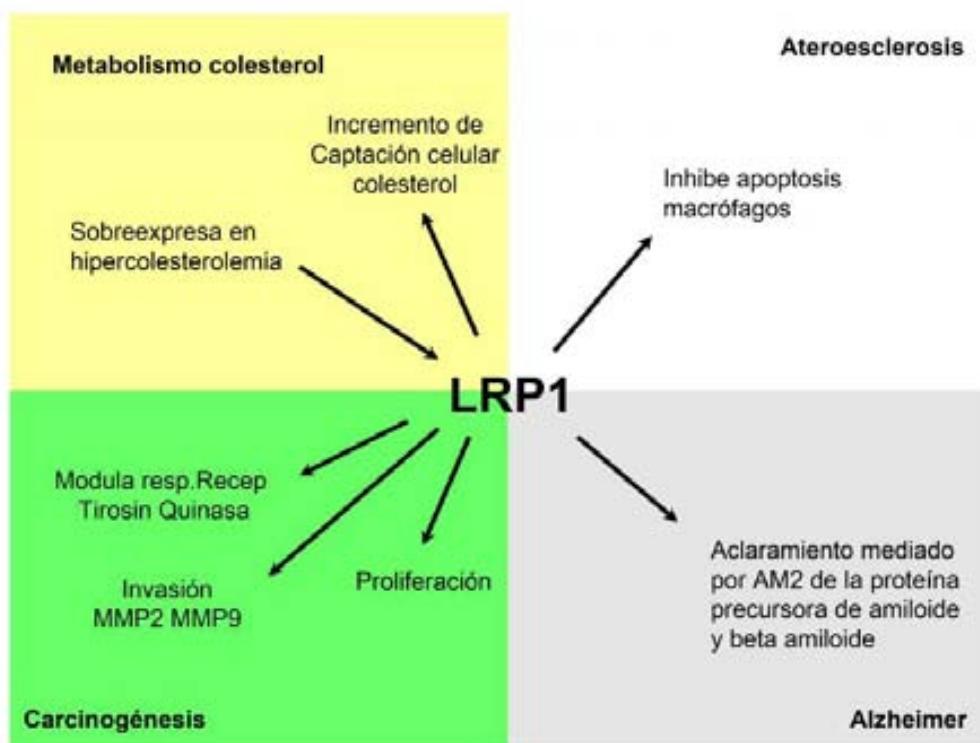


Figura 4-1: Funciones biológicas de LRP1.

El LRP-1 participa en la captación de colesterol, en la regulación del proteoma de la membrana plasmática, en la regulación de la respuesta celular a factores de crecimiento y a las interacciones con la matriz extracelular y el estroma. LRP-1 regula la señalización celular de las vías MAP/ERK quinasas, Wnt, PI3K y JNK (142) y también controla la migración celular y la proliferación mediante la regulación de la expresión de tres MMPs (MMP-2, MMP-13 y MMP-9) y de los receptores que participan directamente en estos procesos, como el receptor del activador del plasminógeno uroquinasa (uPAR) y el receptor del factor de crecimiento derivado de las plaquetas (PDGFR) y algunas proteasas como la catepsina B.

Papel del LRP-1 y el colesterol en cánceres humanos.

El LRP-1 modula importantes funciones celulares entre las cuales están la invasión y migración celular. El LRP-1 constituye un sensor del medio extracelular y un regulador de la dinámica del proteoma de la membrana que regula la dinámica del citoesqueleto y la composición de las adhesiones focales. Inicialmente, se consideró que el LRP-1 era un gen supresor tumoral implicado en la eliminación de proteasas extracelulares implicadas en la metástasis. Sin embargo, hay resultados contradictorios y los datos más recientes invitan a replantear las propiedades antitumorales inicialmente atribuidas al LRP-1, dado que la expresión de LRP-1 se ha asociado a mal pronóstico y a mayor capacidad invasiva de las células tumorales (142).

Estudios preclínicos relacionados con el control de la progresión tumoral han confirmado que la reducción de la expresión del LRP-1 evita la invasión y la metástasis de células tumorales (143-146). Un estudio en fibroblastos peritumorales sugiere que el LRP-1 podría facilitar la invasión, así como activar la neoangiogénesis tumoral (147), mientras que en las células tumorales, el LRP-1 facilitaría el crecimiento y la invasión celular modulando los niveles de MMPs (148) y la degradación de la membrana basal y de la matriz extracelular por medio de la

activación del metabolismo de catepsina B y del receptor de la uroquinasa activadora del plasminógeno (u-PAR) (142). Por otra parte, la expresión de LRP-1 en las células tumorales no es frecuente y su significado es contradictorio. Por ejemplo, en adenocarcinomas de pulmón su presencia es rara y se asocia a buen pronóstico (149) y en melanomas se ha observado una reducción de su expresión durante la progresión del tumor (150). Sin embargo, la expresión de LRP-1 se ha relacionado con mayor agresividad en gliomas (151), adenocarcinomas de colon (152), endometrio (153) y tumores de Wilms (154).

En el caso de los carcinomas de mama, hay pocos datos acerca de la actividad del LRP-1. Recientemente se ha confirmado *in vitro* que el LRP-1 promueve la invasión y regula la supervivencia de las células tumorales y el desarrollo de metástasis. En esta línea, estudios recientes en carcinomas de mama evidencian que muchos de los genes controlados por el LRP-1, incluyendo las MMP-2 y MMP-9, están sobreexpresadas en los carcinomas ductales infiltrantes (147, 155) y que la expresión del LRP-1 es importante en la agresividad de los tumores en pacientes con cáncer de mama y se asocia con niveles elevados de colesterol (147). La relación entre los niveles de colesterol y el cáncer de mama es controvertida. Mientras que dos estudios epidemiológicos no encontraron ninguna asociación (156, 157), un reciente meta-análisis identificó un mayor riesgo de cáncer de mama en mujeres post-menopáusicas con colesterol elevado (158).

II Objetivos.

Objetivos

- 1.- Interrelación entre los diferentes receptores de membrana en la serie de pacientes con carcinoma de mama HER2+ tratadas con trastuzumab (EGFR, HER2, IGFR-1R).
- 2.- Determinar las alteraciones genéticas y/o nivel de activación/fosforilación de factores de crecimiento y proteínas implicadas en la vía de señalización de PI3K/Akt/mTOR y su interrelación, en una serie de pacientes con carcinoma de mama HER2+ tratadas con trastuzumab.
- 3.- Estudiar la expresión de LRP-1 en el carcinoma de mama y analizar las interacciones entre LRP-1 y los otros receptores de membrana (EGFR, HER2).
- 4.- Correlacionar los datos inmunohistoquímicos y moleculares previos con los factores clínico-patológicos.
- 5.- Determinar su valor predictivo en cuanto a la progresión/recidiva de la enfermedad local o a distancia (metástasis) y de supervivencia global.

III Resumen global.

Resumen global y discusión.

El carcinoma de mama es una de las enfermedades malignas más frecuentes de la mujer y es la segunda causa de muerte debida a neoplasia en la mujer adulta. Se trata de una enfermedad de origen multifactorial y en el pronóstico de los pacientes influyen múltiples variables. La clasificación del carcinoma de mama en los subtipos moleculares ha mejorado notablemente la comprensión de esta neoplasia. El carcinoma de mama ha sido clasificado en los subtipos luminal hormono dependientes (posteriormente subdividido), HER 2 + y triple negativo. Los diferentes factores de riesgo, historia natural y respuesta al tratamiento de estos subtipos tumorales hacen que considerar que el carcinoma de mama como una sola enfermedad no se sostenga.

En la presente tesis doctoral el objetivo era estudiar los mecanismos de invasión, el papel de diferentes factores de crecimiento (algunos ya descritos y otros no) y evaluar la respuesta al tratamiento en el cáncer de mama.

Previamente habíamos estudiado las mutaciones del *PIK3CA* en el carcinoma de mama en una serie de 56 pacientes en las que estaban representados los diferentes subgrupos tumorales (luminal, HER2 + y triple negativo). *PIK3CA* es un oncogén que cuando está constitutivamente activado fosforila PIP2 (fosfatidilinositol 4,5 bifosfato) y genera un segundo mensajero PIP3 (fosfatidilinositol 3,4,5 trifosfato) que activa la vía de AKT y promueve la proliferación celular e inhibe la apoptosis. *PTEN* es un gen supresor tumoral que, entre otras funciones, contrarresta la acción de *PIK3CA*. Secuenciamos los exones 9 y 20 de *PIK3CA* y estudiamos la expresión de diferentes receptores de membrana EGFR, IGFR1R, HER2, la expresión de p110 (la subunidad catalítica de *PIK3CA*), la expresión de *PTEN*, Ki67 y p53. Encontramos mutaciones de *PIK3CA* en el 12.5% de los tumores pero estas eran mucho más frecuentes en el grupo de los tumores HER2 + (22%) y todas en el exón 20. Además las pacientes con tumores con mutaciones en el exón 20 se asociaron con peor supervivencia.

Sin embargo, la existencia de datos contradictorios en cuanto a la asociación de las mutaciones de *PIK3CA* y supervivencia y el escaso número de pacientes en nuestro estudio preliminar nos animó a ampliar la serie. Como la introducción de Trastuzumab ha cambiado la historia natural de las pacientes con tumores HER2+ decidimos incorporar al estudio pacientes que habían recibido este fármaco. Incluimos pacientes tratados con Trastuzumab en la enfermedad metastásica (75 pacientes), así como en el tratamiento inicial (67 pacientes). Decidimos también estudiar los mismos marcadores del estudio previo, pero lo ampliamos con el análisis de metilación del promotor de *PTEN*, mutaciones de *PTEN* e incorporamos otras proteínas relacionadas con la vía del PI3K/Akt. Encontramos al menos una alteración en la vía de señalización de PI3K o alguno de sus activadores o efectores en gran parte de los tumores (figura III-1).

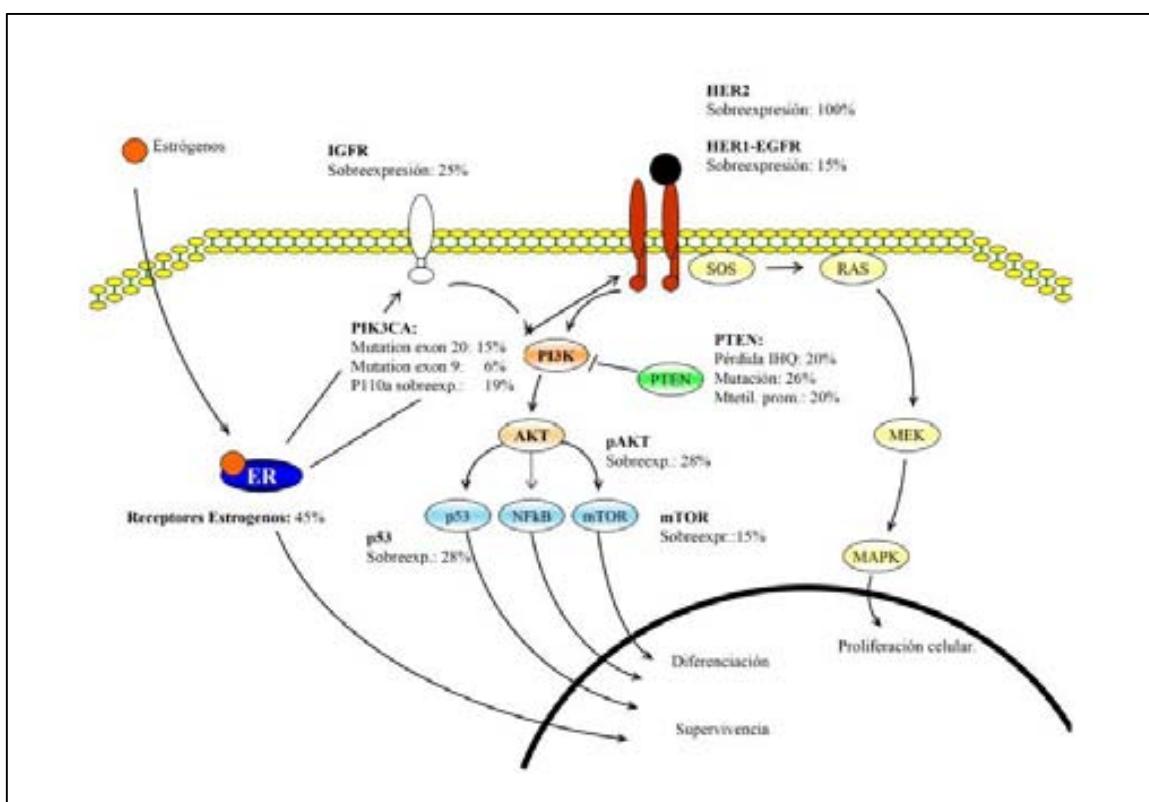


Figura III-1: Principales alteraciones moleculares en la serie de carcinomas tratadas con trastuzumab.

PI3K/Akt es una de las vías de señalización que están más involucradas en la carcinogénesis, ya sea mediante la sobreexpresión de factores de crecimiento (EGFR, IGF1R, HER2, etc.) o la inactivación de PTEN (159), y recientemente se considera un determinante de la resistencia a trastuzumab (113, 160-162). Además la coexpresión de HER2 y EGFR ha demostrado un marcado efecto inhibitorio de trastuzumab (163). En nuestra serie la coexpresión de ambos receptores la encontramos en el 15% de los casos, y además se asoció a mutaciones de PIK3CA. IGF1R tiene un papel importante en el crecimiento e invasión en el carcinoma de mama (92, 164) y también se ha relacionado con la resistencia a trastuzumab (122, 165, 166), de echo en nuestros casos, la sobreexpresión de este receptor se encontró en el 25% de los tumores, especialmente en pacientes con tumores de estadios precoces que se asociaron a recurrencias. Es de destacar que existe evidencia que IGFR1R y EGFR interaccionan entre sí y que su coactivación se asocia a mal pronóstico (122, 165, 167, 168). Por lo tanto sería de esperar que estos pacientes mostraran resistencia a trastuzumab.

PTEN codifica una proteína que inhibe la activación de la vía PI3K/Akt/mTOR (169). La inactivación de PTEN se ha relacionado con las mutación (que ocurre en menos del 5% de carcinomas de mama esporádicos) (170), metilación del promotor (20%) (130), que resulta en pérdida de expresión que ocurre en aproximadamente el 50% de los tumores (113, 131, 160, 161). Estudios experimentales con líneas celulares y modelos animales han demostrado la reducción de PTEN se relaciona con resistencia a trastuzumab, datos que fueron confirmados en un grupo de pacientes (160). En nuestro estudio la metilación del promotor de PTEN y la pérdida de expresión se encontraron en el 20% de los casos, sin asociación con peor supervivencia, a pesar que la pérdida de expresión de PTEN se asoció a metástasis ganglionares e invasión vascular. Sin embargo, los pacientes con enfermedad metastática y mutaciones de PTEN (26%) mostraron peor intervalo libre de progresión, lo que podría estar relacionado con resistencia a trastuzumab.

Las mutaciones que activan constitutivamente PIK3CA se agrupan en los exones 9 (domino helical) y 20 (dominio quinasa), estas se han descrito en el 18 a 40% de los carcinomas de mama, asociadas en algunos casos con tumores HER2 positivos (133) y recurrencias (161). Encontramos mutaciones de este gen en el 17% de los tumores sin asociación con supervivencia. Por el contrario demostramos que la sobreexpresión de p110 (que se encontró en el 19% de los casos) se asoció a peor supervivencia libre de enfermedad. La activación de Akt, presente en el 28% de los tumores se asoció a recurrencia y peor supervivencia y que potencialmente se relaciona con resistencia a trastuzumab.

Diferentes estudios in vitro han confirmado la relación de mTOR con HER2 (171) y resistencia a trastuzumab (172). En nuestra serie el 23% de los tumores mostraban expresión de mTOR, estos tumores eran predominantemente pleomórficos y se asociaban a metástasis ganglionares. También confirmamos que la expresión de mTOR se encontraba modulada por la vía de PI3K/Akt ya que esta se correlacionaba con la expresión de p110 y Bad. Además en el grupo de pacientes con terapia adyuvante la mayor parte de las pacientes con tumores que expresaban mTOR se encontraban vivas, mientras que solo el 77% de las pacientes cuyos tumores expresaban mTOR estaban vivas.

En resumen, a pesar de que no encontramos asociación con la supervivencia y las mutaciones *PIK3CA* o *PTEN*, si que encontramos correlación de la pérdida de expresión de *PTEN* con la presencia de metástasis ganglionares y la presencia de invasión vascular y peor intervalo libre de progresión para las pacientes con trastuzumab en tratamiento de la enfermedad metastásica con mutaciones de *PTEN*. En las pacientes con Trastuzumab en el tratamiento inicial encontramos peor supervivencia libre de progresión asociada a la sobreexpresión de IGF1R o pBad. Además, las metástasis en el sistema nervioso central o hígado, la sobreexpresión de p110 y mTOR se asociaron a peor supervivencia global. En el grupo de pacientes con enfermedad metastásica, el análisis multivariado demostró peor supervivencia para invasión vascular, metástasis en el sistema nervioso central y EGFR, mientras que la sobreexpresión de p110 y las metástasis en el

sistema nervioso central se asociaron a peor supervivencia libre de enfermedad. Nuestros datos ponen de relieve las complejas interacciones entre EGFR, IGF1R y la vía de señalización PTEN/PI3K/Akt/Bad y mTOR y su posible implicación en los mecanismos de resistencia a Trastuzumab.

Para completar el estudio decidimos analizar otro receptor de membrana, como LRP-1 o “low density lipoprotein receptor-related protein 1”. Este es un miembro de la familia de receptores de colesterol que está implicado en el metabolismo de colesterol pero también se ha relacionado con las neoplasias. Se trata de un receptor que presenta homología parcial con EGFR (173) y es capaz de modular el citoesqueleto, la adhesión y proliferación celular (142, 174-176). Además es capaz de reconocer ligandos extracelulares y modular la actividad de integrinas y tirosin quinasas (177). Seleccionamos de nuevo un grupo de 81 pacientes con carcinomas ductales infiltrantes de mama que incluían tumores de tipo luminal HER2+ y tumores triple negativos. Encontramos la expresión de LRP1 mediante inmunohistoquímica en el 14% de los tumores. LRP1 se correlacionaba con alto grado nuclear, alto índice mitótico y Ki67 elevado.

A pesar de que existen estudios “in vitro” que sugerían la relación de LRP-1 con supervivencia celular, invasión, supervivencia y peor pronóstico (145, 174, 178, 179), no existía, hasta la fecha de publicación de este artículo, ningún estudio de LRP1 en una serie de pacientes con carcinoma de mama. Aunque los mecanismos de invasión tumoral son complejos, recientemente se ha publicado que nexin-1 controla las metástasis de cáncer de mama mediante la expresión de LRP-1 y MMP-9 (145). En nuestro estudio, los tumores con expresión de LRP-1 se asociaron a la expresión de MMP9. Además LRP1 se asoció a tumores de tipo triple negativo que sobreexpresaban EGFR y HER2+ siendo negativo en los tumores de tipo luminal.

El síndrome hipermetabólico (obesidad, intolerancia a la glucosa, bajo HDL, hipertrigliceridemia e hipertensión) se ha asociado a tumores de tipo triple negativo

(180). En nuestra serie las pacientes con tumores de tipo triple negativo y HER2+ mostraron mayores niveles de colesterol. Se ha relacionado la sobreexpresión de LRP1 con hipercolesterolemia en estudios “in vivo”. En nuestra serie encontramos mayores cifras de colesterol en las pacientes que sobreexpresaban LRP1, aunque los resultados no fueron estadísticamente significativos.

En conclusión hemos corroborado la importancia que tienen los receptores de membrana en el cáncer de mama. También que el estado de activación de los diferentes efectores de la vía del PI3K/akt/mTOR pueden influir en la resistencia a fármacos como Trastuzumab. También hemos demostrado que otros receptores de membrana como LRP1 (con homología parcial con EGFR) están implicados en el carcinoma de mama, se relacionan con la invasión y además es muy interesante la relación de este último con los niveles de colesterol y el síndrome hipermetabólico.

IV Publicaciones.

Artículo 1:

Titulo:

El incremento de la vía de señalización de EGFR y IGFR1R y la desregulación de PTEN/PI3K/Akt se relacionan con la resistencia a trastuzumab en carcinomas de mama de tipo HER2.

Introducción:

El tratamiento con trastuzumab es muy efectivo en el tratamiento de las pacientes con carcinoma de mama de tipo HER2 positivo, sin embargo gran parte de las pacientes con enfermedad metastática acaban progresando.

Material y métodos:

Seleccionamos 155 pacientes tratadas con trastuzumab como terapia adyuvante/neoadyuvante o en la enfermedad metastática. Estudiamos diferentes receptores de membrana así como la expresión mediante immunohistoquímica de diferentes moléculas relacionadas con la vía PIK/akt/mTOR así como mutaciones de *PIK3CA* y *PTEN* y metilación del promotor de este.

Resultados

El 46% de los tumores presentaban receptores de estrógenos o progesterona. El 15 % de los tumores presentaban expresión EGFR mientras que la sobreexpresión de IGF1R se detectó en el 25% de los tumores. En cuanto a las proteínas de la vía de PI3K/Akt/mTOR, p110 estaba sobreexpresado en el 19% de los tumores, pAkt en el 28%, pBad en el 22%, pmTOR en el 23% y pMAPK en el 24% de los tumores. La pérdida de expresión de PTEN estaba presente en el 20% de los tumores mientras que la metilación del promotor de este gen se encontró en el 20% de los casos. Finalmente las mutaciones de *PIK3CA* y *PTEN* se detectaron en el 17% y 26% de los tumores respectivamente.

Supervivencia

Para realizar el análisis de supervivencia sepáramos a las pacientes en las que el tratamiento con trastuzumab se había realizado en la enfermedad metastática de las pacientes con tratamiento adyuvante con trastuzumab. También eliminamos de esta sección del estudio a las pacientes con estadio IV y las pacientes que habían recibido tratamiento neoadyuvante, pues no son comparables. La siguiente tabla

incluye el resumen de los resultados del análisis univariado (tabla IV-1).

En el análisis multivariado en las pacientes con trastuzumab en la enfermedad metastática la peor supervivencia global se asoció a invasión vascular ($p = .015$, HR 3.36 C.I. 1.22-8.94) metástasis en SNC ($p = .009$, HR 4.22 C.I. 1.44-12.38) y expresión de EGFR ($p = .019$, HR 5.25 C.I. 1.32-20.92). Mientras que las metástasis en el SNC ($p = .020$, HR 3.59 C.I. 1.23-10.51) y sobreexpresión de p110 ($p = .024$, HR 2.75 C.I. 1.14-6.49) se asociaron a un intervalo libre de progresión más corto.

Valores de probabilidad (p)	Trastuzumab en el tto. de la enf. Metastática		Trastuzumab como tto. adyuvante	
	SG	SLP	SG	SLE
Grado tumoral			0.000	
Invasión vascular	0.072	0.042		
Metástasis ganglionares	0.013	0.093		
Estadio inicial	0.003			
Metástasis SNC	0.005	0.002	0.011	
Metástasis hepáticas	0.059		0.009	0.003
P110α	0.079	0.004	0.041	
EGFR	0.006	0.026		
pIGFR				0.028
Mutación PTEN		0.045		
pAKT	0.003	0.016		
pBAD				0.003

Tabla IV-1: Resumen del análisis univariado de supervivencia (Kaplan Meyer).

SG: supervivencia global. SLP: supervivencia libre de progresión. SLE: supervivencia libre de enfermedad.

Conclusión:

Aproximadamente el 25% de los tumores HER2 positivos presentan al menos una alteración de la vía PI3K o alguno de sus efectores/activadores. Nuestros datos apoyan la presencia de interacciones complejas entre EGFR, IGFR1R y la vía de señalización PTEN/PI3K/Akt/Bad y mTOR, y que la desregulación de estas vías moleculares pueden estar relacionadas con los mecanismos de resistencia a trastuzumab.

Increased signalling of EGFR and IGF1R, and deregulation of PTEN/PI3K/Akt pathway are related with trastuzumab resistance in HER2 breast carcinomas

A Gallardo¹, E Lerma^{*1}, D Escuin², A Tibau³, J Muñoz¹, B Ojeda³, A Barnadas³, E Adrover⁴, L Sánchez-Tejada⁵, D Giner⁵, F Ortiz-Martínez⁵ and G Peiró⁵

¹Department of Pathology, Hospital de la Santa Creu i Sant Pau, Autonomous University of Barcelona, Avda. Sant Antoni M^a Claret 167, 08025, Barcelona, Spain; ²Department of Clinical Oncology, Institut de Recerca, Hospital de la Santa Creu i Sant Pau, Barcelona, Spain; ³Department of Clinical Oncology, Hospital de la Santa Creu i Sant Pau, Autonomous University of Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain; ⁴Department of Clinical Oncology, Hospital General Universitario, Alicante, Spain; ⁵Research Unit, Hospital General Universitario, Alicante, Spain

BACKGROUND: Trastuzumab resistance hampers its well-known efficacy to control HER2-positive breast cancer. The involvement of PI3K/Akt pathway in this mechanism is still not definitively confirmed.

METHODS: We selected 155 patients treated with trastuzumab after development of metastasis or as adjuvant/neoadjuvant therapy. We performed immunohistochemistry for HER2, ER/PR, epidermal growth factor 1-receptor (EGFR), α -insulin-like growth factor 1-receptor (IGF1R), phosphatase and tensin homologue (PTEN), p110 α , pAkt, pBad, pmTOR, pMAPK, MUC1, Ki67, p53 and p27; mutational analysis of PIK3CA and PTEN, and PTEN promoter hypermethylation.

RESULTS: We found 46% ER/PR-positive tumours, overexpression of EGFR (15%), α -IGF1R (25%), p110 α (19%), pAkt (28%), pBad (22%), pmTOR (23%), pMAPK (24%), MUC1 (80%), PTEN loss (20%), and PTEN promoter hypermethylation (20%). PIK3CA and PTEN mutations were detected in 17% and 26% tumours, respectively. Patients receiving adjuvant trastuzumab with α -IGF1R or pBad overexpressing tumours presented shorter progression-free survival (PFS) (all $P \leq 0.043$). Also, p110 α and mTOR overexpression, liver and brain relapses implied poor overall survival (OS) (all $P \leq 0.041$). In patients with metastatic disease, decreased PFS correlated with p110 α expression ($P = 0.024$), whereas for OS were the presence of vascular invasion and EGFR expression ($P \leq 0.019$; Cox analysis).

CONCLUSION: Our results support that trastuzumab resistance mechanisms are related with deregulation of PTEN/PI3K/Akt/mTOR pathway, and/or EGFR and IGF1R overexpression in a subset of HER2-positive breast carcinomas.

British Journal of Cancer (2012) 106, 1367–1373. doi:10.1038/bjc.2012.85 www.bjcancer.com

Published online 27 March 2012

© 2012 Cancer Research UK

Keywords: breast cancer; HER2; EGFR; IGF1R; PTEN/PI3K/Akt pathway; trastuzumab resistance

Breast cancer (BC) is one of the most frequent malignancies in women (Jemal *et al*, 2008). HER2 overexpressing and/or gene amplified tumours represent approximately 25% of all BC, and they are associated with an aggressive phenotype, metastases, resistance to chemotherapy (CT), and poor prognosis (Slamon *et al*, 1987, 1989; Peiro *et al*, 2007; Nguyen *et al*, 2008). Nevertheless, the outcome has changed dramatically with the introduction of trastuzumab, a humanised monoclonal antibody that targets the HER2 extracellular domain (Murphy and Modi, 2009). It is very effective in combination with CT for the treatment of early stages (Viani *et al*, 2007) or metastatic BC (Pegram *et al*, 2004; Brufsky *et al*, 2005), and even as a single-agent for the later group (Vogel *et al*, 2002), showing in both groups of patients a substantial decrease in cancer recurrence and mortality (Slamon *et al*, 2001; Piccart-Gebhart *et al*, 2005; Joensuu *et al*, 2006; Untch *et al*, 2008). Despite its demonstrated clinical benefit, about 30–50% of patients do not respond, and those with metastasis that

achieved an initial response to trastuzumab-based regimens will develop drug resistance.

Currently, in clinical practice there are not conclusive biomarkers that allow the selection of patients who will respond to trastuzumab and the exact molecular mechanisms are still not well defined. Several growth factor receptors and signalling molecules have been proposed to be responsible for trastuzumab resistance, such as downregulation of the surface HER2 protein by endocytosis and degradation (Austin *et al*, 2004), p27 downregulation (Lane *et al*, 2001; Nahta *et al*, 2004), activation of insulin-like growth factor 1-receptor (IGF1R) (Lu *et al*, 2001; Nahta *et al*, 2005), interaction between HER2 and epidermal growth factor 1-receptor (EGFR) (Diermeier *et al*, 2005), phosphatase and tensin homologue (PTEN) loss (Nagata *et al*, 2004), phosphoinositide 3-kinase (PI3K)/Akt activation (Esteve *et al*, 2011; Razis *et al*, 2011), MUC1 (Fessler *et al*, 2009) and MUC4 upregulation (Nagy *et al*, 2005), and the crosstalk with the ER signalling pathway (Slamon *et al*, 2001). More recently, the non-receptor tyrosine kinase c-SRC (SRC) has been suggested as a potential key modulator of trastuzumab response (Zhang *et al*, 2011).

Therefore, the aim of our study was to evaluate the relevance of alterations in the PI3K/Akt/mTOR and Ras/mitogen-activated

*Correspondence: Dr E Lerma; E-mail: elerma@santpau.cat

Received 12 December 2011; revised 10 February 2012; accepted 20 February 2012; published online 27 March 2012

protein kinase (MAPK) signalling pathways, given their role in cell cycle progression. We performed an extensive immunohistochemical and molecular analysis of several biological markers related with these pathways, in a series of patients with HER2-positive BC in stage I–IV, to determine their prognostic relevance, and as a result, their potential involvement in the mechanisms of response to trastuzumab.

PATIENTS AND METHODS

Tumour samples and patients' follow-up

The study was conducted according to the Declaration of Helsinki principles, with approval from the local ethics committees. A total of 155 tumour samples from HER2-positive patients were retrospectively collected from the Department of Pathology of the Hospital de la Santa Creu i Sant Pau ($n=103$) and University General Hospital of Alicante ($n=52$). Patients were staged according to the WHO system, and tumours were histologically graded according to Elston and Ellis method. After pathological diagnosis, patients were treated according to standard protocols. All patients received trastuzumab for the treatment of metastatic disease ($n=75$) after failure of conventional CT with anthracyclines and/or taxanes, or for early stages either adjuvant ($n=40$) or neoadjuvant ($n=27$) therapy. In 13 patients the type of treatment was unknown. Median follow-up was 5.3 years (range 0.17–31 years).

We considered response or non-resistance to trastuzumab treatment when no progression of stable disease occurred. Progression-free survival was defined as the length of time after treatment during which a patient survived with no signs of the disease, and OS as the time to the patients' death or last follow-up.

Immunohistochemistry

Tissue microarrays were prepared from paraffin-embedded tissue taken from three representative tumour areas. Sections were stained using the Envision method (Dako, Glostrup, Denmark). HER2 protein and EGFR protein determinations were performed using HercepTest and EGFR pharmADx (Dako; Glostrup, Denmark), respectively. Antibodies, dilutions, antigen retrieval methods, and suppliers are listed in Table 1. ER/PR and HER2 were evaluated by standard protocols. The EGFR expression was considered positive when complete membrane staining is >10% of tumour cells. The PTEN, pAkt, pBad, p110 α , p-mTOR, α -IGF1R, MUC1, and pMAPK (cytoplasm) scores were calculated by multiplying the percentage of labelled cells by the staining intensity (range 0–300). Loss of PTEN was considered for cutoff scores <75; and overexpression of p110 α , MUC1, pMAPK, p27 and pAkt were considered for scores ≥ 150 . Positive α -IGF1R and mTOR were considered for scores ≥ 220 and ≥ 30 , respectively. The percentage of stained nuclei was evaluated

independently of the intensity for Ki67 (cutoff 20%) and p53 (cutoff 10%). Consensus between three pathologists (AG, EL, and GP) was done for the immunohistochemical results.

Mutational analysis of PIK3CA

Genomic DNA was extracted from frozen tumour or paraffin-embedded tissues and mutational analysis of PIK3CA was performed by PCR and direct sequencing using primers for exons 9 and 20 as previously described (Samuels *et al*, 2004).

Phosphatase and tensin homologue mutation and promoter hypermethylation

Mutational analysis was performed using previously reported PCR conditions and primers for exons 3, 5, 7, and 8 (Bussaglia *et al*, 2000). Methylation-specific PCR was used to assay CpG island methylation status of the PTEN promoter gene using the Methylamp One-Step DNA Modification kit (Epigentek, Brooklyn, NY, USA). Three primers sets were used for the PCR as previously reported (Soria *et al*, 2002).

In situ hybridisation analysis

HER2 gene status was confirmed by fluorescence *in situ* hybridisation (Dako pharmADx) or chromogenic *in situ* hybridisation (Spot light; Zymed, Paisley, UK) in equivocal cases.

Statistical analyses

They were performed with the SPSS/win 17.0 statistical software package (SPSS, Chicago, IL, USA). Qualitative variables were compared with the X2/Fisher tests. A receiver operating characteristic curve and area under the curve were generated to determine a cutoff value of the expression of several biomarkers and the potential clinical utility to predict prognosis. The Kaplan–Meier method and the Cox regression model were used to estimate survival. *P*-values <0.05 were considered statistically significant.

RESULTS

Clinicopathological data

The clinicopathological data is summarised in Table 2. Patients were classified into two groups: group A ($n=75$) included patients where trastuzumab was included for treatment of metastatic disease and group B ($n=67$ patients) those with trastuzumab in the adjuvant/neoadjuvant setting. Median age was 55 years (range 31–92 years) and median tumour size was 2.5 cm (range 1–20 cm). Histological grade 1 was seen in 7 (5%) cases, grade 2 in 50 (32%),

Table 1 Panel of antibodies for the immunohistochemical analysis

Antibody	Clone	Dilution	Supplier	Pretreatment
ER	6F11	1:40	Novocastra (Newcastle, UK)	Citrate buffer pH 6. Autoclave, 8 min
PR	16	1:200	Novocastra (Newcastle, UK)	Citrate buffer pH 6. Autoclave, 8 min
α IGF1R	24–31	1:200	Neomarkers (Freemont, CA, USA)	Citrate buffer pH 6. Autoclave, 8 min
PTEN	6H2.1	1:50	Cascade Biosciences (Winchester, MA, USA)	Citrate buffer pH 6. Autoclave, 40 min
p110 α	Rabbit polyclonal	1:25	Cell Signaling (Beverly, MA, USA)	EDTA buffer pH 8. Autoclave, 8 min
pAkt	Rabbit monoclonal	1:50	Cell Signaling (Beverly, MA, USA)	EDTA buffer pH 8. Autoclave, 8 min
pBAD	Sc-12969-R	1:40	Santa Cruz (Santa Cruz, CA, USA)	EDTA buffer pH 8. Autoclave, 8 min
mTOR	Rabbit polyclonal	1:50	Cell Signaling (Beverly, MA, USA)	EDTA buffer pH 8. Autoclave, 8 min
MUC1	BC-2	1:40	Signet (Dedham, MA, USA)	Citrate buffer pH 6. Autoclave, 8 min
pMAPK	Rabbit IgG monoclonal	1:100	Cell Signaling (Beverly, MA, USA)	EDTA buffer pH 8. Autoclave, 8 min
Ki67	MIB-1	Prediluted	Dako (Carpinteria, CA, USA)	Citrate buffer pH 6. Autoclave, 8 min
p53	DO-7	Prediluted	Dako (Carpinteria, CA, USA)	Citrate buffer pH 6. Autoclave, 8 min
p27	SX53G8	1:50	Dako (Carpinteria, CA, USA)	EDTA buffer pH 8. Autoclave, 8 min

Table 2 Summary of the main clinicopathological data

	All cases (n = 155)	Trastuzumab in the metastatic disease (n = 75)	Trastuzumab in the first-line treatment (n = 67)
Age (median and range)	55 years (31–92 years)	59 years (31–92 years)	54 years (33–88 years)
Tumour size (median and range)	2.5 cm (1–20 cm)	2.8 cm (1–11 cm)	2.4 cm (4–20 cm)
BC subgroups			
HER2+/HR+	67	35	29
HER2+/HR-	78	33	37
Unknown	10	7	1
Lymph node status			
Negative	46	20	24
Positive	89	47	36
Unknown	20	8	7
Stage			
IA	17	8	8
IIA	29	10	17
IIB	15	8	6
IIIB	42	22	17
IIIA	18	13	5
IIIC	12	9	3
IV	13	3	7
Unknown	9	2	4
Histological grade			
1	7	1	4
2	50	24	23
3	98	50	40
DCIS			
<25%	25	12	12
>25%	22	9	13
Follow-up			
NED	56	5	50
AWD	31	21	10
DOD	57	49	7
LFU	11	0	0

Abbreviations: AWD = alive with disease; BC = breast carcinoma; DCIS = ductal carcinoma *in situ*; DOD = dead of the disease; HR = hormonal receptors; LFU = lost of follow-up; NED = no evidence of disease.

and grade 3 in 98 (63%) tumours. Vascular invasion was found in 32% (47 of 145) cases. Axillary lymph node dissection was performed in 135 patients, being positive in 89 cases (66%). Tumour stage was IA in 17 (11%), IIA in 29 (18.8%), IIB in 15 (9.7%), IIIA in 42 (27%), IIIB in 18 (11.6%), IIIC in 12 (7.7%), IV in 13 (8.4%), and was unknown in 9 (5.8%) patients. A total of 11 patients were lost in the follow-up, and among those remaining, 56 (39%) were alive with no evidence of disease, 31 (21.5%) alive with disease, and 57 (39.5%) died of the disease (DOD).

Tumour molecular features

Table 3 includes the relationship between clinicopathological and molecular data for all patients. Examples of relevant immunohistochemical images are shown in Figure 1.

Hormonal receptors (HR) The HR (either ER or PR) were positive in 46% (67/145) of the tumours, and they were associated with ductal formation ($P=0.024$) and histological grade 1 ($P=0.048$).

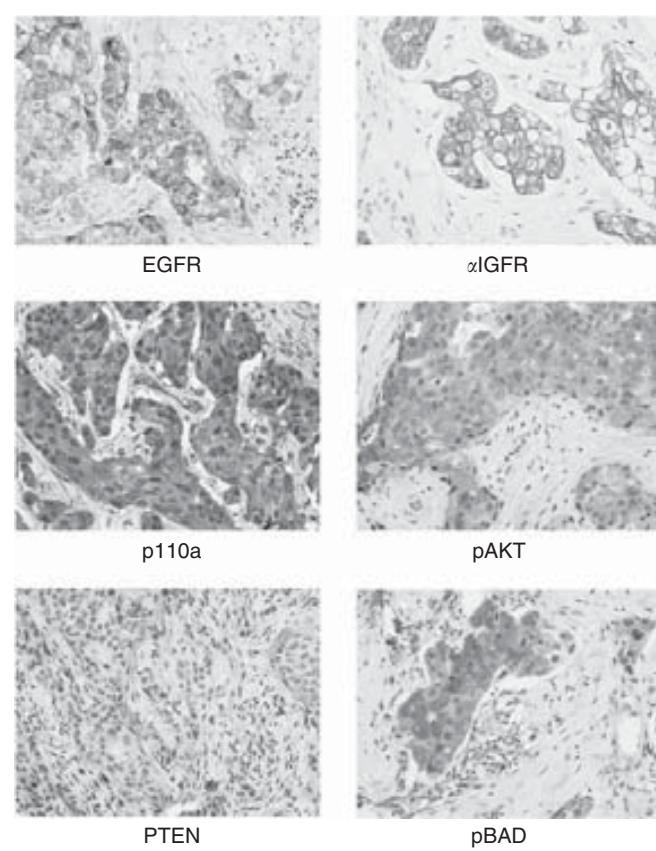
Growth factor receptors Increased EGFR expression was found in 15% tumours (21/141) and correlated with high mitotic index ($P=0.013$) and negative HR ($P<0.000$), and there was a trend towards higher tumour grade ($P=0.061$).

Table 3 Statistical correlations between clinicopathological, immunohistochemical and molecular data for all tumours

	Histological grade	Ductal form	Nuclear grade	Mitosis	Lymph node +	Vascular invasion
HR-	0.080 ^a	0.024 ^a	NS	0.091 ^a	NS	NS
EGFR+	0.061	0.083	NS	0.013	0.088	NS
α IGF1R+	0.001	NS	0.07	0.004	NS	0.005
PTEN loss	0.065	NS	NS	NS	NS	0.047
PIK3CA mut	NS	NS	0.043	NS	NS	NS
pAkt+	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS
pBad+	0.001	NS	0.008	0.002	NS	0.006
mTOR+	NS	NS	0.034	NS	0.12	NS
MAPK+	0.029 ^a	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS
Ki67 > 20%	0.087	NS	NS	0.021	NS	0.082
p53 > 10%	NS	NS	0.009	0.076	NS	NS
p27+(nuclear)	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS

Abbreviations: EGFR = epidermal growth factor receptor; HR = hormonal receptors; IGF1R = insulin-like growth factor receptor; MAPK = mitogen-activated protein kinase; NS = non-significant; PTEN = phosphatase and tensin homologue.

^aInverse relationship.

**Figure 1** Immunohistochemical expression of EGFR, α IGFR, p110a, pAKT, pBad, and loss of PTEN in HER2-positive breast carcinomas.

Staining of α -IGF1R was strong and diffuse (overexpression) in 25% tumours (34/138), in association with high grade ($P=0.001$), high mitotic index ($P=0.004$), and vascular invasion ($P=0.005$).

Biomarkers associated with the PI3K/Akt/mTOR and MAPK signalling pathways Phosphatase and tensin homologue loss was found in 20% of the tumours (30/149), PTEN promoter hypermethylation in 20% (22/110) and mutations in 26% (8/30). Phosphatase and tensin homologue loss was associated with vascular invasion ($P=0.047$) and higher grades ($P=0.065$), but

Table 4 Statistical significance according to metastatic site for all patients. (Note: EGFR, p53, p27, and MAPK expression levels were unrelated with metastases)

	Liver	Bone	CNS	Skin and soft tissue	Lung	Pleura	Lymph nodes
HR+	NS	0.008	NS	0.069 ^a	NS	NS	NS
ER+	NS	0.004	NS	0.082	NS	NS	NS
PR+	NS	0.044	NS	0.090	NS	NS	NS
α IGF1R+	0.009 ^a	0.031 ^a	NS	NS	0.002 ^a	N.S.	0.007 ^a
<i>PTEN</i>							
– Loss expr	NS	NS	0.058	NS	NS	NS	NS
– Mutat	NS	NS	NS	0.065	NS	0.099	NS
p110 α	NS	NS	0.0029	NS	NS	NS	NS
PIK3CA							
– Mutat	NS	NS	NS	NS	0.087	NS	NS
pAkt+	NS	0.085	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS
mTOR+	0.069	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS
Ki67 > 20%	0.011	0.011	0.037	NS	NS	0.049	0.096
pBad+	0.068	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS

Abbreviations: CNS = central nervous system; ER = oestrogen receptor; HR = hormonal receptors; IHC = immunohistochemistry; mutat = mutations; NS = non-significant; PR = progesterone receptor. ^aInverse relationship.

neither association with *PTEN* mutation nor hypermethylation was found.

p110 α (PI3K catalytic subunit) overexpression was present in 19% of the tumours (24/125), and PIK3CA somatic missense mutations were identified in 17% (24/142); in exon 20 (nucleotide A3140G, amino acid H1047R) in 15% of the tumours (21/142), whereas mutations in the helical domain of exon 9 (nucleotide G1635C, amino acid E545D) were detected in only 6% (3/50). Interestingly, mutations were present more frequently in tumours with EGFR expression (33%; $P = 0.016$) and higher nuclear grade ($P = 0.043$), but there was no correlation with p110 α protein expression.

pAkt overexpression was found in 28% of the tumours (40/143) and phosphorylated (inactive) Bad in 22% (30/139) in association with high nuclear ($P = 0.008$) and histological grades ($P = 0.001$), elevated mitotic index ($P = 0.002$), and vascular invasion ($P = 0.006$). mTOR overexpression was detected in 23% (33/142) of the tumours, predominantly with high nuclear grade tumours ($P = 0.034$), and in association with α -IGF1R (47%; $P < 0.000$), p110 α (64%; $P = 0.028$) and pBad (65%; $P = 0.027$).

Strong pMAPK expression in 24% (22/93) of the tumours predominated in those of low grade ($P = 0.029$); MUC1 was overexpressed in 80% of the analysed tumours (77/96) but without significant association with clinicopathological features.

Cell proliferation and apoptosis markers Ki67 > 20% was seen in 51% of the tumours (73/144), related with high mitotic index ($P = 0.021$). p53 overexpression was found in 30% of the tumours (42/139) associated with HR-negative status ($P = 0.022$) and high nuclear grade ($P = 0.009$). Only 17% (16/94) of the cases showed p27 nuclear expression but unrelated with any clinical-pathological factors.

Relationship between biomarkers and recurrence

In all, 61% of the patients developed distant metastases, which were located in the liver (35%), bone (35%), lung (27%), lymph nodes (21%), pleura (18%), central nervous system (CNS; 16%), and skin (14%). Patients with HR-positive tumours presented more frequently bone metastases ($P = 0.008$) compared with those with HR-negative status. In contrast, tumours with α -IGF1R overexpression rarely metastasised to the liver ($P = 0.009$), lung ($P = 0.002$), bone ($P = 0.031$) or lymph nodes ($P = 0.007$). Patients with p110 α -positive tumours developed more frequently CNS metastases ($P = 0.029$). The remaining proteins studied here

Table 5 Multivariate analysis of histological and biological factors for patients with trastuzumab treatment in the metastatic disease (group A) (Cox model)

Variables	B	Hazard ratio	95% CI	P-value
Disease-free survival				
CNS metastasis	1.128	3.59	1.23–10.51	0.020
p110 α	1.269	2.75	1.14–6.49	0.024
Overall survival				
Vascular invasion	1.17	3.36	1.22–8.94	0.015
CNS metastasis	1.406	4.22	1.44–12.38	0.009
EGFR	1.630	5.25	1.32–20.92	0.019

Abbreviations: CNS = central nervous system; EGFR = epidermal growth factor I-receptor.

showed a trend or were not associated with any specific site of dissemination (see Table 4).

Survival analyses

In order to perform the survival analysis in similar patients groups, we excluded those that received neoadjuvant CT or stage IV. Therefore, 51 patients remained in group A and 38 patients in group B. Supplementary Figures 1 and 2 include the Kaplan–Meier curves for both groups. Table 5 shows the results of the multivariate analysis.

Metastatic BC (group A) A total of 47 patients (92%, 47/51) had tumour recurrence with a median PFS of 2.6 years (range 1.01 to 11.64 years) and 65% (33/51) of the patients DOD with a median OS of 7.5 years (range 0.17 to 21 years).

Univariate analysis (Kaplan–Meier; log rank test) showed that shorter PFS was associated with vascular invasion ($P = 0.042$), mutated PTEN ($P = 0.045$), EGFR ($P = 0.026$), p110 α ($P = 0.004$), pAkt overexpression ($P = 0.016$), and CNS metastases ($P = 0.002$). Poor OS correlated with positive lymph node status ($P = 0.013$), EGFR ($P = 0.006$), p110 α ($P = 0.079$), pAkt overexpression ($P = 0.042$), tumour stage ($P = 0.003$), and tumour relapses in the liver ($P = 0.059$) or in CNS ($P = 0.005$).

Multivariate analyses for PFS revealed that only the presence of metastases to the CNS ($P = 0.020$, HR 3.59, CI 1.23–10.51) and p110 α overexpression ($P = 0.024$, HR 2.75, CI 1.14–6.49) emerged

as significant predictors of relapse. Worse OS was seen for vascular invasion ($P=0.015$, HR 3.36; CI 1.22–8.94), EGFR expression ($P=0.019$, HR 5.25; CI 1.32–20.92), and metastases to the CNS ($P=0.009$, HR 4.22; CI 1.44–12.38) (Cox regression model).

Early-stage BC (group B) Only 11% (4/38) of the patients had tumour recurrence and 5% died from the tumour. These events might be, however, related to the short follow-up of the majority of the patients (median 2.82 years). Median PFS was 2.81 years (range 1.00–8.28 years) and for OS was 2.82 years (range 1.00–8.42 years).

Shorter PFS was associated with α -IGF1R ($P=0.028$), pBad overexpression ($P=0.003$), and tumour recurrence in the liver ($P=0.003$) or the bone ($P=0.001$). Poor OS correlated with high tumour grade ($P<0.000$), overexpression of p110 α ($P=0.041$) and mTOR (77 vs 100% in negative cases; $P=0.006$), and tumour recurrence in the liver ($P=0.009$) and CNS ($P=0.011$) (Kaplan–Meier; log rank test). Nevertheless, the multivariate analysis (Cox regression) showed that these results did not reach any statistically significance, probably due to the small number of events in this group.

DISCUSSION

In the current study, we performed an extensive immunohistochemical and molecular analysis of biological markers related with the PI3K/Akt/mTOR and Ras/MAPK signalling pathways in a series of HER2-positive BC patients who received trastuzumab for metastatic disease or as first-line therapy in earlier stages. We found that patients with primary tumours showing alterations in EGFR and PTEN/PI3K/Akt had shorter PFS and OS despite trastuzumab treatment when given at advanced stage (metastatic disease), supporting their role in the mechanisms of response. Our results in the group of patients in earlier stages who received trastuzumab as adjuvant/neoadjuvant therapy demonstrated that those having tumours with IGF1R overexpression and inactive Bad had shorter PFS. Poorer OS was seen in patients who developed metastatic disease especially in the brain and liver, and with p110 α and mTOR overexpressing tumours. Nevertheless, none of the factors had an independent prognostic value, probably related with the small number of events and short follow-up of this group.

PI3K/Akt signalling is one of the most critical cancer-promoting pathways through upregulation of growth factor receptors (EGFR, IGF1R, HER2, etc) or PTEN inactivation (Lu *et al*, 1999) and recently considered a major determinant of trastuzumab resistance (Nagata *et al*, 2004; Berns *et al*, 2007; Esteva *et al*, 2011; Razis *et al*, 2011). HER2 and EGFR coexpression has a considerable inhibitory effect on this drug (Diermeier *et al*, 2005) and are associated with poor prognostic factors such as high grade, negative HR status, and vascular invasion (Abd El-Rehim *et al*, 2004). In agreement with these findings, we found coexpression in 15%, which in turn was related with PIK3CA mutations. Insulin-like growth factor 1-receptor has an important role in growth and invasiveness of BC (Peiro *et al*, 2009, 2011) and recently has also been involved in trastuzumab resistance (Lu *et al*, 2001; Nahta *et al*, 2005; Harris *et al*, 2007). In fact, we found IGF1R overexpression in 25% of the tumours, especially in those of early stage patients who developed recurrences. Of note, there is considerable evidence that both IGF1R and EGFR crosstalk in BC cells and their coactivation occurs in approximately 25% of BC, related with poor outcome (Harris *et al*, 2001, 2007; Lu *et al*, 2001; Abd El-Rehim *et al*, 2004). Therefore, it would be expected that those patients would be more likely to be resistant to trastuzumab.

PTEN encodes a protein that inhibits activation of the PI3K/Akt/mTOR signalling pathway (Panigrahi *et al*, 2004). The PTEN inactivation may be related with gene mutations (<5% of sporadic BC) (Vanhaesebroeck and Alessi, 2000) or promoter hypermethylation (20%) (Saal *et al*, 2005), resulting in PTEN loss that occurs in about half of the tumours (Nagata *et al*, 2004; Lerma *et al*, 2008;

Esteva *et al*, 2011; Razis *et al*, 2011). Prior experimental studies with SKBR3 and BT474 BC cells and in breast tumour xenografts demonstrated that PTEN reduction confers resistance to trastuzumab's antitumour function, and this data was subsequently confirmed in a group of patients (Nagata *et al*, 2004). In the current study, PTEN loss or promoter hypermethylation were observed both in 20% of the tumours but without association with patient's survival, despite their correlation with other adverse clinicopathological data, such as vascular invasion and lymph node metastases. Nevertheless, tumours with PTEN mutations (26%) recurred more frequently in patients with metastatic disease, supporting its contribution to trastuzumab resistance.

The PI3K/Akt pathway activation blocks apoptosis and promotes cellular proliferation through interaction with different downstream effectors (Stemke-Hale *et al*, 2008; Di Cosimo and Baselga, 2008; Nahta and O'Regan, 2011; Margariti *et al*, 2011). PIK3CA activating mutations, clustered in exons 9 (helical domain) and 20 (kinase domain) have been reported in 18–40% BC, occasionally associated with HER2 phenotype (Stemke-Hale *et al*, 2008) and tumour recurrence (Razis *et al*, 2011). We found PIK3CA mutations in 17% of the tumours, unrelated with trastuzumab clinical benefit. In contrast, p110 α overexpression (19%) had an independent poor prognostic value for progression in patients with advanced stage. Moreover, active Akt in 28% of our tumours, correlated with recurrence and poor patients' survival, supporting that activation of this pathway contributes to tumour growth and therefore to trastuzumab resistance. Further, inactive Bad seen in 22% of the tumours in association with adverse prognostic parameters, such as high tumour grade, high mitotic index and vascular invasion, predicted shorter survival as a result of non-response, in early stage patients. In partial agreement with our data, Esteva *et al* (2011), in a previous series of 137 metastatic BC, found that PI3K pathway activation (defined as PTEN loss and/or PIK3CA mutation) significantly contributed to worse response to trastuzumab and shorter OS. Moreover, pAkt and PTEN status combination showed more power than PTEN loss alone.

mTOR is a key regulator of multiple cell stimuli integrating growth factor and cytokine signals. *In vitro* studies and recent clinical data have confirmed a relationship between mTOR and HER2 (Morrow *et al*, 2011) as well as its role in trastuzumab resistance (Nahta and O'Regan, 2011). In our series, 23% of predominantly pleomorphic tumours contained increased mTOR, and these patients had lymph-node metastasis. Of note, we found that mTOR modulation by PI3K/Akt-dependent mechanisms reflected by its positive correlation with p110 α and Bad is influenced by IGF1R. Further, supporting its involvement in the mechanisms of trastuzumab responsiveness, all our patients from the group B and negative mTOR tumours were alive at the last follow-up compared with only 77% for those with positive tumours. This is of interest as preclinical models have shown that dual inhibition of both IGF1R – with either monoclonal antibodies or tyrosine kinase inhibitors – and mTOR results in a superior antiproliferative effect over each single strategy, and this combination is now under evaluation in phase I/II trials in patients with BC (Di Cosimo and Baselga, 2008). Nevertheless, the mechanisms of how mTOR inhibitors reverse resistance to trastuzumab still remain unexplained (Nahta and O'Regan, 2011).

The antiproliferative effect of trastuzumab has been also linked to p27, cyclin E-CDK complex or IGF1R interaction in clinical and *in vitro* studies (Lane *et al*, 2001; Lu *et al*, 2004; Nahta *et al*, 2004). Nevertheless, we were not able to demonstrate any significant correlation between p27, biomarkers or clinicopathological data.

MAPK/ERK pathway stimulation has been related with the oncogenic potential of HER2 and trastuzumab resistance (Berns *et al*, 2007; Yao *et al*, 2009). Nevertheless, recent data support the assertion that trastuzumab has less effect on this cell cycle kinetics pathway (Dave *et al*, 2011), and therefore, not relevant in the development of resistance, in line with our study.

Using a full-length MUC1 antibody, we found expression in 80% of the tumours, with neither correlation with prognostic indicators nor survival. Recent studies have now shown it is not related to tumour growth but it is present in newly differentiated stem cells. However, the cleaved form of the MUC1 protein (MUC1*) has growth factor receptor-like activity on tumour cells and is detected in populations of pluripotent stem cells (Hikita *et al*, 2008; Mahanta *et al*, 2008). Fessler *et al* (2009) showed upregulation of MUC1* in HER2-amplified/trastuzumab-resistant BC cells. Further treatment with MUC1* antagonists in addition to trastuzumab reversed that resistance (Fessler *et al*, 2009). Therefore, further studies on MUC1* are needed to confirm the previous data in clinical series. Finally, p53 and Ki67, two well-known prognostic factors (Jansen *et al*, 1998; Yamashita *et al*, 2004) that were increased in a significant number of tumours and associated with poor pathological features, lacked significance with respect to survival.

The results reported here mostly agree with those reported in the literature derived from experimental and clinical series. Nevertheless, our study was not conducted in patients included in a clinical trial, and a control (no-trastuzumab) group was not included. Therefore, the additional influence of CT and poor prognostic factors to the markers associated with trastuzumab resistance cannot be stated with certainty.

In summary, we found in about one-fourth of HER2 tumours at least one molecular alteration in the PI3K pathway and/or its upstream or downstream effectors. Our data support the complex interactions between EGFR, IGF1R, and the PTEN/PI3K/Akt/Bad

and mTOR signalling pathway, which in turn are potentially related with the mechanisms of trastuzumab response. Nevertheless, some of these biomarkers need to be further validated in larger series and introduced into the clinical practice to carefully select patients on the basis of tumour molecular alterations. This is of relevance as novel combinations for targeting simultaneously several factors might suggest another strategy to overcome trastuzumab resistance and enhance response rates.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We thank Patricia Picó, María D Durán, and Daniel Fernandez for their technical assistance, and Doreen A Denecker for the preparation of the manuscript. *Sources of support:* This work was supported in part by grants from Fondo de Investigaciones Sanitarias (FIS PI06/0709 and PI06/1495), Instituto Carlos III RTICCCFIS RD06/0020/0015, Pfizer Laboratories, Mutua Madrileña Foundation (448/2008), and ROCHE Diagnostics-Sociedad Española de Anatomía Patológica (SEAP).

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Supplementary Information accompanies the paper on British Journal of Cancer website (<http://www.nature.com/bjc>)

REFERENCES

- Abd El-Rehim DM, Pinder SE, Paish CE, Bell JA, Rampaul RS, Blamey RW, Robertson JF, Nicholson RI, Ellis IO (2004) Expression and co-expression of the members of the epidermal growth factor receptor (EGFR) family in invasive breast carcinoma. *Br J Cancer* **91**: 1532–1542
- Austin CD, De Maziere AM, Pisacane PI, van Dijk SM, Eigenbrot C, Sliwkowski MX, Klumperman J, Scheller RH (2004) Endocytosis and sorting of ErbB2 and the site of action of cancer therapeutics trastuzumab and geldanamycin. *Mol Biol Cell* **15**: 5268–5282
- Berns K, Horlings HM, Hennessy BT, Madiredjo M, Hijnmans EM, Beelen K, Linn SC, Gonzalez-Angulo AM, Stemke-Hale K, Hauptmann M, Beijersbergen RL, Mills GB, van de Vijver MJ, Bernards R (2007) A functional genetic approach identifies the PI3K pathway as a major determinant of trastuzumab resistance in breast cancer. *Cancer Cell* **12**: 395–402
- Brufsky A, Lemmersky B, Schiffman K, Lieberman G, Paton VE (2005) Hormone receptor status does not affect the clinical benefit of trastuzumab therapy for patients with metastatic breast cancer. *Clin Breast Cancer* **6**: 247–252
- Bussaglia E, del Rio E, Matias-Guiu X, Prat J (2000) PTEN mutations in endometrial carcinomas: a molecular and clinicopathologic analysis of 38 cases. *Hum Pathol* **31**: 312–317
- Dave B, Migliaccio I, Gutierrez MC, Wu MF, Chamness GC, Wong H, Narasanna A, Chakrabarty A, Hilsenbeck SG, Huang J, Rimawi M, Schiff R, Arteaga C, Osborne CK, Chang JC (2011) Loss of phosphatase and tensin homolog or phosphoinositol-3 kinase activation and response to trastuzumab or lapatinib in human epidermal growth factor receptor 2-overexpressing locally advanced breast cancers. *J Clin Oncol* **29**: 166–173
- Di Cosimo S, Baselga J (2008) Targeted therapies in breast cancer: where are we now? *Eur J Cancer* **44**: 2781–2790
- Diermeier S, Horvath G, Knuechel-Clarke R, Hofstaedter F, Szollosi J, Brockhoff G (2005) Epidermal growth factor receptor coexpression modulates susceptibility to Herceptin in HER2/neu overexpressing breast cancer cells via specific erbB-receptor interaction and activation. *Exp Cell Res* **304**: 604–619
- Esteva FJ, Guo H, Zhang S, Santa-Maria C, Stone S, Lanchbury JS, Sahin AA, Hortobagyi GN, Yu D (2011) PTEN, PIK3CA, p-AKT, and p-p70S6K status: association with trastuzumab response and survival in patients with HER2-positive metastatic breast cancer. *Am J Pathol* **177**: 1647–1656
- Fessler SP, Wotkowicz MT, Mahanta SK, Bamdad C (2009) MUC1* is a determinant of trastuzumab (Herceptin) resistance in breast cancer cells. *Breast Cancer Res Treat* **118**: 113–124
- Harris LN, Liotcheva V, Broadwater G, Ramirez MJ, Maimonis P, Anderson S, Everett T, Harpole D, Moore MB, Berry DA, Rizzi D, Vredenburgh JJ, Bentley RC (2001) Comparison of methods of measuring HER-2 in metastatic breast cancer patients treated with high-dose chemotherapy. *J Clin Oncol* **19**: 1698–1706
- Harris LN, You F, Schnitt SJ, Witkiewicz A, Lu X, Sgroi D, Ryan PD, Come SE, Burstein HJ, Lesnikoski BA, Kamma M, Friedman PN, Gelman R, Iglesias JD, Winer EP (2007) Predictors of resistance to preoperative trastuzumab and vinorelbine for HER2-positive early breast cancer. *Clin Cancer Res* **13**: 1198–1207
- Hikita ST, Kosik KS, Clegg DO, Bamdad C (2008) MUC1* mediates the growth of human pluripotent stem cells. *PLoS One* **3**: e3312
- Jansen RL, Hupperts PS, Arends JW, Joosten-Achjanie SR, Volovics A, Schouten HC, Hillen HF (1998) MIB-1 labelling index is an independent prognostic marker in primary breast cancer. *Br J Cancer* **78**: 460–465
- Jemal A, Siegel R, Ward E, Hao Y, Xu J, Murray T, Thun MJ (2008) Cancer statistics, 2008. *CA Cancer J Clin* **58**: 71–96
- Joensuu H, Kellokumpu-Lehtinen PL, Bono P, Alanko T, Kataja V, Asola R, Utriainen T, Kokko R, Hemminki A, Tarkkanen M, Turpeenniemi-Hujanen T, Jyrkkio S, Flander M, Helle L, Ingalsuo S, Johansson K, Jaaskelainen AS, Pajunen M, Rauhala M, Kaleva-Kerola J, Salminen T, Leinonen M, Elomaa I, Isola J (2006) Adjuvant docetaxel or vinorelbine with or without trastuzumab for breast cancer. *N Engl J Med* **354**: 809–820
- Lane HA, Motoyama AB, Beuvink I, Hynes NE (2001) Modulation of p27/Cdk2 complex formation through 4D5-mediated inhibition of HER2 receptor signaling. *Ann Oncol* **12**(Suppl 1): S21–S22
- Lerma E, Catasus L, Gallardo A, Peiro G, Alonso C, Aranda I, Barnadas A, Prat J (2008) Exon 20 PIK3CA mutations decreases survival in aggressive (HER-2 positive) breast carcinomas. *Virchows Arch* **453**: 133–139
- Lu Y, Lin YZ, LaPushin R, Cuevas B, Fang X, Yu SX, Davies MA, Khan H, Furui T, Mao M, Zinner R, Hung MC, Steck P, Siminovitch K, Mills GB (1999) The PTEN/MMAC1/TEP tumour suppressor gene decreases cell growth and induces apoptosis and anoikis in breast cancer cells. *Oncogene* **18**: 7034–7045
- Lu Y, Zi X, Pollak M (2004) Molecular mechanisms underlying IGF-I-induced attenuation of the growth-inhibitory activity of trastuzumab (Herceptin) on SKBR3 breast cancer cells. *Int J Cancer* **108**: 334–341
- Lu Y, Zi X, Zhao Y, Mascarenhas D, Pollak M (2001) Insulin-like growth factor-I receptor signaling and resistance to trastuzumab (Herceptin). *J Natl Cancer Inst* **93**: 1852–1857

- Mahanta S, Fessler SP, Park J, Bamdad C (2008) A minimal fragment of MUC1 mediates growth of cancer cells. *PLoS One* 3: e2054
- Margariti N, Fox SB, Bottini A, Generali D (2011) "Overcoming breast cancer drug resistance with mTOR inhibitors". Could it be a myth or a real possibility in the short-term future? *Breast Cancer Res Treat* 128: 599–606
- Morrow PK, Wulf GM, Ensor J, Booser DJ, Moore JA, Flores PR, Xiong Y, Zhang S, Krop IE, Winer EP, Kindelberger DW, Covello J, Sahin AA, Nunez R, Hortobagyi GN, Yu D, Esteva FJ (2011) Phase I/II study of trastuzumab in combination with everolimus (RAD001) in patients with HER2-overexpressing metastatic breast cancer who progressed on trastuzumab-based therapy. *J Clin Oncol* 29(23): 3126–3132
- Murphy CG, Modi S (2009) HER2 breast cancer therapies: a review. *Biologics* 3: 289–301
- Nagata Y, Lan KH, Zhou X, Tan M, Esteva FJ, Sahin AA, Klos KS, Li P, Monia BP, Nguyen NT, Hortobagyi GN, Hung MC, Yu D (2004) PTEN activation contributes to tumour inhibition by trastuzumab, and loss of PTEN predicts trastuzumab resistance in patients. *Cancer Cell* 6: 117–127
- Nagy P, Friedlander E, Tanner M, Kapanen AI, Carraway KL, Isola J, Jovin TM (2005) Decreased accessibility and lack of activation of ErbB2 in JIMT-1, a herceptin-resistant, MUC4-expressing breast cancer cell line. *Cancer Res* 65: 473–482
- Nahta R, O'Regan RM (2011) Evolving strategies for overcoming resistance to HER2-directed therapy: targeting the PI3K/Akt/mTOR pathway. *Clin Breast Cancer* 10(Suppl 3): S72–S78
- Nahta R, Takahashi T, Ueno NT, Hung MC, Esteva FJ (2004) P27(kip1) down-regulation is associated with trastuzumab resistance in breast cancer cells. *Cancer Res* 64: 3981–3986
- Nahta R, Yuan LX, Zhang B, Kobayashi R, Esteva FJ (2005) Insulin-like growth factor-I receptor/human epidermal growth factor receptor 2 heterodimerization contributes to trastuzumab resistance of breast cancer cells. *Cancer Res* 65: 11118–11128
- Nguyen PL, Taghian AG, Katz MS, Niemierko A, Abi Raad RF, Boon WL, Bellon JR, Wong JS, Smith BL, Harris JR (2008) Breast cancer subtype approximated by estrogen receptor, progesterone receptor, and HER-2 is associated with local and distant recurrence after breast-conserving therapy. *J Clin Oncol* 26: 2373–2378
- Panigrahi AR, Pinder SE, Chan SY, Paish EC, Robertson JF, Ellis IO (2004) The role of PTEN and its signalling pathways, including AKT, in breast cancer; an assessment of relationships with other prognostic factors and with outcome. *J Pathol* 204: 93–100
- Pegram MD, Pienkowski T, Northfelt DW, Eiermann W, Patel R, Fumoleau P, Quan E, Crown J, Toppmeyer D, Smylie M, Riva A, Blitz S, Press MF, Reese D, Lindsay MA, Slamon DJ (2004) Results of two open-label, multicenter phase II studies of docetaxel, platinum salts, and trastuzumab in HER2-positive advanced breast cancer. *J Natl Cancer Inst* 96: 759–769
- Peiro G, Adrover E, Sanchez-Tejada L, Lerma E, Planelles M, Sanchez-Paya J, Aranda FI, Giner D, Gutierrez-Avino FJ (2011) Increased insulin-like growth factor-1 receptor mRNA expression predicts poor survival in immunophenotypes of early breast carcinoma. *Mod Pathol* 24: 201–208
- Peiro G, Aranda FI, Adrover E, Niveiro M, Alenda C, Paya A, Segui J (2007) Analysis of HER2 by chromogenic *in situ* hybridization and immunohistochemistry in lymph node-negative breast carcinoma: prognostic relevance. *Hum Pathol* 38: 26–34
- Peiro G, Benloch S, Sanchez-Tejada L, Adrover E, Lerma E, Peiro FM, Sanchez-Paya J, Aranda FI (2009) Low activation of insulin-like growth factor 1-receptor (IGF1R) is associated with local recurrence in early breast carcinoma. *Breast Cancer Res Treat* 117: 433–441
- Piccart-Gebhart MJ, Procter M, Leyland-Jones B, Goldhirsch A, Untch M, Smith I, Gianni L, Baselga J, Bell R, Jackisch C, Cameron D, Dowsett M, Barrios CH, Steger G, Huang CS, Andersson M, Inbar M, Lichinitser M, Lang I, Nitz U, Iwata H, Thomassen C, Lohrisch C, Suter TM, Ruschoff J, Suto T, Greatorex V, Ward C, Straehle C, McFadden E, Dolci MS, Gelber RD (2005) Trastuzumab after adjuvant chemotherapy in HER2-positive breast cancer. *N Engl J Med* 353: 1659–1672
- Razis E, Bobos M, Kotoula V, Eleftheraki AG, Kalofonos HP, Pavlakis K, Papakostas P, Aravantinos G, Rigakos G, Efstratiou I, Petraki K, Bafaloukos D, Kostopoulos I, Pectasides D, Kalogeris KT, Skarlos D, Fountzilas G (2011) Evaluation of the association of PIK3CA mutations and PTEN loss with efficacy of trastuzumab therapy in metastatic breast cancer. *Breast Cancer Res Treat* 128: 447–456
- Saal LH, Holm K, Maurer M, Memeo L, Su T, Wang X, Yu JS, Malmstrom PO, Mansukhani M, Enoksson J, Hibshoosh H, Borg A, Parsons R (2005) PIK3CA mutations correlate with hormone receptors, node metastasis, and ERBB2, and are mutually exclusive with PTEN loss in human breast carcinoma. *Cancer Res* 65: 2554–2559
- Samuels Y, Wang Z, Bardelli A, Silliman N, Ptak J, Szabo S, Yan H, Gazdar A, Powell SM, Riggins GJ, Willson JK, Markowitz S, Kinzler KW, Vogelstein B, Velculescu VE (2004) High frequency of mutations of the PIK3CA gene in human cancers. *Science* 304: 554
- Slamon DJ, Clark GM, Wong SG, Levin WJ, Ullrich A, McGuire WL (1987) Human breast cancer: correlation of relapse and survival with amplification of the HER-2/neu oncogene. *Science* 235: 177–182
- Slamon DJ, Godolphin W, Jones LA, Holt JA, Wong SG, Keith DE, Levin WJ, Stuart SG, Udove J, Ullrich A, Press MF (1989) Studies of the HER-2/neu proto-oncogene in human breast and ovarian cancer. *Science* 244: 707–712
- Slamon DJ, Leyland-Jones B, Shak S, Fuchs H, Paton V, Bajamonde A, Fleming T, Eiermann W, Wolter J, Pegram M, Baselga J, Norton L (2001) Use of chemotherapy plus a monoclonal antibody against HER2 for metastatic breast cancer that overexpresses HER2. *N Engl J Med* 344: 783–792
- Soria JC, Lee HY, Lee JI, Wang L, Issa JP, Kemp BL, Liu DD, Kurie JM, Mao L, Khuri FR (2002) Lack of PTEN expression in non-small cell lung cancer could be related to promoter methylation. *Clin Cancer Res* 8: 1178–1184
- Stemke-Hale K, Gonzalez-Angulo AM, Lluch A, Neve RM, Kuo WL, Davies M, Carey M, Hu Z, Guan Y, Sahin A, Symmans WF, Pusztai L, Nolden LK, Horlings H, Berns K, Hung MC, van de Vijver MJ, Valero V, Gray JW, Bernard R, Mills GB, Hennessy BT (2008) An integrative genomic and proteomic analysis of PIK3CA, PTEN, and AKT mutations in breast cancer. *Cancer Res* 68: 6084–6091
- Untch M, Gelber RD, Jackisch C, Procter M, Baselga J, Bell R, Cameron D, Bari M, Smith I, Leyland-Jones B, de Azambuja E, Wermuth P, Khasanov R, Feng-Yi F, Constantine C, Mayordomo JL, Su CH, Yu SY, Lluch A, Senkus-Konefska E, Price C, Haslbauer F, Suarez Sahui T, Srimuninnimit V, Colleoni M, Coates AS, Piccart-Gebhart MJ, Goldhirsch A (2008) Estimating the magnitude of trastuzumab effects within patient subgroups in the HERA trial. *Ann Oncol* 19: 1090–1096
- Vanhaesebroeck B, Alessi DR (2000) The PI3K-PDK1 connection: more than just a road to PKB. *Biochem J* 346(Part 3): 561–576
- Viani GA, Afonso SL, Stefano EJ, De Fendi LI, Soares FV (2007) Adjuvant trastuzumab in the treatment of HER-2-positive early breast cancer: a meta-analysis of published randomized trials. *BMC Cancer* 7: 153
- Vogel CL, Cobleigh MA, Tripathy D, Gutheil JC, Harris LN, Fehrenbacher L, Slamon DJ, Murphy M, Novotny WF, Burchmore M, Shak S, Stewart SJ, Press M (2002) Efficacy and safety of trastuzumab as a single agent in first-line treatment of HER2-overexpressing metastatic breast cancer. *J Clin Oncol* 20: 719–726
- Yamashita H, Nishio M, Toyama T, Sugiura H, Zhang Z, Kobayashi S, Iwase H (2004) Coexistence of HER2 over-expression and p53 protein accumulation is a strong prognostic molecular marker in breast cancer. *Breast Cancer Res* 6: R24–R30
- Yao E, Zhou W, Lee-Hoefflin ST, Truong T, Haverty PM, Eastham-Anderson J, Lewin-Koh N, Gunter B, Belvin M, Murray LJ, Friedman LS, Sliwkowski MX, Hoefflin KP (2009) Suppression of HER2/HER3-mediated growth of breast cancer cells with combinations of GDC-0941 PI3K inhibitor, trastuzumab, and pertuzumab. *Clin Cancer Res* 15: 4147–4156
- Zhang S, Huang WC, Li P, Guo H, Poh SB, Brady SW, Xiong Y, Tseng LM, Li SH, Ding Z, Sahin AA, Esteva FJ, Hortobagyi GN, Yu D (2011) Combating trastuzumab resistance by targeting SRC, a common node downstream of multiple resistance pathways. *Nat Med* 17: 461–469

This work is published under the standard license to publish agreement. After 12 months the work will become freely available and the license terms will switch to a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-Share Alike 3.0 Unported License.

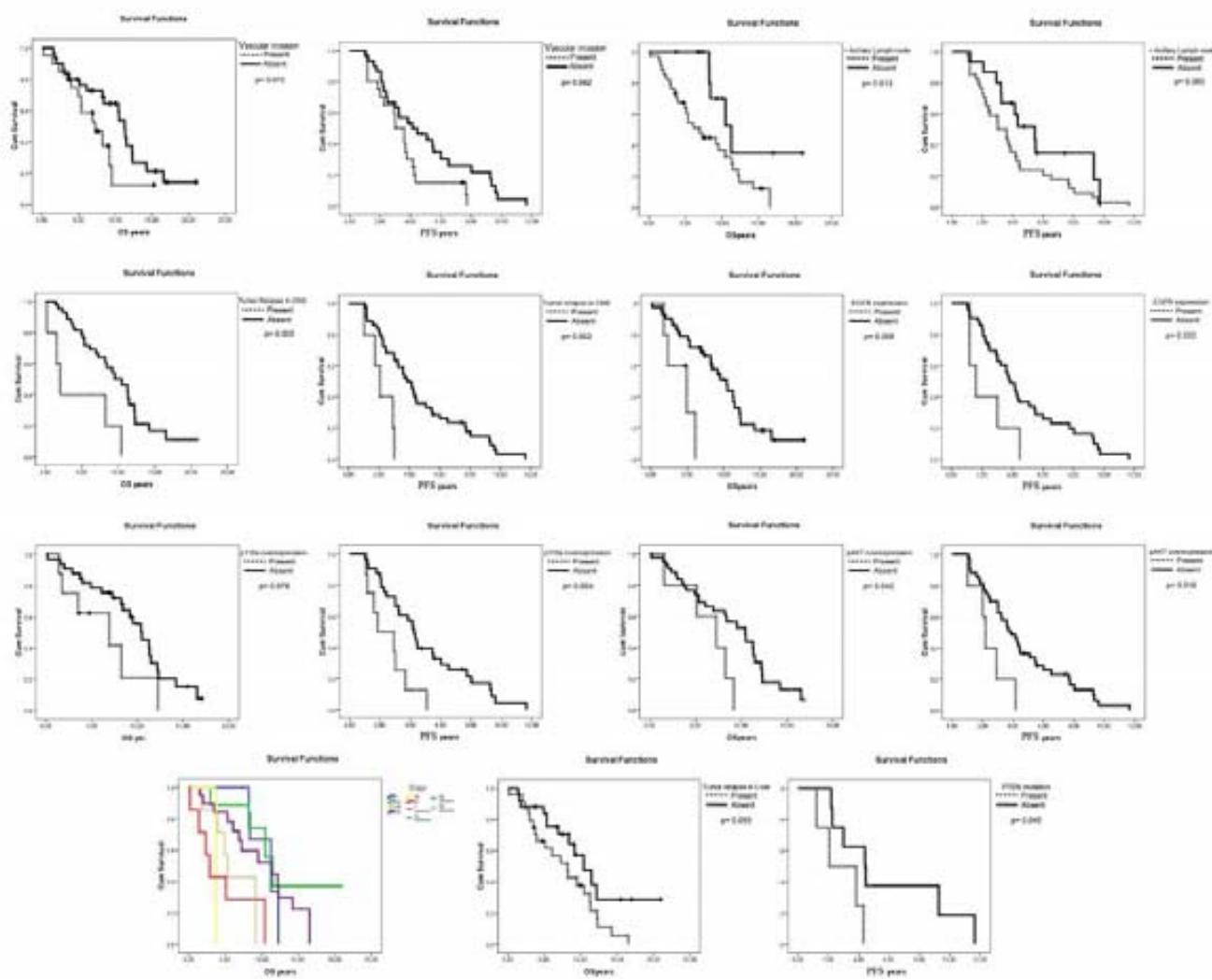


Figura IV-1: Figura suplementaria 1: Análisis univariado (Kaplan Meier) de la supervivencia en el grupo de pacientes con trastuzumab en el tratamiento de la enfermedad diseminada.

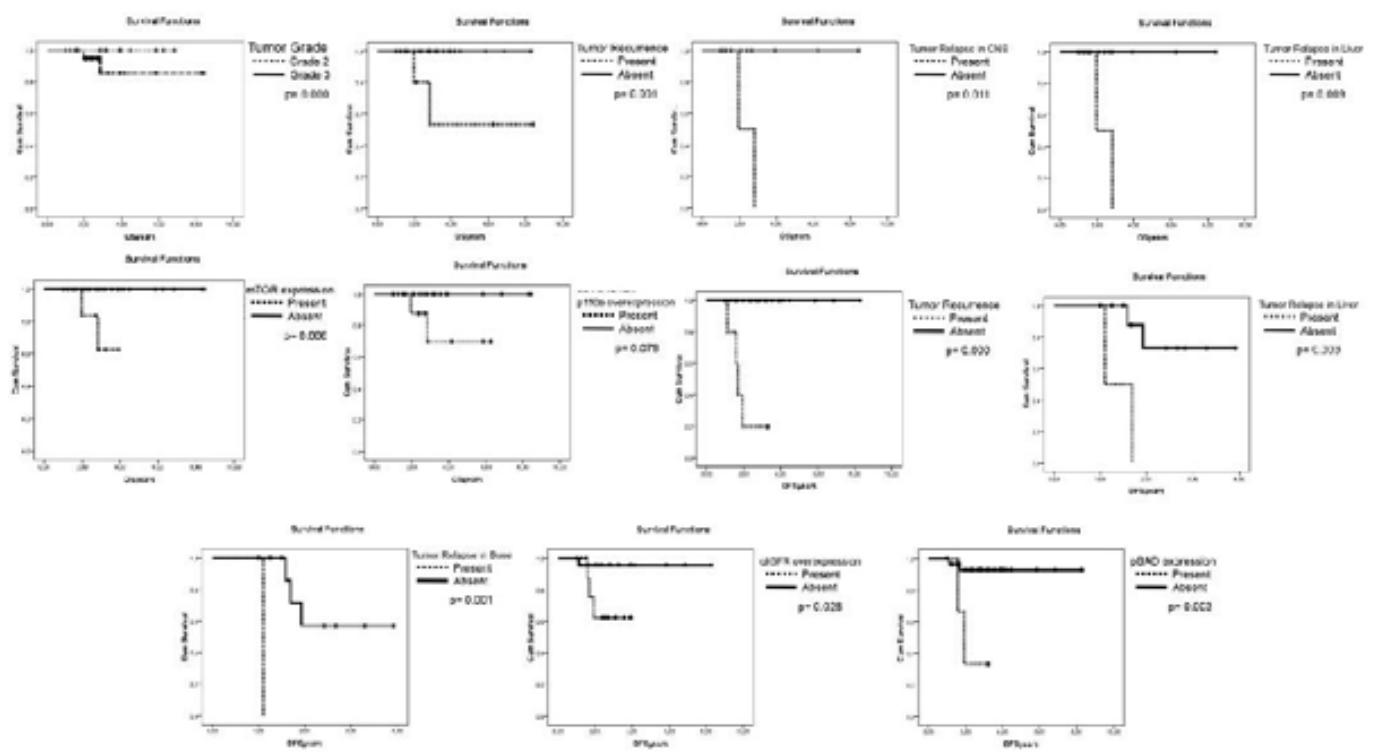


Figura IV-2: Figura suplementaria 2: Análisis univariado (Kaplan Meier) de la supervivencia en el grupo de pacientes con trastuzumab en el tratamiento adyuvante.

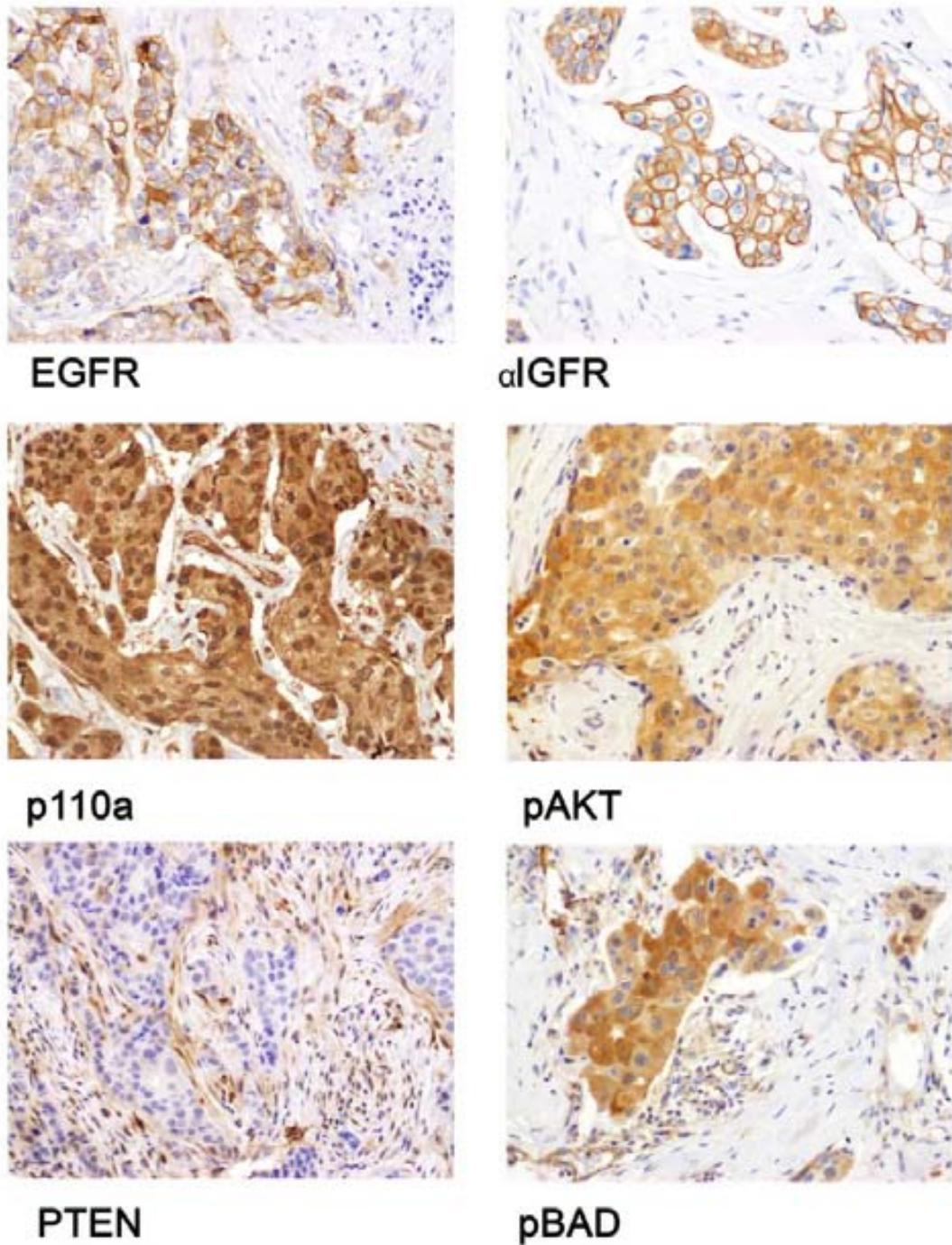


Figura IV-3: Expresión de EGFR, αIGFR, p110α, pAKT, pBAD y pérdida de PTEN en carcinomas de mama HER2 positivos (figura 1 del artículo en color).

Artículo 2:

Título:

El receptor relacionado con la lipoproteína de baja densidad 1 (LRP-1) se asocia con proliferación e invasión en los carcinomas de mama de tipo Her-2/neu y triple negativo.

Introducción:

LRP1 o el receptor de lipoproteína de baja densidad 1 es un miembro de la familia de receptores de colesterol que contribuye a la incorporación celular de colesterol y que se expresa en respuesta a la hipercolesterolemia. También se ha asociado a las neoplasias en las que modula la composición de la membrana plasmática, la respuesta a factores de crecimiento y regula los niveles de las metaloproteinasas (principalmente MMP2 y MMP9). Su papel en los carcinomas de mama todavía no está establecido.

Material y métodos:

Seleccionamos una serie de tumores procedentes de 81 pacientes con carcinomas ductales infiltrantes que incluían los subtipos luminal, HER2 y triple negativos. Determinamos la expresión de LRP1 mediante inmunohistoquímica y lo correlacionamos las diferentes variables clinicopatológicas, la expresión de receptores de membrana (HER2, EGFR), receptores de estrógenos, progesterona, Ki67, p16, MMP2 y MMP9.

Resultados

Encontramos sobreexpresión de LRP1 en el 14% de los tumores, estos eran de alto grado nuclear ($p=0.043$), con alto índice mitótico ($p=0.06$) y Ki67 elevado ($p=0.047$). La expresión de LRP1 se relacionó con los tumores de tipo HER2+ y triple negativo, mientras que LRP1 fue negativo en los tumores de tipo luminal ($p=0.040$). No encontramos correlación de LRP1 con supervivencia, aunque entre las pacientes con tumores que expresaban este receptor mostraron mayor número de recurrencias. También observamos relación de LRP1 con la expresión de

MMP9 y EGFR aunque esta asociación no fue estadísticamente significativa. Por ultimo los niveles de colesterol fueron mas elevados en las pacientes con tumores del tipo HER2+ y triple negativo que las pacientes con tumores de tipo luminal ($p=0.046$). Observamos mayores niveles de colesterol en las pacientes con tumores que sobreexpresaban LRP1, aunque esta asociación no fue estadísticamente significativa.

Conclusión:

En resumen nuestros resultados nos indican que la sobreexpresión de LRP1 esta relacionada con la proliferación de los tumores de tipo HER2 y triple negativo y que la sobreexpresión de este receptor de membrana se asocia a tumores agresivos de mama con alto grado histológico, elevado índice mitótico, Ki67 elevado y se asocia a recurrencia tumoral.



Original contribution

Low-density lipoprotein receptor-related protein 1 is associated with proliferation and invasiveness in Her-2/neu and triple-negative breast carcinomas[☆]

Lluís Catásus PhD^{a,*}, Alberto Gallardo MD^{a,1}, Vicenta Llorente-Cortes PhD^b, Daniel Escuin PhD^c, Josefina Muñoz BSc^a, Ariadna Tibau MD^c, Gloria Peiro PhD^d, Agustí Barnadas PhD^c, Enrique Lerma PhD^a

^aDepartment of Pathology, Hospital de la Santa Creu i Sant Pau, Institut d'Investigació Biomèdica (IIB) Sant Pau, Autonomous University of Barcelona, 08041 Barcelona, Spain

^bCardiovascular Research Center, Consejo Superior de Investigación Científica - Institut Català de Ciències Cardiovasculars (CSIC-ICCC), Hospital de la Santa Creu i Sant Pau, Autonomous University of Barcelona, 08041 Barcelona, Spain

^cDepartment of Medical Oncology, Hospital de la Santa Creu i Sant Pau, Institut d'Investigació Biomèdica (IIB) Sant Pau, Autonomous University of Barcelona, 08041 Barcelona, Spain

^dResearch Unit of the General Hospital of Alacant, 03010 Alacant, Spain

Received 1 December 2010; accepted 22 January 2011

Keywords:

Low-density lipoprotein receptor-related protein 1;
Breast carcinoma;
Triple negative;
Her-2/neu;
Cholesterol levels

Summary Low-density lipoprotein receptor-related protein 1, a member of the low-density lipoprotein cholesterol receptor family, has been implicated in the progression of certain tumors; but it remains unclear whether it plays a role in infiltrating ductal breast carcinomas. We studied a series of 81 ductal breast tumors to determine the correlation of low-density lipoprotein receptor-related protein 1 overexpression with clinicopathologic and immunohistochemical characteristics associated with prognosis. Low-density lipoprotein receptor-related protein 1 overexpression was identified in 14% (11/81) of tumors and was correlated with a high nuclear grade ($P = .043$), high mitotic index ($P = .006$), and Ki-67 greater than 20% ($P = .047$). Furthermore, low-density lipoprotein receptor-related protein 1 expression was associated with aggressive carcinomas (triple-negative tumors [21%, 7/33] and Her-2/neu tumors [17%, 4/24]) but not with hormone-dependent carcinomas (0%, 0/24) ($P = .040$). There was no correlation between low-density lipoprotein receptor-related protein 1 expression and survival, but a trend was found between low-density lipoprotein receptor-related protein 1 overexpression and tumor recurrence. Low-density lipoprotein receptor-related protein 1 overexpression was related to proliferation and invasiveness in Her-2/neu and triple-negative breast carcinoma. Moreover, patients with low-density lipoprotein receptor-related protein 1-positive tumors had higher cholesterol levels (62.5%, 5/8) than those with low-density lipoprotein receptor-related protein 1-negative tumors (40%, 19/47). Nevertheless, the correlation between low-density lipoprotein receptor-related protein 1 and

[☆] This work was supported by grants FIS PI06-0709, FIS PI07-0899, RTICCFIS RD06/0020/0015, and REDINSCOR RD06/0003/0015 from the Department of Health, Spain, and Mutua Madrileña Foundation (2008) to Enrique Lerma and by a Pfizer grant to Agustí Barnadas and Enrique Lerma.

* Corresponding author. Department of Pathology, Hospital de la Santa Creu i Sant Pau, Sant Quintí 89, 08041 Barcelona, Spain.

E-mail address: lcatasus@santpau.cat (L. Catásus).

¹ The authors contributed equally to the work.

hypercholesterolemia was not statistically significant; but cholesterol levels were higher in patients with triple-negative breast carcinoma (60%, 15/25) and Her-2/neu carcinomas (40%, 6/15) than in luminal-A carcinomas (20%, 3/15) ($P = .046$). These findings suggest a relationship between hypercholesterolemia and aggressiveness of ductal breast carcinomas.

© 2011 Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

1. Introduction

Breast cancer ranks second among cancer deaths in women and accounts for 27% of all new cancer cases in women [1]. It represents a heterogeneous group of tumors of diverse morphology and behavior. Nearly 80% of breast cancers are histologically classified as invasive ductal carcinoma [2], and tumor grading helps to predict prognosis with relative accuracy in these cases [3]. Breast cancers are currently tested for the expression of the estrogen receptor (ER), progesterone receptor (PR), and Her-2/neu receptor because these markers have important implications in prognosis and treatment [4-12]. Prognostic factors also include staging (ie, tumor size, location, grade, and whether disease has spread to other parts of the body), recurrence of the disease, and age of patient. Nevertheless, many issues concerning tumor biology remain unanswered.

Low-density lipoprotein receptor-related protein 1 (LRP-1) has recently been described as a key receptor in cancer. However, results from in vitro experiments are controversial because they have shown both protumorigenic and antitumorigenic properties of LRP-1. LRP-1, a large endocytic receptor belonging to the low-density lipoprotein receptor family, modulates the proteome composition of plasma membrane and the response to growth factors. It also modulates the levels of extracellular matrix proteins through metalloproteinases (MMPs) [13-16]. MMPs, especially MMP-2 and MMP-9, are considered pivotal in cancer invasiveness. Both are regulated by LRP-1 [17]. Whereas some investigators have stated that LRP-1 induces the expression of MMP-9 [18], promoting invasiveness and metastasis of breast cancer cells [19-21], others have associated LRP-1 with the clearance of extracellular proteases involved in metastatic spread of several neoplasms [22-25].

LRP-1 is upregulated by hypercholesterolemia in human vascular smooth muscle cells [26]. In addition, LRP-1 contributes to cholesterol intake in several cell types [27] and modulates postprandial lipid transport and glucose homeostasis in mice [28]. In the present work, we sought to investigate the relationships between LRP-1 expression and proliferative markers, serum cholesterol levels, and other clinicopathologic features associated with prognosis in a series of patients with infiltrating ductal breast carcinomas.

2. Materials and methods

2.1. Patients, tissue samples, and DNA isolation

This study was conducted according to the Declaration of Helsinki principles, with approval from the local ethics committee. We studied tumor samples from 81 infiltrating ductal breast carcinomas from the Frozen Tumor Tissue Bank in the Pathology Department of Hospital Santa Creu i Sant Pau, Barcelona, Spain. Based on standard determination of ERs, PRs, and Her-2, we established 3 groups of tumors: 24 ER/PR+ or luminal-A tumors, 24 Her-2/neu tumors, and 33 triple-negative breast carcinomas. For this comparative clinicopathologic and molecular genetic study, we selected a similar number of each variety of breast carcinomas. All hematoxylin and eosin slides were reviewed to confirm conventional morphologic parameters. Patients were staged according to the World Health Organization system, and tumors were classified according to the Elston-Ellis grading system [3]. The mitotic index was scored by counting the number of mitoses per 10 high-power fields (HPF) with an estimated area of 0.0625 mm². We considered mitotic index scores less than 7 as low, scores between 7 and 13 as intermediate, and scores more than 13 as high. Patient serum cholesterol levels, including low-density lipoprotein and high-density lipoprotein, at the time of breast cancer diagnosis, before chemotherapy, were retrieved from the clinical records.

Serum cholesterol level more than 6.21 mmol/L (240 mg/dL) was considered high in accordance with the American Heart Association guidelines (<http://www.americanheart.org>).

2.2. Tissue microarray design

Tissue microarrays were prepared with 3 representative areas of each infiltrating ductal breast carcinoma. Tumor areas were selected from hematoxylin and eosin slides and marked on the corresponding paraffin blocks. One-millimeter tissue cores were precisely arrayed in a paraffin block using a tissue microarray workstation (Beecher Instruments, Sun Prairie, WI).

2.3. Immunohistochemical analysis

Protein expression was evaluated by immunohistochemistry on 4-μm sections obtained from each tissue microarray mounted on charged slides. Immunohistochemical staining

was performed using a Dako Autostainer (Dako, Glostrup, Denmark). Mouse monoclonal primary antibodies anti-LRP-1 (dil.1:50; RDI; Fitzgerald Industries International, North Acton, MA), anti-MMP-9 (diluted 1:50; Novocastra; Leica, Wetzlar, Germany), anti-Ki-67 (prediluted; Dako), and anti-p16 (prediluted; MTM, Heidelberg, Germany) were used. Antigen retrieval was achieved in a PT module with Dako high-pH buffer (MMP-9 and p16) or Dako low-pH buffer (LRP-1 and Ki-67). LRP-1, MMP-9, and p16 were also incubated with Dako EnVision+ Linker mouse. The detection system used was Dako EnVision+ Flex, and visualization was done with 3,3-Diaminobenzidine/horse-radish peroxidase (DAB/HRP) and hematoxylin as a counterstain. Immunohistochemical staining for epidermal growth factor receptor (EGFR) was performed according to the kit instructions (Dako phDX). Moderate or strong staining in more than 10% of tumor cells was the cutoff for LRP-1 cytoplasmic positivity. Immunostaining scores for MMP-9 and p16 were calculated by multiplying the cytoplasmic staining intensity (0, no staining; 1, weak; 2, moderate; and 3, strong) by the percentage of immunoreactive tumor cells (0-100). The H-score was obtained on the 3 tissue cores from each selected area, and the mean value was considered the final H-score. H-scores 100 or greater for MMP-9 and 150 or greater for p16 were considered positive. The cutoff for the high proliferative index measured with Ki-67 was established in more than 20% of tumor cells. Membranous EGFR was considered positive when expressed in more than 10% of tumor cells. The stained sections were evaluated by 3 pathologists (A. G., E. L., and G. P.). Discordances were reviewed to achieve agreement.

2.4. Statistical analysis

Statistical analyses were performed with the SPSS/win 18.0 statistical software package (SPSS, Chicago, IL). Continuous and ordinal variables between the 2 groups were compared using the Student *t* test. Dichotomous variables were compared with Fisher exact test. Follow-up was obtained and evaluated with regard to each antibody. The Kaplan-Meier method was used to estimate survival, and the log-rank test was performed to assess survival differences between groups. For quantitative variables, the Cox regression was used to estimate survival differences. A 2-sided *P* = .05 was considered significant.

3. Results

3.1. Clinical and pathologic findings

The clinicopathologic features of 81 invasive ductal breast carcinomas are summarized in Table 1. Briefly, the mean age was 67 years (range, 38-89 years). Tumor size ranged from 0.7 to 20 cm (mean, 4 cm). All carcinomas were

Table 1 Clinicopathologic features of 81 invasive ductal breast carcinomas

Age (y), mean (range)	67 (38-89)
Tumor size (cm), mean (range)	4 (0.7-20)
Breast carcinoma types	
Luminal-A	24 (30)
Her-2/neu	24 (30)
TNBC	33 (40)
Lymph node status	
Negative	43 (61)
Positive	28 (39)
Staging	
Ia	5 (7)
Ib	1 (1)
IIa	21 (30)
IIb	23 (32)
IIIa	10 (14)
IIIb	7 (10)
IV	4 (6)
Grading	
1	7 (9)
2	25 (31)
3	49 (60)
Ductal formation	
>75%	4 (5)
25%-75%	13 (16)
<25%	64 (79)
Nuclear atypia	
1	2 (2)
2	20 (25)
3	39 (73)
Mitoses	
<7/10 mm ²	22 (27)
7-13/10 mm ²	29 (36)
>13/10 mm ²	30 (37)
DCIS	
>10%	23 (28)
Follow-up	
NED	43 (60)
AWD	15 (21)
DOD	14 (19)
LFU	9
Serum cholesterol levels	
Normal (<6.21 mmol/L)	31 (56)
Elevated (>6.21 mmol/L)	24 (44)

NOTE. Values are presented as number (percentage), unless otherwise indicated.

Abbreviations: TNBC, triple-negative breast carcinoma; DCIS, ductal carcinoma in situ; NED, no evidence of disease; AWD, alive with disease; DOD, died of disease; LFU, loss to follow-up.

of ductal type (not otherwise specified). Seven tumors (9%) were grade 1; 25 (31%), grade 2; and 49 (60%), grade 3. Adjuvant chemotherapy or radiotherapy was given according to standard protocols. Follow-up information was obtained in 72 patients (mean follow-up, 49.7 months; range, 8-180 months). Fourteen patients died of their disease, and 29 presented with tumor progression.

3.2. Serum cholesterol level

Total serum cholesterol levels, including low-density lipoprotein and high-density lipoprotein, at the time of breast cancer diagnosis were found retrospectively in the clinical history of 55 patients, with a mean level of 5.92 mmol/L (range, 3.21–8.61). Of 55 patients, 24 (44%) had elevated serum cholesterol levels (>6.21 mmol/L); these were more frequently related with nuclear grade 3 tumors (52%, 22/42) than with nuclear grade 2 tumors (15%, 2/13) ($P = .026$, Fisher test). We also found an association with tumor subtype: patients with triple-negative breast carcinomas had higher serum cholesterol levels (60%, 15/25) than Her-2/neu carcinomas (40%, 6/15) and hormone-dependent carcinomas (20%, 3/15) ($P = .046$, Fisher test).

3.3. Immunohistochemical analyses and correlations

Cytoplasmic LRP-1 overexpression was identified in tumor cells and in nonneoplastic stromal cells, whereas normal ductal cells were always negative (Fig. 1). LRP-1 was positive in 14% (11/81) of cases and was associated exclusively with triple-negative (21%, 7/33) and Her-2/neu breast carcinomas (17%, 4/24) ($P = .040$, Fisher test). LRP-1 overexpression was more commonly found in grade 3 tumors (20%, 10/49) than in grade 1 or 2 (3%, 1/32) carcinomas ($P = .043$, Fisher test). Most tumors with LRP-1 expression had elevated mitotic index (>13 mitosis per 10 HPF) ($P = .006$, Fisher test) (Fig. 2). Patients with LRP-1-positive tumors had higher cholesterol levels (62.5%, 5/8) than those with

LRP-1-negative tumors (40%, 19/47), although the difference did not reach statistical significance ($P = \text{not significant [NS]}$). No correlations were found between LRP-1 immunoexpression and other clinicopathologic parameters. Furthermore, no correlation was seen between LRP-1 expression and overall survival using the Kaplan-Meier method and Cox regression; but a trend was found between LRP-1 overexpression and tumor recurrence.

Cytoplasmic MMP-9 staining was localized in tumor and in stromal cells in a significant percentage of cases. The H-score ranged from 0 to 300 (mean, 109.1). MMP-9-positive staining (H-score ≥ 100) was detected in 38% (28/73) of cases, more commonly in neoplasms with LRP-1 expression (67%, 6/11) than in those without LRP-1 expression (35%, 22/62), although these associations did not reach statistical significance ($P = \text{NS}$).

The percentage of Ki-67-positive cells ranged from 0 to 90 (mean, 28.4). A Ki-67 index greater than 20% was detected in 51% (37/72) of cases, and it correlated with LRP-1 overexpression ($P = .047$, Fisher test; $r = 0.303$, $P = .010$, Spearman test).

p16 was positive in 48% (21/43) of tumors, more frequently in LRP-1-positive tumors (75%, 6/8) than in those lacking LRP-1 expression (43%, 15/35), but only as a trend ($P = .1$, Fisher test). Similarly, EGFR staining detected in 21% (17/81) of the tumors was associated with positive LRP-1 overexpression in 57% (4/7) of triple-negative breast carcinomas ($P = .1$, Fisher test).

Fig. 3 shows images of the immunohistochemical stainings of LRP-1, MMP-9, Ki-67, and EGFR in a breast

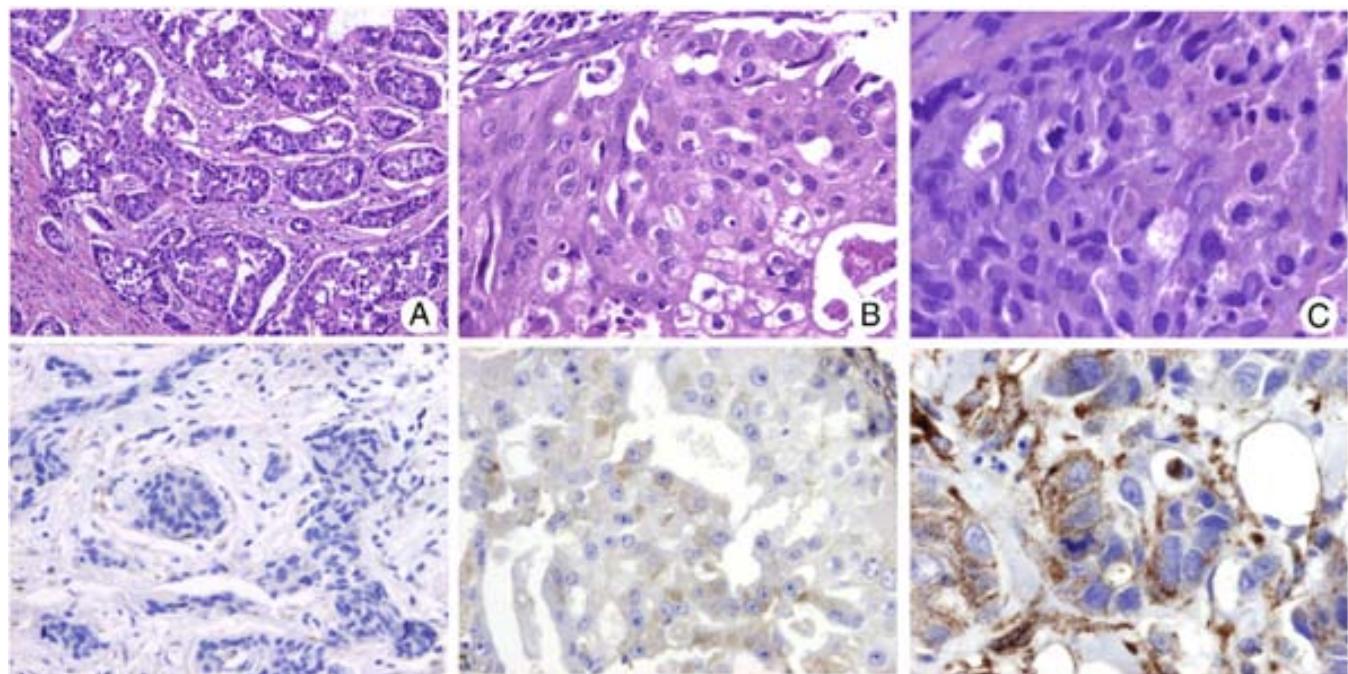


Fig. 1 Distribution and expression pattern of LRP-1 in breast carcinomas investigated using immunohistochemistry: negative (A), weak (B), and strong (C).

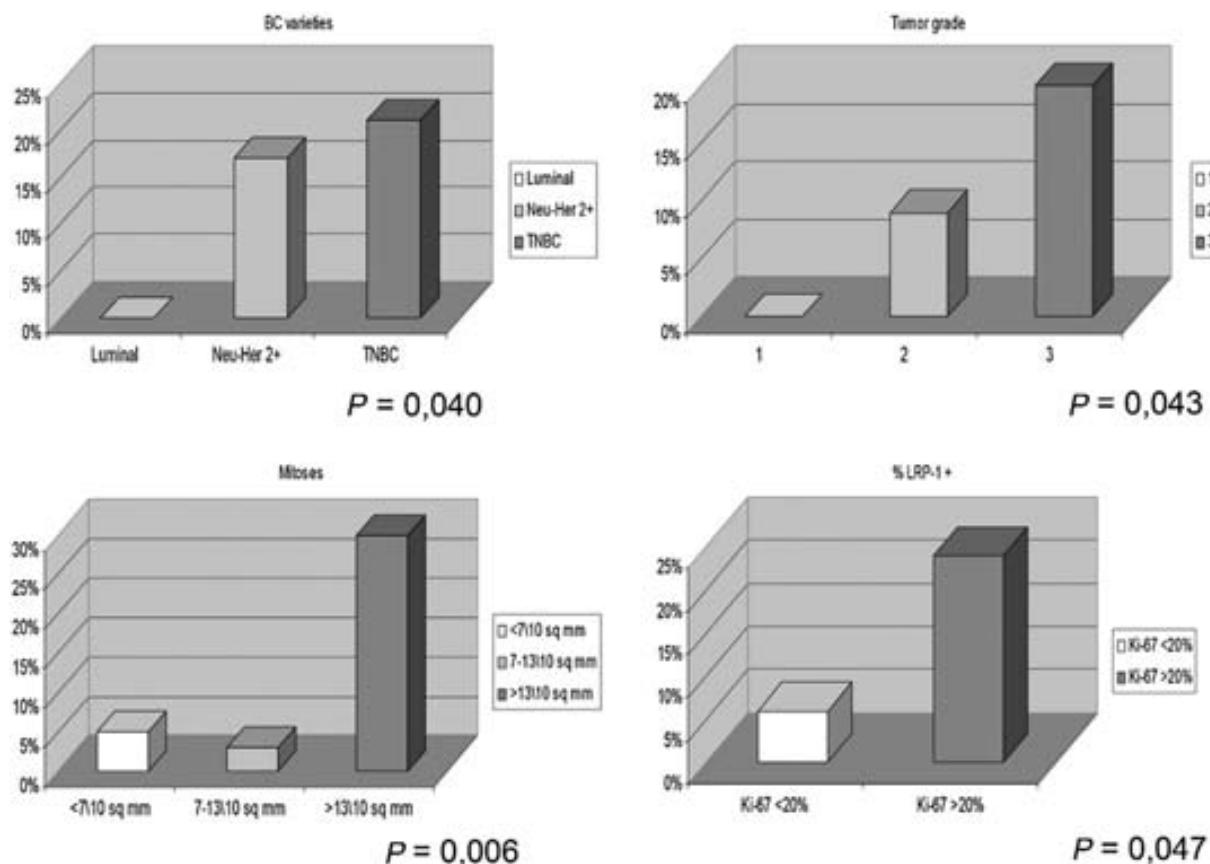


Fig. 2 Graphs representing the percentage of positive LRP-1 immunoexpression tumors with the breast-type carcinoma, tumor grade, mitotic index, and Ki-67 protein expression. *P* values were calculated using Fisher test.

carcinoma. A summary of the relationships between the LRP-1 expression and clinical and molecular features is shown in Table 2.

4. Discussion

In this study, we found that LRP-1, an important cholesterol receptor, is overexpressed in breast carcinomas, playing a role in the invasiveness and proliferation of Her-2/neu and triple-negative breast carcinomas, but not in hormone-dependent tumors.

LRP-1 recognizes extracellular ligands and cytoplasmic adaptor proteins and modulates the activity of other transmembrane receptors, such as integrins and tyrosine kinase receptors [13]. In cancer cells, LRP-1 can be considered a key factor in cytoskeleton dynamics modulation, focal adhesion, and cellular proliferation [20,29-31]. The association between LRP-1, urokinase, urokinase receptor, and plasminogen activator inhibitor 1 in the filopodia of breast cancer cells is related to in vitro attachment and cell migration [21]. Taken together, these results point to LRP-1 as a key receptor in cancer. In the present work, we analyzed LRP-1 expression in a series of

human breast carcinomas and its relationship with tumor invasion, proliferation, and prognosis. Our results show that LRP-1 overexpression is present in 20% of aggressive human breast carcinomas and generally associated with high histologic grade, elevated mitotic index, and Ki-67 greater than 20% ($P < .05$ in all). Previous in vitro studies have shown LRP-1 expression in breast cancer cell lines [18,19,21,32]. However, LRP-1 expression has not been reported in in vivo studies to date [33]. In our series, cytoplasmic LRP-1 immunostaining was identified in tumor cells and in nonneoplastic stromal cells (fibroblasts and macrophages), whereas normal ductal cells were always negative. It is well known that LRP-1 receptor is expressed by diverse stromal cell types, including fibroblasts and macrophages [13,34]. Many studies have shown that tumor progression occurs as a consequence of stroma-cancer cell interactions. Tumor-associated macrophages can promote tumor cell motility through activation of angiogenesis, extracellular matrix breakdown, and tissue remodeling.

To our knowledge, this is the first histopathologic confirmation of a relationship between LRP-1 expression and aggressiveness in a series of patients with breast carcinomas. Our results are in agreement with recent data from in vitro studies showing that LRP-1 promotes invasiveness and cell survival, suggesting that LRP-1

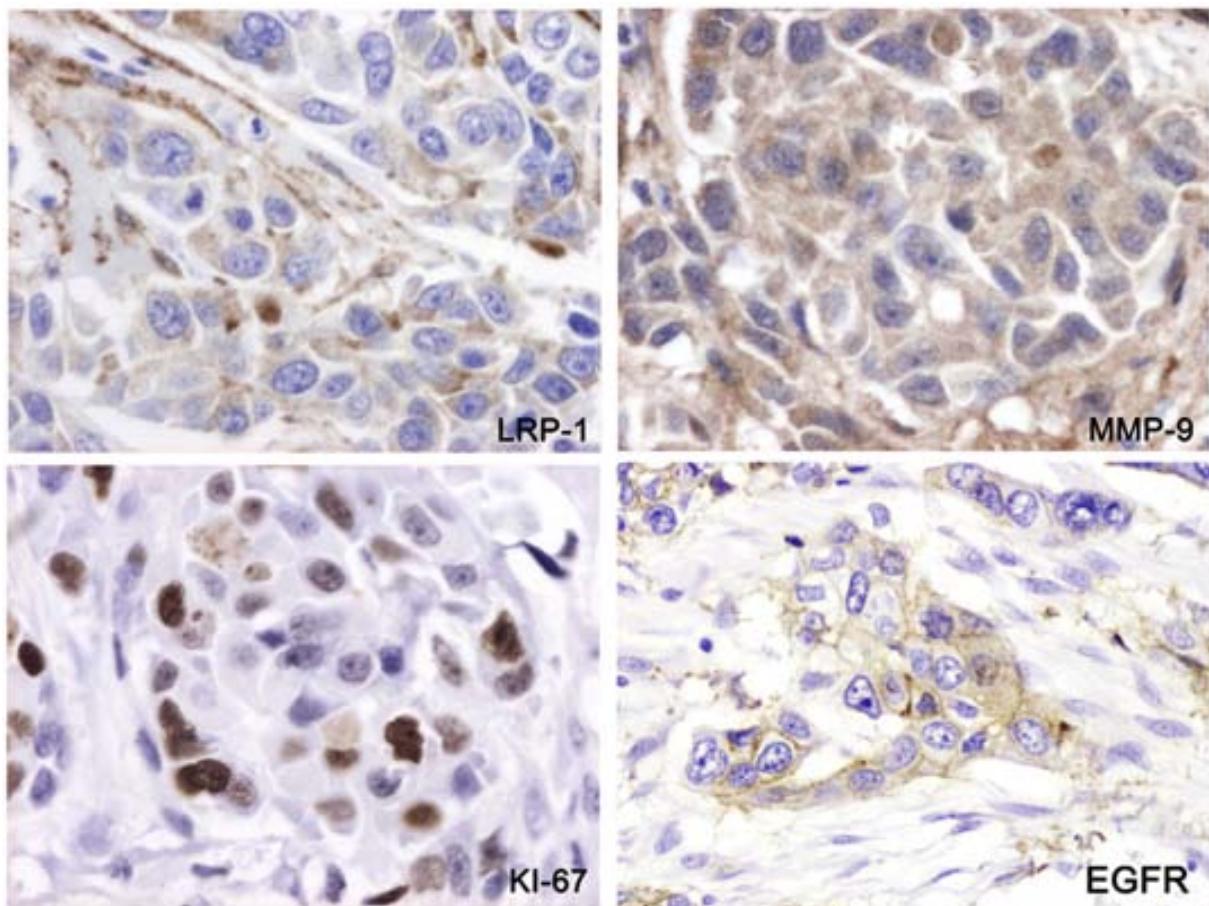


Fig. 3 Panel of immunoreactions for LRP-1, MMP-9, EGFR, and Ki-67 in the same case of breast carcinoma.

overexpression is associated with tumor cell invasion and poor prognosis [18-21]. Mechanisms of tumor invasion seem complex, but it has recently been published that nexin-1 controls mammary cancer metastasis through LRP-1-mediated MMP-9 expression [18]. Results from our present study show that MMP-9 expression was more commonly found in carcinomas with positive LRP-1 expression than in those without LRP-1 expression.

Other recent evidence from in vitro studies also suggests a protumor role of LRP-1. It is known that LRP-1 is a receptor with partial sequence homology with EGFR [35], which is frequently expressed in triple-negative breast carcinoma [36]. EGFR appears to induce breast carcinoma cell proliferation by the potential formations of heterodimers with Her-2 [37]. It will be interesting to know whether Her-2 may also form heterodimers with LRP-1. In the present work, we found coexpression of EGFR and LRP-1 in 57% of triple-negative breast carcinomas ($P = .1$). Furthermore, we were able to correlate LRP-1 overexpression with a high mitotic index (>13 mitosis per 10 HPF) and an elevated Ki-67. A high Ki-67 index, a well-known marker of proliferation, has been associated with shorter disease-free survival and overall survival and more frequent tumor recurrence in a meta-analysis of 46 studies including 12 155 patients with early breast carcinoma [38].

Interestingly, the results from the present study show that patients with LRP-1-positive tumors had higher cholesterol levels (62.5%, 5/8) than those with LRP-1-negative tumors (40%, 19/47). These findings suggest a relationship between hypercholesterolemia and aggressiveness of ductal breast carcinomas. Nevertheless, the sample size of our series is small; and more investigations with an independent large sample set of breast carcinomas are needed to clarify this point. These results are in agreement with previous studies suggesting that high proliferative cells from colorectal carcinomas show LRP-1 overexpression to cover cholesterol cellular needs for membrane production [25]. Moreover, LRP-1 expression is upregulated by lipoproteins in vitro and by diet-induced hypercholesterolemia in vivo [26,27,39]. Lipid profile alterations significantly correlated with breast cancer risk [40] and the metabolic syndrome (obesity, glucose intolerance, low serum high-density lipoprotein cholesterol, high serum triglycerides, and hypertension) alterations have been related with triple-negative breast carcinomas [41]. LRP-1 may thus be an intermediate effector in the deleterious effect of lipid metabolic alterations in breast cancer. In addition, the prevention of LRP-1 overexpression may be useful as a potential therapeutic strategy to control tumor progression in patients with dyslipidemia. Indeed, it has already been described that lipophilic statins

Table 2 Relationships between the LRP-1 expression and clinicopathologic features in breast carcinomas

	LRP-1 immunoexpression	P
Breast carcinoma types		
Luminal-A (n = 24)	0 (0)	
Her-2/neu (n = 24)	4 (17)	
TNBC (n = 33)	7 (21)	.040
Grade		
1 (n = 7)	0 (0)	
2 (n = 25)	1 (9)	
3 (n = 49)	10 (20)	.043
Mitoses		
<7/10 mm ² (n = 22)	1 (5)	
7-13/10 mm ² (n = 29)	1 (3)	
>13/10 mm ² (n = 30)	9 (30)	.006
MMP-9 immunoexpression		
Negative (score ≤100) (n = 45)	5 (11)	
Positive (score >100) (n = 28)	6 (21)	NS
Ki-67 immunoexpression		
Negative (LI <20%) (n = 35)	2 (6)	
Positive (LI >20%) (n = 37)	9 (24)	.047
p16 immunoexpression		
Negative (score ≤150) (n = 22)	2 (9)	
Positive (score >150) (n = 21)	6 (29)	.132
Serum cholesterol levels		
Normal (<6.21 mmol/L) (n = 31)	3 (10)	
Elevated (>6.21 mmol/L) (n = 24)	5 (21)	NS

NOTE. Values are presented as number (percentage). P values were calculated by Fisher test.

Abbreviations: TNBC, triple-negative breast carcinoma; LI, labeling index.

exert direct anticancer activity by reducing tumor cell proliferation in a mouse Her-2/neu breast cancer model and in vitro cell lines [42]. These findings could provide support for future statin trials in breast cancer patients with altered lipid profile levels because these drugs may play a dual role in the prevention of heart disease and breast cancer [43,44].

In summary, our results show that LRP-1 overexpression seems to be involved in the proliferation of Her-2/neu and especially triple-negative tumors, but not in hormone-related breast carcinoma. Increased LRP-1 expression is predictive of aggressive neoplasms because it is associated with high histologic grade, elevated mitotic index, Ki-67 greater than 20%, and tumor recurrence.

References

- Jemal A, Siegel R, Ward E, Hao Y, Xu J, Thun MJ. Cancer statistics, 2009. CA Cancer J Clin 2009;59:225-49.
- Ellis IO, Schnitt SJ, Sastre-Garau X, et al. Invasive breast carcinoma. In: Tavassoli FA, Devilee P, editors. Tumors of the breast and female genital organs. Lyon: IARC press; 2003. p. 13-59.
- Elston CW, Ellis IO. Pathological prognostic factors in breast cancer. I. The value of histological grade in breast cancer: experience from a large study with long-term follow-up. Histopathology 1991;19:403-10.
- Sotiriou C, Pusztai L. Gene-expression signatures in breast cancer. N Engl J Med 2009;360:790-800.
- Sørlie T, Perou CM, Tibshirani R, et al. Gene expression patterns of breast carcinomas distinguish tumor subclasses with clinical implications. Proc Natl Acad Sci USA 2001;98:10869-74.
- van 't Veer LJ, Dai H, van de Vijver MJ. Gene expression profiling predicts clinical outcome of breast cancer. Nature 2002;415:530-6.
- Sotiriou C, Neo SY, McShane LM, et al. Breast cancer classification and prognosis based on gene expression profiles from a population based study. Proc Natl Acad Sci USA 2003;100:10393-8.
- Huang E, Cheng SH, Dressman H, et al. Gene expression predictors of breast cancer outcomes. Lancet 2003;361:1590-6.
- Callagy G, Cattaneo E, Diago Y, et al. Molecular classification of breast carcinomas using tissue microarrays. Diag Mol Pathol 2003;12:27-34.
- Bauer KR, Brown M, Cress RD, Parise CA, Caggiano V. Descriptive analysis of estrogen receptor (ER)-negative, progesterone receptor (PR)-negative, and HER2-negative invasive breast cancer, the so-called triple-negative phenotype. Population-based study from the California Cancer Registry. Cancer 2007;109:1721-8.
- Nguyen PL, Taghian AG, Katz MS, et al. Breast cancer subtype approximated by estrogen receptor, progesterone receptor, and HER-2 is associated with local and distant recurrence after breast-conserving therapy. J Clin Oncol 2008;26:2373-8.
- Smid M, Wang Y, Zhang Y, et al. Subtypes of breast cancer show preferential site of relapse. Cancer Res 2008;68:3108-14.
- Lillis AP, Van Duyn LB, Murphy-Ullrich JE, Strickland DK. LDL receptor-related protein 1: unique tissue-specific functions revealed by selective gene knockout studies. Physiol Rev 2008;88:887-918.
- Herz J, Strickland DK. LRP1: a multifunctional scavenger and signaling receptor. J Clin Invest 2001;108:779-84.
- Lutz C, Nimpf J, Jenny M, et al. Evidence of functional modulation of the MEKK/JNK/cJun signaling cascade by the LRP. J Biol Chem 2002;277:43143-51.
- van der Geer P. Phosphorylation of LRP1: regulation of transport and signal transduction. Trends Cardiovasc Med 2002;12:160-5.
- Song H, Li Y, Lee J, Schwartz AL, Bu G. Low-density lipoprotein receptor-related protein 1 promotes cancer cell migration and invasion by inducing the expression of matrix metalloproteinases 2 and 9. Cancer Res 2009;69:879-86.
- Fayard B, Bianchi F, Dey J, et al. The serine protease inhibitor protease nexin-1 controls mammary cancer metastasis through LRP1-mediated MMP-9 expression. Cancer Res 2009;69:5690-8.
- Li Y, Wood N, Grimsley P, Yellowles D, Donnelly PK. In vitro invasiveness of human breast cancer cells is promoted by low density lipoprotein receptor-related protein. Invasion Metastasis 1998-1999;18:240-51.
- Montel V, Gaultier A, Lester RD, Campana WM, Gonias SL. The low-density lipoprotein receptor-related protein regulates cancer cell survival and metastasis development. Cancer Res 2007;67:9817-24.
- Chazaud B, Ricoux R, Christov C, Plonquet A, Gherardi RK, Barlovatz-Meimon G. Promigratory effect of plasminogen activator inhibitor-1 on invasive breast cancer cell populations. Am J Pathol 2002;160:237-46.
- Kancha RK, Stearns ME, Hussain MM. Decreased expression of LRP1 in invasive cell clones derived from human prostate and breast tumor cells. Oncol Res 1994;6:365-72.
- de Vries TJ, Verheijen JH, de Bart AC, Weidle UH, Ruiter DJ, van Muijen GN. Decreased expression of both the LRP1 and its receptor-associated protein in late stages of cutaneous melanocytic tumor progression. Cancer Res 1996;56:1432-9.
- Desrosiers RR, Rivard ME, Grundy PE, Annabi B. Decrease in LDL receptor-related protein expression and function correlates with advanced stages of Wilms tumors. Pediatr Blood Cancer 2006;46:40-9.

- [25] Obermeyer K, Krueger S, Peters B, Falkenberg B, Roessner A, Röcken C. The expression of LRP1 protein in colorectal carcinoma. *Oncol Rep* 2007;17:361-7.
- [26] Llorente-Cortés V, Otero-Viñas M, Sánchez S, Rodríguez C, Badimon L. Low-density lipoprotein upregulates low-density lipoprotein receptor-related protein expression in vascular smooth muscle cells: possible involvement of sterol regulatory element binding protein-2-dependent mechanism. *Circulation* 2002;106:3104-10.
- [27] Llorente-Cortés V, Martínez-González J, Badimon L. LDL receptor-related protein mediates uptake of aggregated LDL in human vascular smooth muscle cells. *Arterioscler Thromb Vasc Biol* 2000;20:1572-9.
- [28] Hofmann SM, Zhou L, Perez-Tilve D, et al. Adipocyte LDL receptor-related protein-1 expression modulates postprandial lipid transport and glucose homeostasis in mice. *J Clin Invest* 2007;117:3271-82.
- [29] Dedieu S, Langlois B. LRP-1: a new modulator of cytoskeleton dynamics and adhesive complex turnover in cancer cells. *Cell Adh Migr* 2008;2:77-80.
- [30] Langlois B, Emonard H, Martiny L, Dedieu S. Multiple involvements of LRP-1 receptor in tumor progression. *Pathol Biol (Paris)* 2009;57: 548-54.
- [31] Langlois B, Perrot G, Schneider C, et al. LRP-1 promotes cancer cell invasion by supporting ERK and inhibiting JNK signaling pathways. *PLoS One* 2010;e11584:5.
- [32] Li Y, Wood N, Donnelly P, Yellowlees D. Cell density and oestrogen both stimulate alpha 2-macroglobulin receptor expression in breast cancer cell T-47D. *Anticancer Res* 1998;18:1197-202.
- [33] Christensen L, Simonsen ACW, Heegaard CW, Moestrup SK, Andersen JA, Andreasen PA. Immunohistochemical localization of urokinase-type plasminogen activator, type-1 plasminogen-activator inhibitor, urokinase receptor and beta-2-macroglobulin receptor in human breast carcinomas. *Int J Cancer* 1996;66:441-52.
- [34] Moestrup SK, Gliemann J, Pallesen G. Distribution of the LRP1 in human tissues. *Cell Tissue Res* 1992;269:375-82.
- [35] Russell DW, Schneider WJ, Yamamoto T, Luskey KL, Brown MS, Goldstein JL. Domain map of the LDL receptor: sequence homology with the epidermal growth factor precursor. *Cell* 1984;37:577-85.
- [36] Lerma E, Barnadas A, Prat J. Triple negative breast carcinomas: similarities and differences with basal like carcinomas. *Appl Immunohistochem Mol Morphol* 2009;17:483-94.
- [37] Earp HS, Dawson TL, Li X, Yu H. Heterodimerization and functional interaction between EGF receptor family members: a new signaling paradigm with implications for breast cancer research. *Breast Cancer Res Treat* 1995;35:115-32.
- [38] de Azambuja E, Cardoso F, de Castro Jr G, et al. Ki-67 as prognostic marker in early breast cancer: a meta-analysis of published studies involving 12,155 patients. *Br J Cancer* 2007;96:1504-13.
- [39] Llorente-Cortés V, Costales P, Bernués J, Camino-Lopez S, Badimon L. Sterol regulatory element-binding protein-2 negatively regulates low density lipoprotein receptor-related protein transcription. *J Mol Biol* 2006;359:950-60.
- [40] Furberg AS, Veierød MB, Wilsgaard T, Bernstein L, Thune I. Serum high-density lipoprotein cholesterol, metabolic profile, and breast cancer risk. *J Natl Cancer Inst* 2004;96:1152-60.
- [41] Maiti B, Kundranda MN, Spiro TP, Daw HA. The association of metabolic syndrome with triple-negative breast cancer. *Breast Cancer Res Treat* 2010;121:479-83.
- [42] Campbell MJ, Esserman LJ, Zhou Y, et al. Breast cancer growth prevention by statins. *Cancer Res* 2006;66:8707-14.
- [43] Gauthaman K, Fong CY, Bongso A. Statins, stem cells, and cancer. *J Cell Biochem* 2009;106:975-83.
- [44] Haukka J, Sankila R, Klaukka T, et al. Incidence of cancer and statin usage—record linkage study. *Int J Cancer* 2010;126:279-84.

V Conclusiones.

Conclusiones:

- 1.- La coexpresión de HER2 con EGFR o IGFR1R se asocian a peor pronóstico en nuestra serie de pacientes con carcinomas HER2+ tratadas con trastuzumab y por lo tanto podría ser un mecanismo de resistencia a este fármaco.
- 2.- Las alteraciones de la vía PI3K/Akt/bad y mTOR son frecuentes en los carcinomas de mama de tipo HER2 +. Algunas de ellas se asocian peor pronóstico y por lo tanto pueden estar relacionadas con resistencia a trastuzumab..
 - 2a.- La sobreexpresión de p110 se asoció a peor pronóstico. No encontramos asociación de mutaciones de *PIK3CA* con peor pronóstico.
 - 2b.- Las mutaciones de *PTEN* se asociaron a peor intervalo libre de progresión y la pérdida de expresión de PTEN se asoció a invasión vascular y metástasis ganglionares.
 - 2c.- La sobreexpresión de pAkt se asoció a peor supervivencia global y supervivencia libre de enfermedad.
- 3.- LRP-1 se encuentra sobreexpresado en el 14% de los carcinomas de mama, principalmente en los subtipos HER2+ y triple negativo y se asocia a proliferación e invasión. Nuestros datos sugieren una posible interrelación entre LRP1, HER2 y EGFR.

VI Material suplementario.

Artículo 3:

Titulo:

Las mutaciones del exón 20 de *PIK3CA* se asocian a peor supervivencia en carcinomas de mama agresivos (HER2 positivos).

Resumen:

En este artículo analizamos la asociación de las mutaciones de *PIK3CA* en el en una serie de 56 pacientes con carcinoma de mama y las correlacionamos con los subtipos moleculares del carcinoma de mama, con la expresión de receptores de membrana, expresión de PTEN, P110 , Ki67 y p53. Encontramos mutaciones de *PIK3CA* en el 12.5% de los tumores y estas eran mucho mas frecuentes en el grupo de los tumores HER2 + principalmente en el exón 20. Además las pacientes con tumores con mutaciones en el exón 20 se asociaron con peor supervivencia. Estos resultados nos animaron a ampliar la serie.

Exon 20 PIK3CA mutations decreases survival in aggressive (HER-2 positive) breast carcinomas

Enrique Lerma · Lluís Catasús · Alberto Gallardo ·
Gloria Peiro · Carmen Alonso · Ignacio Aranda ·
Agustí Barnadas · Jaime Prat

Received: 28 March 2008 / Accepted: 7 July 2008 / Published online: 5 August 2008
© Springer-Verlag 2008

Abstract PIK3CA mutations at 9 and 20 exons were studied in a series of 56 selected aggressive breast carcinomas (BC): 27 with Her-2 over-expression and negativity for estrogen receptors (ER) and progesterone receptors (PR), and 29 “triple negative” BC (negative for ER, PR and Her-2). Also, immunohistochemical studies of p53, ki-67, Her-1 (EGFR), pIGF-1R, PTEN, p110 α , and pAkt were performed. Six mutations in exon 20 PIK3CA were identified among the 27 Her-2 positive BC, whereas only one exon 9 PIK3CA mutation was detected in a triple negative tumor ($p=0.035$). Furthermore, PIK3CA mutations were associated with p110 α over-expression ($p=0.001$). Overall survival was shorter in cases with PIK3CA mutations ($p=0.015$ in all series; and $p=0.041$ for Her-2+ tumors), although multivariate analyses did not show statistical differences. No statistical significance was related with disease-free survival. Exon 20 PIK3CA mutations are

relatively frequent in Her-2+ tumors and shorten survival, whereas neither exons 9 and 20 mutations seem related with “triple negative” breast carcinomas.

Keywords Breast carcinoma · Her2-neu · p110 · PIK3CA mutations

Introduction

Although breast cancer (BC) survival is improving due to more effective treatment and early detection, the incidence of the disease has steadily increased throughout the world over the past few decades [6]. Approximately two thirds of BCs are hormone-dependent and a good response to endocrine therapy is achieved in a large proportion of tumors. Hormone-independent tumors are usually more aggressive and grow by activation of membrane growth factor receptors or by unknown mechanisms. Nevertheless, membrane growth factor receptors could interfere with estrogen-signaling pathways and thus play a role in endocrine therapy resistance in hormone-dependent tumors [28].

The phosphatidylinositol 3'-kinase (PIK3)/AKT signaling pathway is frequently activated in multiple human epithelial cancers, including breast carcinomas [5, 8, 12, 14, 15]. PIK3 (p110 α) phosphorylates PIP2 (phosphatidylinositol 4,5-bisphosphate) to generate the second messenger PIP3 (phosphatidylinositol 3,4,5-triphosphate), in response to diverse stimuli. These PtdIns(3,4,5)P3 signals are localized in the inner leaflet of the plasma membrane, and activate AKT counteracting PTEN activity. After AKT activation, various downstream target genes inhibit apoptosis and promote cell proliferation [8, 27]. Besides PTEN, there are several tumor suppressor genes in the PIK3 signaling pathway, such as TSC1, TSC2, LKB 1, Foxo1a,

E. Lerma · L. Catasús · A. Gallardo · J. Prat
Department of Pathology, Hospital de la Santa Creu i Sant Pau,
Autonomous University of Barcelona,
Barcelona, Spain

C. Alonso · A. Barnadas
Department of Oncology, Hospital de la Santa Creu i Sant Pau,
Barcelona, Spain

G. Peiro · I. Aranda
Department of Pathology, Hospital General Universitario,
Alicante, Spain

E. Lerma (✉)
Department of Pathology, Hospital de la Santa Creu i Sant Pau,
Avda. Sant Antoni Ma Claret 167,
08025 Barcelona, Spain
e-mail: elerma@santpau.es

Foxo3a and possibly PHLPP. Most of these genes could render cancers insensitive to PIK3 inhibitors [25].

PIK3CA (phosphoinositide-3-kinase, catalytic, alpha polypeptide) mutations may be an important event in progression to the aggressive phenotype in low-grade colorectal and lung tumors [18] while in gastric and liver cancers they have a key role in earlier stage [12]. They may also be seen in glioblastomas, medulloblastomas, ovarian neoplasms, and acute leukemia [8].

Several works have studied PIK3CA mutations in BC [1, 4, 5, 14, 15, 17, 19, 21, 22, 27, 30] and in cell lines from BC [1, 10, 29, 30]. According to one recent review [8], these mutations may be present in ≈26% of BC, ≈85% of which are located in the helical domain mutants E542K and E545K and in the catalytic domain mutant H1047R. Their significance however, is controversial. In the present paper, we studied the mutations in these two exons to determine their possible role in aggressive hormone-independent BC with Her-2 over-expression or “Triple negative” tumors.

Material and methods

Material and histopathological analysis

A total of 56 breast carcinoma with negativity for estrogen receptors (ER) and progesterone receptors (PR) were collected retrospectively from two hospitals, 45 from the Department of Pathology at Hospital de la Santa Creu i Sant Pau, Autonomous University, Barcelona, Spain, and 11 from the Department of Pathology at the General Hospital, Alicante, Spain. Tumors were fixed in 4% formalin for 18–24 h. Most patients underwent a tumorectomy or a modified radical mastectomy, with dissection of axillary lymph nodes. Patients were staged according to the WHO system and tumors were histologically graded. After pathological diagnosis, adjuvant chemo or radiotherapy was done according to standard protocols. Five patients with Her-2+ tumors were also treated with Trastuzumab®. Mean follow-up was 75 months (range, 9–180). Clinico-pathological data were revised for the present study and the patients were subclassified into two groups: one of 27 tumors with marked Her-2/neu over-expression (+++), and another of 29 tumors with Her-2/neu negative (triple negative, TN). None of these 29 tumors showed myoepithelial differentiation as actin and S-100 were negative [13].

This work was approved by the ethical committees of both institutions

Immunohistochemistry

Tissue micro-arrays (TMA) were prepared from paraffin-embedded tissue taken from three representative areas of

each tumor. Serial, 5-μm thick sections were stained using the Envision method (DAKO). Antibodies, dilutions, antigen retrieval methods, and suppliers are listed in Table 1. ER, PR and Her-2 (Ab A-0485, Herceptest®) were repeated to confirm initial results, other membrane receptors such as Her-1 (EGFR) and pIGF-IR were studied, as well as p53 and Ki-67. Investigation of the PIK3/PTEN/Akt pathway included analysis of PTEN, pAkt, and PIK3CA (p110α). Previous BC with positivity for the Ab were used as positive controls, and consecutive tissue section from the TMA's incubated without primary Ab were the negative controls.

Distinct membrane staining in >10% of tumor cells for EGFR, pIGF-IR was counted as positive for expression. The percentage of stained nuclei was evaluated, independently of intensity, for ki67 and p53. Immunostaining cytoplasmic scores for PTEN, pAkt, and p110α were calculated by multiplying the percentage of labeled cells by the intensity of the staining (range 0–300). Loss of PTEN were considered for Scores <150, whereas p110α and pAkt over-expression for Scores >150. Three pathologists (EL, GP, and AG) separately evaluated the immunohistochemical staining, and discordant results were reviewed to achieve agreement. These evaluations were done before the statistical and survival analyses.

Mutational analysis of PIK3CA

Genomic DNA was extracted by proteinase K digestion and QIAamp DNA Mini Kit (Qiagen, GmbH, Hilden, Germany), following the manufacturer's instructions, from frozen tumor tissue. PIK3CA mutations were assessed on

Table 1 List of primary Ab for the immunohistochemical study

Antibody	Clone	Dilution	Ag retrieval	Supplier
ER	6F11	1:40	1	Novocastra
PR	16	1:200	1	Novocastra
Her-2	A-0485	1:1		Dako
S-100	Polyclonal	1:3000	4	Dako
Alpha-actin	1A4	1:100	1	Dako
EGFR	2-18C9	1:1	5	Dako
pIGF-IR	Polyclonal	1:50	3	Cell Signaling
Ki-67	MIB-1	1:1	1	Dako
p53	BP53-12-1	1:150	1	Biogenex
PTEN	6H2.1	1:50	2	Cascade Biosciences
p110α	Polyclonal	1:50	3	Cell Signaling
pAKT	Polyclonal	1:100	3	Cell Signaling

1 Citrate buffer pH 6, autoclave 8 min, 2 citrate buffer pH 6, waterbath 95°C 30 min, 3 EDTA buffer pH 8, autoclave 8 min, 4 pepsin 0.1% 30 min, 5 proteinase K 0.1% 5 min

tumor DNA by PCR amplification and subsequent sequencing analysis, using previously reported PCR conditions and primers for exons 9 and 20 of PIK3CA [23]. The thermal cycling conditions included an initial cycle of 12 min at 94°C, followed by 40 cycles of 45 s at 94°C, 45 s at specific annealing primer temperature of 52–62°C, 1 min at 72°C, and a final extension of 10 min at 72°C. The PCR conditions for exon 9 of PIK3CA were optimized to avoid mispriming with the PIK3CA pseudogene spanning exons 9 to 13 on chromosome 22. The PCR products were purified using the exoSAP-IT (USB, Cleveland, OH) and subjected to direct sequencing using ABI PRISM™ Big Dye terminator v1.1 cycle sequencing Kit (Applied Biosystems, Foster City, CA). Sequencing fragments were detected by capillary electrophoresis using an automated ABI Prism 310 Genetic Analyzer (Applied Biosystems). Mutational analyses were done before knowing follow-up and statistics.

Follow-up and statistical analyses

Statistical analyses were performed with the SPSS/win 15.0 statistical software package (SPSS, Chicago, IL, USA).

Continuous and ordinal variables between the two groups were compared using the Student's *T* test. Dichotomous variables were compared with the Fisher exact test. The overall survival analysis was estimated using the Kaplan–Meier method and compared using the log-rank test. The univariate and multivariate Cox regression analyses were used to identify the independent predictive factors that significantly influenced the overall survival. A *p*-value of 0.05 was considered significant.

Results

Both groups of tumors will be described separately and the main clinico-pathological features are comparatively presented in Table 2.

Clinico-pathological characteristics of Her-2 positive carcinomas

Twenty-seven patients were included in this group. The mean age was 60 years and 9 months (range, 42–101 years). Axillary lymph node dissection at levels I and II was

Table 2 Pathological, immunohistochemical and genetic characteristics of both subtypes of aggressive breast carcinomas

		Her-2 (n=27)	TNC (n=29)	Statistics (comparison)
Size	<2 cm	5 (18.5%)	0	Ns
	2–5 cm	19 (70.4%)	22 (75.9%)	
	>5 cm	3 (11.1%)	7 (24.1%)	
Stage	I	2 (7.5%)	4 (13.8%)	Ns
	II	17 (63%)	15 (51.7%)	
	III	6 (22.2%)	6 (20.7%)	
	IV	2 (7.5%)	4 (13.8%)	
Histol. grade	II	8 (29.6%)	4 (13.8%)	Ns
	III	19 (70.3%)	25 (86.2%)	
Ductal in situ carc.	>10%	16 (59.3%)	10 (34.5%)	Ns
	>25%	8 (29.6%)	2 (6.9%)	
Necrosis	>10%	7 (25.9%)	19 (65.6%)	0.08
Vascular invasion	Present	9 (33.3%)	8 (27.6%)	Ns
EGFR overexpr	>10%	4 (14.8%)	11 (38%)	Ns
pIGF-IR	>10%	6 (22.2%)	8 (27.6%)	
Ki 67	Median	12	50	0.007
Ki 67	<20%	15 (55.5%)	4 (13.8%)	
	20–50%	9 (33.3%)	10 (34.5%)	
	>50%	3 (11.1%)	15 (51.7%)	
P53	>10% nuclei	12 (44.4%)	16 (55.2%)	Ns
PTEN loss	<150	4 (14.8%)	3 (10.3%)	0.16
p110 α	Overexpr.	4 (14.8%)	0	0.23
pAKT	>150	4 (14.8%)	1 (3.4%)	0.14
PIK3CA mutations	Exon 9 G1633A 4 E545K	0	1 (3.4%)	Ns
	Exon 20 A3140G H1047R	6 (22.2%)	0	0.008

performed in 15 patients with a mean of 14 nodes examined per patient (median, 15; range 8–27)

Mean tumor size was 3 cm (range from 1.5 to 6 cm). Five tumors (18.5%) measured less than 2 cm, 19 (70.4%) between 2–5 cm and three (11.1%) were >5 cm. The pathological stage at diagnosis was determined in all patients: two patients were stage I (7.5%), ten were stage IIA (37%), seven were IIB (25.9%), six were III (22.2%), and two were IV (7.5%).

Most carcinomas were of the ductal type (NOS), although two had mixed ductal–lobular differentiation. Histological grading was II in eight (29.6%) tumors and III in 19 (70.3%). A ductal “*in situ*” (DCIS) component >10% was present in 16 (59.3%) tumors, and >25% in eight (29.6%). Tumor necrosis was evident in seven (25.9%) and vascular invasion was detected in nine (33.3%).

Exon 20 PIK3CA mutations in Her-2 positive carcinomas are associated with poor prognosis and p110 over-expression

Considering the total series, seven out of 56 aggressive BC had PIK3CA mutations (12.5%), but most of them were related with Her-2+ carcinomas. Effectively, six PIK3CA somatic missense mutations were identified among the 27 Her-2 BC (22.2%). All occurred in the kinase domain (exon 20, nucleotide A3140G, aminoacid H1047R; Fig. 1), and none in the helical domain (exon 9). These mutations were more frequent in Her-2 than in TN-BC ($p=0.035$).

Among the Her-2+ tumors, other immunohistochemical studies showed over-expression of EGFR in four (14.8%) cases and of pIGF-IR in six (22.2%). The mean percentage of Ki67 positive nuclei was 19.3% (range 10–80%) and the median was 12; 15 cases had less than 20%, nine between 20–50% and only three tumors had a Ki67>50%. Aberrant p53 expression (>10% of nuclei) was present in 12 (44.4%) cases. Loss of PTEN expression was found in four cases. p110 α over-expression (Fig. 2) was found only in four (14.8%) and pAKT in four (14.8%).

Kaplan Meyer’s survival analysis for all cases (Fig. 3), as for patients with Her-2+ tumors (Fig. 4) showed shorter mean survival in cases with PIK3CA mutations (mean survival of 46 vs. 65 months in all cases, $p=0.015$; mean survival of Her-2+ patients 42 vs. 87 months $p=0.03$, $p=0.041$). Disease-free survival was unrelated with mutations, because a significant number of patients were in advanced stage at diagnosis. Response to trastuzumab was not analyzed due to the scanty number of cases with this treatment and these patients were excluded from survival analyses. Furthermore, PIK3CA mutations were associated with p110 α over-expression ($p=0.001$), and some correlation was also detected with p53 over-expression (0.068), and EGFR over-expression ($p=0.14$).

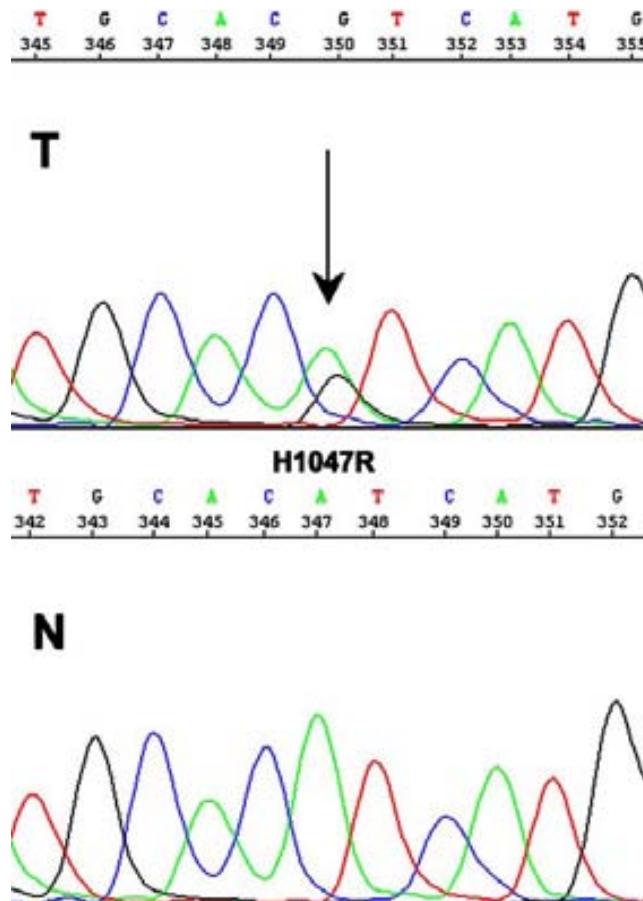


Fig. 1 Exon 20 PIK3CA mutation (nucleotide A3140G, aminoacid H1047R). Partial representative nucleotide sequence of sense strand around codon 1047. Sequence analysis of PCR products of tumor DNA (*T*) compared with normal DNA (*N*) revealed a missense mutation (arrow)

Conventional clinico-pathological features or other immunohistochemical studied molecules were statistically unrelated with PIK3CA mutations.

Clinico-pathological characteristics of triple negative carcinomas

This group included 29 patients. Mean age was 53 years, (range, 25–86 years). Tumorectomy or mastectomy was done in all cases and axillary lymph node dissection at levels I and II was performed in 27 patients, with a mean of 18 nodes per patient (median: 15; range 5–33). Mean tumor size was 6 cm (range from 2.3 to 20 cm). No tumors measured less than 2 cm, 22 (75.9%) were between 2–5 cm and seven (24.1%) were >5 cm. The pathological stage at diagnosis was determined in all patients: four were stage I (13.8%), nine were IIA (31%), six were IIB (20.7%), six were III (20.7%), and four were IV (13.8%).

Most carcinomas were of the ductal type (NOS), although four were of the medullar histological type.

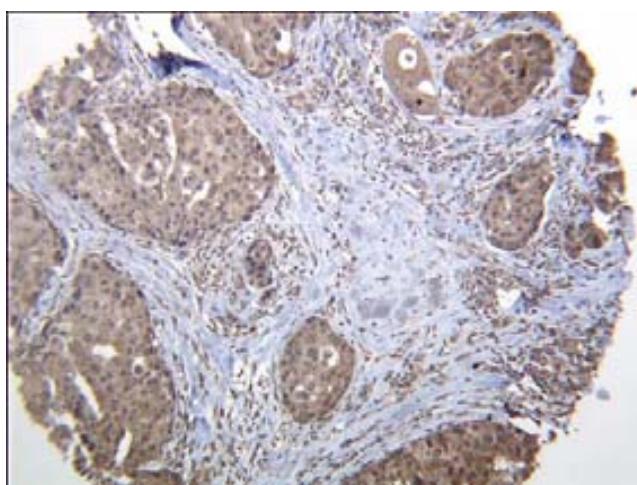


Fig. 2 Her-2+ tumor with intense p110 α cytoplasmic over-expression ($\times 40$)

Histological grading was II in four (13.8%) tumors and III in 25 (86.2%). A ductal “in situ” (DCIS) component >10% was present in ten (34.5%) tumors, and >25% in two (6.9%) of them. Necrosis >10% was detected in 19 (65.6%) tumors and vascular invasion was detected in eight (27.6%).

PIK3CA mutations are very uncommon in TN carcinomas, and unrelated with other immunohistochemical or clinico-pathological features

Only one PIK3CA somatic missense mutation was identified among the 29 triple negative breast neoplasms. This

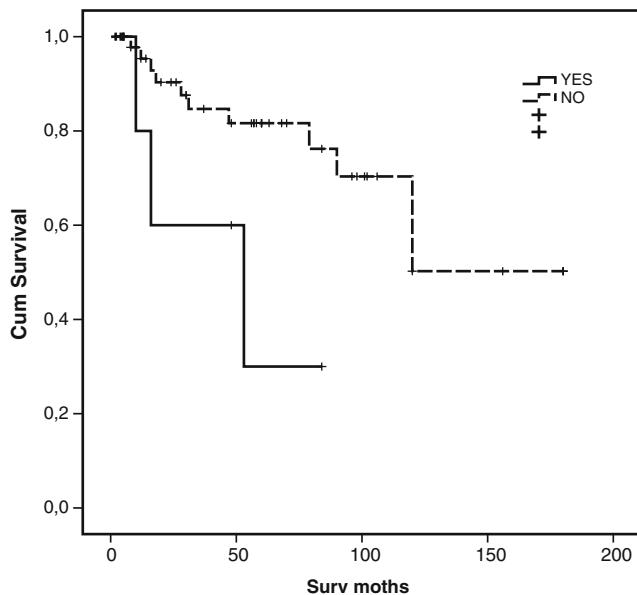


Fig. 3 Kaplan Meyer's survival analysis for all patients. Shorter survival is related with the presence of PIK3CA mutations (continuous versus discontinuous lines; $p=0.03$)

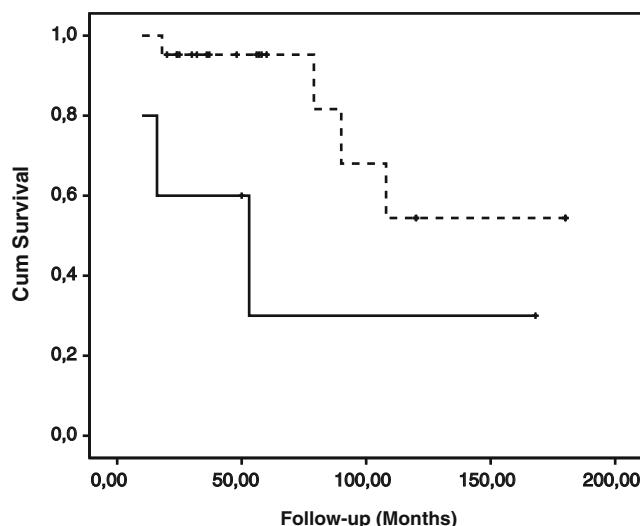


Fig. 4 Kaplan Meyer's survival analysis for patients with Her-2+ tumors, related with/without the presence of PIK3CA mutations (continuous versus discontinuous lines; $p=0.03$)

occurred in the helical domain (exon 9, nucleotide G1633A, aminoacid E545K). Over-expression of EGFR was detected in 11 (38%) cases and pIGF-IR in eight (27.6%). The mean percentage of Ki67 positive nuclei was 41.3% (range 13–90%) and the median was of 50; four (13.8%) cases had less than 20%, ten (34.5%) between 20–50% and 15 (51.7%) tumors had a Ki67 >50%. Figure 5 shows that triple negative tumors had a much higher Ki67 index than Her-2 tumors ($p=0.007$). Aberrant p53 expression (>10% of nuclei) was present in 16 (55.2%) cases. Loss of PTEN expression was found in three (10.3%) cases. p110 α over-expression was not observed and pAKT was detected in one case (3.4%). Conventional clinical varia-

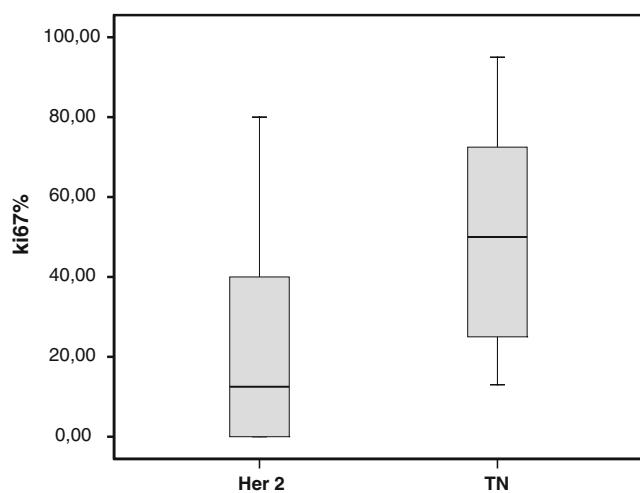


Fig. 5 Plot-box graph representing percentage of positive cells for Ki 67proliferation index; Her-2+ breast carcinomas showed lower Ki67 index (median 12.5% of positive cells) than triple negative tumors (median 50%positive cells; $p=0.007$ Mann Whitney test)

bles, pathological and immunohistochemical data did not show relationship with PIK3CA mutations in these tumors.

Discussion

The c-DNA microchip analysis allow the identification of three major subgroups of BC: a luminal one, equivalent to the hormone-dependent tumors that is the most common variety, and two more aggressive subgroups characterized either by Her-2/neu over-expression or the denominated basal-like or triple negative (TN) carcinomas (ER, PR, and Her-2 negatives) with less defined growth stimulus [20, 24, 26]. In the present work, we studied the significance of PIK3CA mutations in these two subgroups of aggressive BC.

PIK3CA mutations were described in 20%–40% of BC [1, 4, 5, 14, 15, 17, 19, 21, 22, 27, 30], and a recent review [8] estimated that a mean of 26% breast cancers harbor missense mutations. Approximately, 85% of these appear in three hot spots: H1047R, located in the kinase domain and coded by exon 20; E542K and E545K located in the helical domain and coded by the exon 9. Mutations are distributed in both exons with the same frequency (~12%) [3, 4, 8, 17], and the protein resulting from these mutations (p110 α) has capacity to induce oncogenic transformation in chicken embryo fibroblasts [7]. Relationship between PIK3CA mutations with other BC prognostic features was not found in initial studies [1, 5, 12]. Nevertheless, others associated these mutations with nodal metastases, Her2 receptor over-expression /amplification [22], and good prognosis [4, 17, 19].

In our series, PIK3CA mutations were present in only ~12% of cases. However, a significant (22.2%) proportion of BC with Her-2 over-expression had exon 20 mutations. This was higher than expected and in concordance with a previous study by Saal et al. [22]. Furthermore, exon 20 mutations were associated with higher carcinogenic potential, aggressiveness [2] and, recently, with poor survival in multivariate analyses of 152 patients with BC [11] as also suggests the present study. Nevertheless, PIK3CA mutations were exceptionally uncommon in TN-BC. The aggressiveness of these tumors as well as the Ki67 index higher than in Her-2 BC could be related with alteration of other pathologic pathways, i.e., RAS mutations [10]. Indeed, TN-BC are not equivalent to “basal-like”, because there are some differences in the histopathological pattern and in the immunohistochemical expression of basal cytokeratins or EGFR. These tumors do not constitute a homogeneous group [13].

Exon 9 mutations have been associated with lobular carcinomas [3, 4, 17], although most of these tumors are ER α positive, with good prognosis. Nevertheless, these mutations were recently related with aggressiveness [3] and we found one mutation in a TN-BC.

p110 α overproduction was clearly associated with PIK3CA mutations in our series ($p=0.001$). Nevertheless, the relationship between PIK3CA mutations or p110 over-expression and loss of PTEN or Akt activation [9, 17, 22] could not be demonstrated in our cases, as in other series [4, 15, 19, 21]. It has recently been found that PIK3CA mutations and PTEN loss are not mutually exclusive [19] as was initially suggested [22]. Indeed, PIK3CA mutations and PTEN loss should be associated with similar pathologic factors [19] and both could have a relationship with Akt activation, ER- α positivity [9, 17, 19, 22], low histologic grades [17], and lobular histologic type [29].

Activation of the PIK3/PTEN/Akt pathway may also play an important role to therapy resistance in BC [9]. PIK3CA mutations has been related with radiosensitivity [19] and chemosensitivity [16], and a variety of molecules that inhibit PIK3 [25] or Akt [29] are new potential tools for the BC treatment.

In summary, TN breast carcinomas were very rarely related with exon 9 and 20 PIK3CA mutations. Exon 20 mutations, however, are more frequent than previously suspected and shorten survival of patients with Her-2 BC. It could potentially open new ways for their treatment, but further investigations with larger number of patients and prospective studies are needed.

Acknowledgments Thanks to Ms. Carolyn Newey for your help with English text and to Mr. Daniel Martinez for your technical help. This work is supported by grants from Fondo de Investigaciones Sanitarias (FIS PI06-0709), Instituto Carlos III RTICCCFIS RD06/0020/0015. (Department of Health), Madrid, and Pfizer Grant for breast cancer research

Disclosure/conflict of interest statement We declare that we have no conflict of interest.

References

- Bachman KE, Argani P, Samuels Y, Silliman N, Ptak J, Szabo S, Konishi H, Karakas B, Blair BG, Lin C, Peters BA, Velculescu VE, Park BH (2004) The PIK3CA gene is mutated with high frequency in human breast cancers. *Cancer Biol Ther* 3:772–775
- Bader AG, Kang S, Zhao L, Vogt PK (2005) Oncogenic PIK3 deregulates transcription and translation. *Nat Rev Cancer* 5:921–929
- Barbareschi M, Buttitta F, Felicioni L, Cotrupi S, Barassi F, Del Grammastro M, Ferro A, Dalla Palma P, Galligioni E, Marchetti A (2007) Different prognostic roles of mutations in the helical and kinase domains of the PIK3CA gene in breast carcinoma. *Clin Cancer Res* 13:6064–6069
- Buttitta F, Felicioni L, Barassi F, Martella C, Paolizzi D, Fresu G, Salvatore S, Cuccurullo F, Mezzetti A, Campani D, Marchetti A (2006) PIK3CA mutation and histological type in breast carcinoma: high frequency of mutations in lobular carcinoma. *J Pathol* 208:350–355
- Campbell IG, Russell SE, Choong DY, Montgomery KG, Ciavarella ML, Hooi CS, Cristiano BE, Pearson RB, Phillips

- WA (2004) Mutation of the PIK3CA gene in ovarian and breast cancer. *Cancer Res* 64:7678–7681
6. Ferlay P, Autier P, Boniol M, Haneue M, Colombet M, Boyle P (2007) Estimates of the cancer incidence and mortality in Europe in 2006. *Ann Oncol* 18:581–592
 7. Kang S, Bader AG, Vogt PK (2005) Phosphatidylinositol 3-kinase mutations identified in human cancer are oncogenic. *Proc Natl Acad Sci USA* 102:802–807
 8. Karakas B, Bachman KE, Park BH (2006) Mutation of the PIK3CA oncogene in human cancers. *Br J Cancer* 94:455–459
 9. Kirkegaard T, Witton CJ, McGlynn LM, Tovey SM, Dunne B, Lyon A, Barlett JM (2005) AKT activation predicts outcome in breast cancer patients treated with tamoxifen. *J Pathol* 207:139–146
 10. Hollestelle A, Elstrodt F, Nagel JH, Kallemeijer WW, Schutte M (2007) Phosphatidylinositol-3-OH kinase or RAS pathway mutations in human breast cancer cell lines. *Mol Cancer Res* 5:195–201
 11. Lai YL, Mau BL, Cheng WH, Chen HM, Chiu HH, Tzen CY (2008) PIK3CA exon 20 mutation is independently associated with poor prognosis in breast cancer patients. *Ann Surg Oncol* Jan 9 PMID:18183466
 12. Lee JW, Soung YH, Kim SY, Lee HW, Park WS, Nam SW, Kim SH, Lee JY, Yoo NJ, Lee SH (2005) PIK3CA gene is frequently mutated in breast carcinomas and hepatocellular carcinomas. *Oncogene* 24:1477–1480
 13. Lerma E, Peiro G, Ramon y Cajal T, Fernandez S, Martinez D, Pons C, Muñoz F, Sabate JM, Alonso C, Ojeda B, Prat J, Barnadas A (2007) Immunohistochemical heterogeneity of breast carcinomas negative for estrogen receptors, progesterone receptors and Her2/neu (basal like breast carcinomas). *Modern Pathology* 20:1200–1207
 14. Levine DA, Bogomolniy F, Yee CJ, Lash A, Barakat RR, Borgen PI, Boyd J (2005) Frequent mutation of the PIK3CA gene in ovarian and breast cancers. *Clin Cancer Res* 11:2875–2878
 15. Li SY, Rong M, Grieu F, Iacopetta B (2006) PIK3CA mutations in breast cancer are associated with poor outcome. *Breast Cancer Res Treat* 96:91–95
 16. Liang K, Lu Y, Li X, Glazer RI, Mills GB, Fan Z (2006) Differential roles of phosphoinositide-dependent protein kinase-1 and Akt1 expression and phosphorylation in breast cancer cell resistance to paclitaxel, doxorubicin, and gemcitabine. *Mol Pharmacol* 70:1045–1052
 17. Maruyama N, Miyoshi Y, Taguchi T, Tamaki Y, Monden M, Noguchi S (2007) Clinicopathologic analysis of breast cancers with PIK3CA mutations in Japanese women. *Clin Cancer Res* 3:408–414
 18. Massion PP, Taflan PM, Shyr Y, Rahman SM, Yildiz P, Shakthour B, Edgerton ME, Ninan M, Andersen JJ, Gonzalez AL (2004) Early involvement of the phosphatidylinositol 3-kinase/Akt pathway in lung cancer progression. *Am J Respir Crit Care Med* 170:1088–1094
 19. Pérez-Tenorio G, Alkhori L, Olsson B, Waltersson MA, Nordenskjöld B, Rutqvist LE, Skoog L, Stål O (2007) PIK3CA mutations and PTEN loss correlate with similar prognostic factors and are not mutually exclusive in breast cancer. *Clin Cancer Res* 13:3577–3584
 20. Perou CM, Sørlie T, Eisen MB, van de Rijn M, Jeffrey SS, Rees CA, Pollack JR, Ross DT, Johnsen H, Akslen LA, Fluge O, Pergamenschikov A, Williams C, Zhu SX, Lønning PE, Børresen-Dale AL, Brown PO, Botstein D (2000) Molecular portraits of human breast tumors. *Nature* 406:747–752
 21. Saal LH, Johansson P, Holm K, Gruberger-Saal SK, She QB, Maurer M, Koujak S, Ferrando AA, Malmström P, Memeo L, Isola J, Bendahl PO, Rosen N, Hibshoosh H, Ringnér M, Borg A, Parsons R (2007) Poor prognosis in carcinoma is associated with a gene expression signature of aberrant PTEN tumor suppressor pathway activity. *Proc Natl Acad Sci U S A* 104:7564–7569
 22. Saal LH, Holm K, Maurer M, Memeo L, Su T, Wang X, Yu JS, Malmström PO, Mansukhani M, Enoksson J, Hibshoosh H, Borg A, Parsons R (2005) PIK3CA mutations correlate with hormone receptors, node metastasis, and ERBB2, and are mutually exclusive with PTEN loss in human breast carcinoma. *Cancer Res* 65:2554–2559
 23. Samuels Y, Wang Z, Bardelli A, Silliman N, Ptak J, Szabo S, Yan H, Gazdar A, Powell SM, Riggins GJ, Willson JK, Markowitz S, Kinzler KW, Vogelstein B, Velculescu VE (2004) High frequency of mutations of the PIK3CA gene in human cancers. *Science* 304:554
 24. Sorlie T, Tibshirani R, Parker J, Hastie T, Marron JS, Nobel A, Deng S, Johnsen H, Pesich R, Geisler S, Demeter J, Perou CM, Lønning PE, Brown PO, Børresen-Dale AL, Botstein D (2003) Repeated observation of breast tumor subtypes in independent gene expression data sets. *Proc Natl Acad Sci USA* 100: 8418–8423
 25. Stephens L, Williams R, Hawkins P (2003) Phosphoinositide 3-kinases as drug targets in cancer. *Curr Opinin in Pharmacology* 5:357–365
 26. van de Vijver MJ, He YD, van't Veer LJ, Dai H, Hart AA, Voskuil DW, Schreiber GJ, Peterse JL, Roberts C, Marton MJ, Parrish M, Atsma D, Witteveen A, Glas A, Delahaye L, van der Velde T, Bartelink H, Rodenhuis S, Rutgers ET, Friend SH, Bernards R (2002) A gene expression signature as a predictor of survival in breast cancer. *N Eng J Med* 347:1999–2009
 27. Vivanco I, Sawyers CL (2002) The phosphatidylinositol 3-kinase AKT pathway in human cancer. *Nat Rev Cancer* 2:489–501
 28. Weinberg OK, Marquez-Garban DC, Pietras RJ (2005) New approaches to reverse resistance to hormonal therapy in human breast cancer. *Drug Resist Updates* 8:219–233
 29. Whyte DB, Holbeck SL (2006) Correlation of PIK3CA mutations with gene expression and drug sensitivity in NCI-60 cell lines. *Biochem Biophys Res Commun* 340:469–475
 30. Wu G, Xing M, Mambo E, Huang X, Liu J, Guo Z, Chatterjee A, Goldenberg D, Gollin SM, Sukumar S, Trink B, Sidransky D (2005) Somatic mutation and gain of copy number of PIK3CA in human breast cancer. *Breast Cancer Res* 7:R609–R616

VII Bibliografía.

Bibliografía:

1. Anbazhagan R, Osin PP, Bartkova J, Nathan B, Lane EB, Gusterson BA. The development of epithelial phenotypes in the human fetal and infant breast. *J Pathol* 1998;184:197-206.
2. Moinfar F, Man YG, Lininger RA, Bodian C, Tavassoli FA. Use of keratin 35betaE12 as an adjunct in the diagnosis of mammary intraepithelial neoplasia-ductal type--benign and malignant intraductal proliferations. *Am J Surg Pathol* 1999;23:1048-58.
3. Bussolati G, Cassoni P, Ghisolfi G, Negro F, Sapino A. Immunolocalization and gene expression of oxytocin receptors in carcinomas and non-neoplastic tissues of the breast. *Am J Pathol* 1996;148:1895-903.
4. Barbareschi M, Pecciarini L, Cangi MG, et al. p63, a p53 homologue, is a selective nuclear marker of myoepithelial cells of the human breast. *Am J Surg Pathol* 2001;25:1054-60.
5. Eusebi V, Millis RR, Cattani MG, Bussolati G, Azzopardi JG. Apocrine carcinoma of the breast. A morphologic and immunocytochemical study. *Am J Pathol* 1986;123:532-41.
6. Pier WJ, Jr., Garancis JC, Kuzma JF. The ultrastructure of apocrine cells in intracystic papilloma and fibrocystic disease of the breast. *Arch Pathol* 1970;89:446-52.
7. Lakhani SR, Chaggar R, Davies S, et al. Genetic alterations in 'normal' luminal and myoepithelial cells of the breast. *J Pathol* 1999;189:496-503.
8. Sapino A, Papotti M, Sanfilippo B, Gugliotta P, Bussolati G. Tumor types derived from epithelial and myoepithelial cell lines of R3230AC rat mammary carcinoma. *Cancer Res* 1992;52:1553-60.
9. Egan RL, McSweeney MB. Intramammary lymph nodes. *Cancer* 1983;51:1838-42.
10. Lee AH, Ellis IO, Pinder SE, Barbera D, Elston CW. Pathological assessment of sentinel lymph-node biopsies in patients with breast cancer. *Virchows Arch* 2000;436:97-101.

11. Donegan WL SJ. *Cancer of the breast* 4th ed. Philadelphia: W.B. Saunders; 1995.
12. Jemal A, Bray F, Center MM, Ferlay J, Ward E, Forman D. Global cancer statistics. *CA Cancer J Clin* 2011;61:69-90.
13. Ferlay J, Shin HR, Bray F, Forman D, Mathers C, Parkin DM. Estimates of worldwide burden of cancer in 2008: GLOBOCAN 2008. *Int J Cancer*;127:2893-917.
14. Beral V, Banks E, Reeves G, Wallis M. Hormone replacement therapy and high incidence of breast cancer between mammographic screens. *Lancet* 1997;349:1103-4.
15. Rossouw JE, Anderson GL, Prentice RL, et al. Risks and benefits of estrogen plus progestin in healthy postmenopausal women: principal results From the Women's Health Initiative randomized controlled trial. *JAMA* 2002;288:321-33.
16. Autier P, Boniol M, La Vecchia C, et al. Disparities in breast cancer mortality trends between 30 European countries: retrospective trend analysis of WHO mortality database. *BMJ* 2010;341:c3620.
17. Eifel P, Axelson JA, Costa J, et al. National Institutes of Health Consensus Development Conference Statement: adjuvant therapy for breast cancer, November 1-3, 2000. *J Natl Cancer Inst* 2001;93:979-89.
18. Anders CK, Hsu DS, Broadwater G, et al. Young age at diagnosis correlates with worse prognosis and defines a subset of breast cancers with shared patterns of gene expression. *J Clin Oncol* 2008;26:3324-30.
19. Goldhirsch A, Gelber RD, Yothers G, et al. Adjuvant therapy for very young women with breast cancer: need for tailored treatments. *J Natl Cancer Inst Monogr* 2001:44-51.
20. Schairer C, Mink PJ, Carroll L, Devesa SS. Probabilities of death from breast cancer and other causes among female breast cancer patients. *J Natl Cancer Inst* 2004;96:1311-21.
21. Hanrahan EO, Gonzalez-Angulo AM, Giordano SH, et al. Overall survival and cause-specific mortality of patients with stage T1a,bN0M0 breast carcinoma. *J Clin Oncol* 2007;25:4952-60.

22. Du XL, Fox EE, Lai D. Competing causes of death for women with breast cancer and change over time from 1975 to 2003. *Am J Clin Oncol* 2008;31:105-16.
23. van de Water W, Markopoulos C, van de Velde CJ, et al. Association between age at diagnosis and disease-specific mortality among postmenopausal women with hormone receptor-positive breast cancer. *JAMA* 2012;307:590-7.
24. Bastiaannet E, Liefers GJ, de Craen AJ, et al. Breast cancer in elderly compared to younger patients in the Netherlands: stage at diagnosis, treatment and survival in 127,805 unselected patients. *Breast Cancer Res Treat* 2010;124:801-7.
25. Fitzgibbons PL, Page DL, Weaver D, et al. Prognostic factors in breast cancer. College of American Pathologists Consensus Statement 1999. *Arch Pathol Lab Med* 2000;124:966-78.
26. Carter CL, Allen C, Henson DE. Relation of tumor size, lymph node status, and survival in 24,740 breast cancer cases. *Cancer* 1989;63:181-7.
27. McMasters KM, Giuliano AE, Ross MI, et al. Sentinel-lymph-node biopsy for breast cancer--not yet the standard of care. *N Engl J Med* 1998;339:990-5.
28. Gibbs NM. Topographical and histological presentation of mammographic pathology in breast cancer. *J Clin Pathol* 1988;41:3-11.
29. Contesso G, Jotti GS, Bonadonna G. Tumor grade as a prognostic factor in primary breast cancer. *Eur J Cancer Clin Oncol* 1989;25:403-9.
30. Elston CW, Ellis IO, Pinder SE. Prognostic factors in invasive carcinoma of the breast. *Clin Oncol (R Coll Radiol)* 1998;10:14-7.
31. Bloom HJ, Richardson WW. Histological grading and prognosis in breast cancer; a study of 1409 cases of which 359 have been followed for 15 years. *Br J Cancer* 1957;11:359-77.
32. Elston CW, Ellis IO. Pathological prognostic factors in breast cancer. I. The value of histological grade in breast cancer: experience from a large study with long-term follow-up. *Histopathology* 1991;19:403-10.
33. Elledge RM, Osborne CK. Oestrogen receptors and breast cancer. *BMJ* 1997;314:1843-4.

34. Lal P, Tan LK, Chen B. Correlation of HER-2 status with estrogen and progesterone receptors and histologic features in 3,655 invasive breast carcinomas. *Am J Clin Pathol* 2005;123:541-6.
35. Eusebi V, Azzopardi JG. Vascular infiltration in benign breast disease. *J Pathol* 1976;118:9-16.
36. Youngson BJ, Cranor M, Rosen PP. Epithelial displacement in surgical breast specimens following needling procedures. *Am J Surg Pathol* 1994;18:896-903.
37. Carter BA, Jensen RA, Simpson JF, Page DL. Benign transport of breast epithelium into axillary lymph nodes after biopsy. *Am J Clin Pathol* 2000;113:259-65.
38. Pinder SE, Ellis IO, Galea M, O'Rouke S, Blamey RW, Elston CW. Pathological prognostic factors in breast cancer. III. Vascular invasion: relationship with recurrence and survival in a large study with long-term follow-up. *Histopathology* 1994;24:41-7.
39. Clemente CG, Boracchi P, Andreola S, Del Vecchio M, Veronesi P, Rilke FO. Peritumoral lymphatic invasion in patients with node-negative mammary duct carcinoma. *Cancer* 1992;69:1396-403.
40. Sloane JP, Amendoeira I, Apostolikas N, et al. Consistency achieved by 23 European pathologists from 12 countries in diagnosing breast disease and reporting prognostic features of carcinomas. European Commission Working Group on Breast Screening Pathology. *Virchows Arch* 1999;434:3-10.
41. Goulding H, Abdul Rashid NF, Robertson JF, et al. Assessment of angiogenesis in breast carcinoma: an important factor in prognosis? *Hum Pathol* 1995;26:1196-200.
42. Lee AH, Happerfield LC, Bobrow LG, Millis RR. Angiogenesis and inflammation in invasive carcinoma of the breast. *J Clin Pathol* 1997;50:669-73.
43. Weidner N, Semple JP, Welch WR, Folkman J. Tumor angiogenesis and metastasis--correlation in invasive breast carcinoma. *N Engl J Med* 1991;324:1-8.

44. Axelsson K, Ljung BM, Moore DH, 2nd, et al. Tumor angiogenesis as a prognostic assay for invasive ductal breast carcinoma. *J Natl Cancer Inst* 1995;87:997-1008.
45. Berns EM, Klijn JG, Look MP, et al. Combined vascular endothelial growth factor and TP53 status predicts poor response to tamoxifen therapy in estrogen receptor-positive advanced breast cancer. *Clin Cancer Res* 2003;9:1253-8.
46. Manders P, Beex LV, Tjan-Heijnen VC, et al. The prognostic value of vascular endothelial growth factor in 574 node-negative breast cancer patients who did not receive adjuvant systemic therapy. *Br J Cancer* 2002;87:772-8.
47. Cristofanilli M, Hayes DF, Budd GT, et al. Circulating tumor cells: a novel prognostic factor for newly diagnosed metastatic breast cancer. *J Clin Oncol* 2005;23:1420-30.
48. Cristofanilli M, Budd GT, Ellis MJ, et al. Circulating tumor cells, disease progression, and survival in metastatic breast cancer. *N Engl J Med* 2004;351:781-91.
49. Lucci A, Hall CS, Lodhi AK, et al. Circulating tumour cells in non-metastatic breast cancer: a prospective study. *Lancet Oncol*.2012 Epub ahead of print.
50. Wulfing P, Borchard J, Buerger H, et al. HER2-positive circulating tumor cells indicate poor clinical outcome in stage I to III breast cancer patients. *Clin Cancer Res* 2006;12:1715-20.
51. Diab SG, Clark GM, Osborne CK, Libby A, Allred DC, Elledge RM. Tumor characteristics and clinical outcome of tubular and mucinous breast carcinomas. *J Clin Oncol* 1999;17:1442-8.
52. Papadatos G, Rangan AM, Psarianos T, Ung O, Taylor R, Boyages J. Probability of axillary node involvement in patients with tubular carcinoma of the breast. *Br J Surg* 2001;88:860-4.
53. Toikkanen S, Kujari H. Pure and mixed mucinous carcinomas of the breast: a clinicopathologic analysis of 61 cases with long-term follow-up. *Hum Pathol* 1989;20:758-64.
54. Page DL, Dixon JM, Anderson TJ, Lee D, Stewart HJ. Invasive cribriform carcinoma of the breast. *Histopathology* 1983;7:525-36.

55. Venable JG, Schwartz AM, Silverberg SG. Infiltrating cribriform carcinoma of the breast: a distinctive clinicopathologic entity. *Hum Pathol* 1990;21:333-8.
56. Peters GN, Wolff M. Adenoid cystic carcinoma of the breast. Report of 11 new cases: review of the literature and discussion of biological behavior. *Cancer* 1983;52:680-6.
57. Schmitt FC, Ribeiro CA, Alvarenga S, Lopes JM. Primary acinic cell-like carcinoma of the breast--a variant with good prognosis? *Histopathology* 2000;36:286-9.
58. McDivitt RW, Stewart FW. Breast carcinoma in children. *JAMA* 1966;195:388-90.
59. Rapin V, Contesso G, Mouriesse H, et al. Medullary breast carcinoma. A reevaluation of 95 cases of breast cancer with inflammatory stroma. *Cancer* 1988;61:2503-10.
60. Fisher CJ, Egan MK, Smith P, Wicks K, Millis RR, Fentiman IS. Histopathology of breast cancer in relation to age. *Br J Cancer* 1997;75:593-6.
61. Fisher ER, Gregorio RM, Fisher B, Redmond C, Vellios F, Sommers SC. The pathology of invasive breast cancer. A syllabus derived from findings of the National Surgical Adjuvant Breast Project (protocol no. 4). *Cancer* 1975;36:1-85.
62. Azzopardi JG, Laurini RN. Elastosis in breast cancer. *Cancer* 1974;33:174-83.
63. Lampejo OT, Barnes DM, Smith P, Millis RR. Evaluation of infiltrating ductal carcinomas with a DCIS component: correlation of the histologic type of the in situ component with grade of the infiltrating component. *Semin Diagn Pathol* 1994;11:215-22.
64. Hetelekidis S, Collins L, Silver B, et al. Predictors of local recurrence following excision alone for ductal carcinoma in situ. *Cancer* 1999;85:427-31.
65. Charpin C, Garcia S, Bonnier P, et al. Reduced E-cadherin immunohistochemical expression in node-negative breast carcinomas correlates with 10-year survival. *Am J Clin Pathol* 1998;109:431-8.
66. Kettle P, Allen DC. Bone marrow granulomas in infiltrating lobular breast cancer. *J Clin Pathol* 1997;50:166-8.

67. Dixon JM, Anderson TJ, Page DL, Lee D, Duffy SW. Infiltrating lobular carcinoma of the breast. *Histopathology* 1982;6:149-61.
68. Tot T. The diffuse type of invasive lobular carcinoma of the breast: morphology and prognosis. *Virchows Arch* 2003;443:718-24.
69. Porter PL, Garcia R, Moe R, Corwin DJ, Gown AM. C-erbB-2 oncogene protein in in situ and invasive lobular breast neoplasia. *Cancer* 1991;68:331-4.
70. Fisher B, Jeong JH, Anderson S, Bryant J, Fisher ER, Wolmark N. Twenty-five-year follow-up of a randomized trial comparing radical mastectomy, total mastectomy, and total mastectomy followed by irradiation. *N Engl J Med* 2002;347:567-75.
71. Veronesi U, Cascinelli N, Mariani L, et al. Twenty-year follow-up of a randomized study comparing breast-conserving surgery with radical mastectomy for early breast cancer. *N Engl J Med* 2002;347:1227-32.
72. Silverstein MJ, Lagios MD, Recht A, et al. Image-detected breast cancer: state of the art diagnosis and treatment. *J Am Coll Surg* 2005;201:586-97.
73. Dietel M, Sers C. Personalized medicine and development of targeted therapies: The upcoming challenge for diagnostic molecular pathology. A review. *Virchows Arch* 2006;448:744-55.
74. Goldhirsch A, Glick JH, Gelber RD, Coates AS, Thurlimann B, Senn HJ. Meeting highlights: international expert consensus on the primary therapy of early breast cancer 2005. *Ann Oncol* 2005;16:1569-83.
75. Goldhirsch A, Wood WC, Gelber RD, Coates AS, Thurlimann B, Senn HJ. Progress and promise: highlights of the international expert consensus on the primary therapy of early breast cancer 2007. *Ann Oncol* 2007;18:1133-44.
76. Sapunar F, Smith IE. Neoadjuvant chemotherapy for breast cancer. *Ann Med* 2000;32:43-50.
77. Wolff AC, Davidson NE. Primary systemic therapy in operable breast cancer. *J Clin Oncol* 2000;18:1558-69.
78. Goldhirsch A, Wood WC, Coates AS, Gelber RD, Thurlimann B, Senn HJ. Strategies for subtypes--dealing with the diversity of breast cancer: highlights of the

- St. Gallen International Expert Consensus on the Primary Therapy of Early Breast Cancer 2011. Ann Oncol 2011;22:1736-47.
79. Polychemotherapy for early breast cancer: an overview of the randomised trials. Early Breast Cancer Trialists' Collaborative Group. Lancet 1998;352:930-42.
 80. Weigelt B, Mackay A, A'Hern R, et al. Breast cancer molecular profiling with single sample predictors: a retrospective analysis. Lancet Oncol 2010;11:339-49.
 81. Perou CM, Sorlie T, Eisen MB, et al. Molecular portraits of human breast tumours. Nature 2000;406:747-52.
 82. Sorlie T, Perou CM, Tibshirani R, et al. Gene expression patterns of breast carcinomas distinguish tumor subclasses with clinical implications. Proc Natl Acad Sci U S A 2001;98:10869-74.
 83. Abd El-Rehim DM, Ball G, Pinder SE, et al. High-throughput protein expression analysis using tissue microarray technology of a large well-characterised series identifies biologically distinct classes of breast cancer confirming recent cDNA expression analyses. Int J Cancer 2005;116:340-50.
 84. Prat A, Perou CM. Deconstructing the molecular portraits of breast cancer. Mol Oncol 2010;5:5-23.
 85. Curtis C, Shah SP, Chin SF, et al. The genomic and transcriptomic architecture of 2,000 breast tumours reveals novel subgroups. Nature.2012. Epub ahead of print.
 86. Nik-Zainal S, Alexandrov LB, Wedge DC, et al. Mutational Processes Molding the Genomes of 21 Breast Cancers. Cell 2012;149:979-93.
 87. Nik-Zainal S, Van Loo P, Wedge DC, et al. The life history of 21 breast cancers. Cell 2012;149:994-1007.
 88. Nahta R, Hortobagyi GN, Esteva FJ. Growth factor receptors in breast cancer: potential for therapeutic intervention. Oncologist 2003;8:5-17.
 89. Slamon DJ, Clark GM, Wong SG, Levin WJ, Ullrich A, McGuire WL. Human breast cancer: correlation of relapse and survival with amplification of the HER-2/neu oncogene. Science 1987;235:177-82.
 90. Foley J, Nickerson NK, Nam S, et al. EGFR signaling in breast cancer: bad to the bone. Semin Cell Dev Biol 2010;21:951-60.

91. Knowlden JM, Gee JM, Seery LT, et al. c-erbB3 and c-erbB4 expression is a feature of the endocrine responsive phenotype in clinical breast cancer. *Oncogene* 1998;17:1949-57.
92. Peiro G, Benlloch S, Sanchez-Tejada L, et al. Low activation of Insulin-like Growth Factor 1-Receptor (IGF1R) is associated with local recurrence in early breast carcinoma. *Breast Cancer Res Treat* 2009;117:433-41.
93. Yarden Y. The EGFR family and its ligands in human cancer. signalling mechanisms and therapeutic opportunities. *Eur J Cancer* 2001;37 Suppl 4:S3-8.
94. Cho HS, Mason K, Ramyar KX, et al. Structure of the extracellular region of HER2 alone and in complex with the Herceptin Fab. *Nature* 2003;421:756-60.
95. Schechter AL, Stern DF, Vaidyanathan L, et al. The neu oncogene: an erb-B-related gene encoding a 185,000-Mr tumour antigen. *Nature* 1984;312:513-6.
96. King CR, Kraus MH, Aaronson SA. Amplification of a novel v-erbB-related gene in a human mammary carcinoma. *Science* 1985;229:974-6.
97. Peiro G, Aranda FI, Adrover E, et al. Analysis of HER2 by chromogenic in situ hybridization and immunohistochemistry in lymph node-negative breast carcinoma: Prognostic relevance. *Hum Pathol* 2007;38:26-34.
98. Paik S, Bryant J, Park C, et al. erbB-2 and response to doxorubicin in patients with axillary lymph node-positive, hormone receptor-negative breast cancer. *J Natl Cancer Inst* 1998;90:1361-70.
99. Press MF, Cordon-Cardo C, Slamon DJ. Expression of the HER-2/neu proto-oncogene in normal human adult and fetal tissues. *Oncogene* 1990;5:953-62.
100. Paik S, Hazan R, Fisher ER, et al. Pathologic findings from the National Surgical Adjuvant Breast and Bowel Project: prognostic significance of erbB-2 protein overexpression in primary breast cancer. *J Clin Oncol* 1990;8:103-12.
101. Niehans GA, Singleton TP, Dykoski D, Kiang DT. Stability of HER-2/neu expression over time and at multiple metastatic sites. *J Natl Cancer Inst* 1993;85:1230-5.
102. Baselga J, Tripathy D, Mendelsohn J, et al. Phase II study of weekly intravenous recombinant humanized anti-p185HER2 monoclonal antibody in

- patients with HER2/neu-overexpressing metastatic breast cancer. *J Clin Oncol* 1996;14:737-44.
103. Vogel CL, Cobleigh MA, Tripathy D, et al. Efficacy and safety of trastuzumab as a single agent in first-line treatment of HER2-overexpressing metastatic breast cancer. *J Clin Oncol* 2002;20:719-26.
 104. Slamon DJ, Leyland-Jones B, Shak S, et al. Use of chemotherapy plus a monoclonal antibody against HER2 for metastatic breast cancer that overexpresses HER2. *N Engl J Med* 2001;344:783-92.
 105. Seidman AD, Fornier MN, Esteva FJ, et al. Weekly trastuzumab and paclitaxel therapy for metastatic breast cancer with analysis of efficacy by HER2 immunophenotype and gene amplification. *J Clin Oncol* 2001;19:2587-95.
 106. Esteva FJ, Valero V, Booser D, et al. Phase II study of weekly docetaxel and trastuzumab for patients with HER-2-overexpressing metastatic breast cancer. *J Clin Oncol* 2002;20:1800-8.
 107. Izumi Y, Xu L, di Tomaso E, Fukumura D, Jain RK. Tumour biology: herceptin acts as an anti-angiogenic cocktail. *Nature* 2002;416:279-80.
 108. Austin CD, De Maziere AM, Pisacane PI, et al. Endocytosis and sorting of ErbB2 and the site of action of cancer therapeutics trastuzumab and geldanamycin. *Mol Biol Cell* 2004;15:5268-82.
 109. Scaltriti M, Rojo F, Ocana A, et al. Expression of p95HER2, a truncated form of the HER2 receptor, and response to anti-HER2 therapies in breast cancer. *J Natl Cancer Inst* 2007;99:628-38.
 110. Nahta R, Esteva FJ. HER2 therapy: molecular mechanisms of trastuzumab resistance. *Breast Cancer Res* 2006;8:215.
 111. Ritter CA, Perez-Torres M, Rinehart C, et al. Human breast cancer cells selected for resistance to trastuzumab in vivo overexpress epidermal growth factor receptor and ErbB ligands and remain dependent on the ErbB receptor network. *Clin Cancer Res* 2007;13:4909-19.
 112. Gallardo A, Lerma E, Escuin D, et al. Increased signalling of EGFR and IGF1R, and deregulation of PTEN/PI3K/Akt pathway are related with trastuzumab resistance in HER2 breast carcinomas. *Br J Cancer* 2012;106:1367-73.

113. Esteva FJ, Guo H, Zhang S, et al. PTEN, PIK3CA, p-AKT, and p-p70S6K status: association with trastuzumab response and survival in patients with HER2-positive metastatic breast cancer. *Am J Pathol* 2010;177:1647-56.
114. Bendell JC, Domchek SM, Burstein HJ, et al. Central nervous system metastases in women who receive trastuzumab-based therapy for metastatic breast carcinoma. *Cancer* 2003;97:2972-7.
115. Lin NU, Bellon JR, Winer EP. CNS metastases in breast cancer. *J Clin Oncol* 2004;22:3608-17.
116. Lin CR, Chen WS, Kruiger W, et al. Expression cloning of human EGF receptor complementary DNA: gene amplification and three related messenger RNA products in A431 cells. *Science* 1984;224:843-8.
117. Yu H, Levesque MA, Khosravi MJ, Papanastasiou-Diamandi A, Clark GM, Diamandis EP. Associations between insulin-like growth factors and their binding proteins and other prognostic indicators in breast cancer. *Br J Cancer* 1996;74:1242-7.
118. Yakar S, Leroith D, Brodt P. The role of the growth hormone/insulin-like growth factor axis in tumor growth and progression: Lessons from animal models. *Cytokine Growth Factor Rev* 2005;16:407-20.
119. Werner H, Maor S. The insulin-like growth factor-I receptor gene: a downstream target for oncogene and tumor suppressor action. *Trends Endocrinol Metab* 2006;17:236-42.
120. Ouban A, Muraca P, Yeatman T, Coppola D. Expression and distribution of insulin-like growth factor-1 receptor in human carcinomas. *Hum Pathol* 2003;34:803-8.
121. Peiro G, Lohse P, Mayr D, Diebold J. Insulin-like growth factor-I receptor and PTEN protein expression in endometrial carcinoma. Correlation with bax and bcl-2 expression, microsatellite instability status, and outcome. *Am J Clin Pathol* 2003;120:78-85.
122. Lu Y, Zi X, Zhao Y, Mascarenhas D, Pollak M. Insulin-like growth factor-I receptor signaling and resistance to trastuzumab (Herceptin). *J Natl Cancer Inst* 2001;93:1852-7.

123. Whitman M, Downes CP, Keeler M, Keller T, Cantley L. Type I phosphatidylinositol kinase makes a novel inositol phospholipid, phosphatidylinositol-3-phosphate. *Nature* 1988;332:644-6.
124. Franke TF. PI3K/Akt: getting it right matters. *Oncogene* 2008;27:6473-88.
125. Vogt PK, Bader AG, Kang S. Phosphoinositide 3-kinase: from viral oncoprotein to drug target. *Virology* 2006;344:131-8.
126. Samuels Y, Wang Z, Bardelli A, et al. High frequency of mutations of the PIK3CA gene in human cancers. *Science* 2004;304:554.
127. Zhao L, Vogt PK. Helical domain and kinase domain mutations in p110alpha of phosphatidylinositol 3-kinase induce gain of function by different mechanisms. *Proc Natl Acad Sci U S A* 2008;105:2652-7.
128. Wood LD, Parsons DW, Jones S, et al. The genomic landscapes of human breast and colorectal cancers. *Science* 2007;318:1108-13.
129. Campbell IG, Russell SE, Choong DY, et al. Mutation of the PIK3CA gene in ovarian and breast cancer. *Cancer Res* 2004;64:7678-81.
130. Saal LH, Holm K, Maurer M, et al. PIK3CA mutations correlate with hormone receptors, node metastasis, and ERBB2, and are mutually exclusive with PTEN loss in human breast carcinoma. *Cancer Res* 2005;65:2554-9.
131. Lerma E, Catasus L, Gallardo A, et al. Exon 20 PIK3CA mutations decreases survival in aggressive (HER-2 positive) breast carcinomas. *Virchows Arch* 2008;453:133-9.
132. Barbareschi M, Buttitta F, Felicioni L, et al. Different prognostic roles of mutations in the helical and kinase domains of the PIK3CA gene in breast carcinomas. *Clin Cancer Res* 2007;13:6064-9.
133. Stemke-Hale K, Gonzalez-Angulo AM, Lluch A, et al. An integrative genomic and proteomic analysis of PIK3CA, PTEN, and AKT mutations in breast cancer. *Cancer Res* 2008;68:6084-91.
134. Cizkova M, Susini A, Vacher S, et al. PIK3CA mutation impact on survival in breast cancer patients and in ERalpha, PR and ERBB2-based subgroups. *Breast Cancer Res* 2012;14:R28.

135. Li SY, Rong M, Grieu F, Iacopetta B. PIK3CA mutations in breast cancer are associated with poor outcome. *Breast Cancer Res Treat* 2006;96:91-5.
136. Maruyama N, Miyoshi Y, Taguchi T, Tamaki Y, Monden M, Noguchi S. Clinicopathologic analysis of breast cancers with PIK3CA mutations in Japanese women. *Clin Cancer Res* 2007;13:408-14.
137. Adams JR, Schachter NF, Liu JC, Zackenhaus E, Egan SE. Elevated PI3K signaling drives multiple breast cancer subtypes. *Oncotarget* 2011;2:435-47.
138. Gao X, Neufeld TP, Pan D. Drosophila PTEN regulates cell growth and proliferation through PI3K-dependent and -independent pathways. *Dev Biol* 2000;221:404-18.
139. Cully M, You H, Levine AJ, Mak TW. Beyond PTEN mutations: the PI3K pathway as an integrator of multiple inputs during tumorigenesis. *Nat Rev Cancer* 2006;6:184-92.
140. Depowski PL, Rosenthal SI, Ross JS. Loss of expression of the PTEN gene protein product is associated with poor outcome in breast cancer. *Mod Pathol* 2001;14:672-6.
141. Perren A, Weng LP, Boag AH, et al. Immunohistochemical evidence of loss of PTEN expression in primary ductal adenocarcinomas of the breast. *Am J Pathol* 1999;155:1253-60.
142. Langlois B, Emonard H, Martiny L, Dedieu S. [Multiple involvements of LRP-1 receptor in tumor progression]. *Pathol Biol (Paris)* 2009;57:548-54.
143. Kancha RK, Stearns ME, Hussain MM. Decreased expression of the low density lipoprotein receptor-related protein/alpha 2-macroglobulin receptor in invasive cell clones derived from human prostate and breast tumor cells. *Oncol Res* 1994;6:365-72.
144. Pallero MA, Elzie CA, Chen J, Mosher DF, Murphy-Ullrich JE. Thrombospondin 1 binding to calreticulin-LRP1 signals resistance to anoikis. *FASEB J* 2008;22:3968-79.
145. Fayard B, Bianchi F, Dey J, et al. The serine protease inhibitor protease nexin-1 controls mammary cancer metastasis through LRP-1-mediated MMP-9 expression. *Cancer Res* 2009;69:5690-8.

146. Song H, Li Y, Lee J, Schwartz AL, Bu G. Low-density lipoprotein receptor-related protein 1 promotes cancer cell migration and invasion by inducing the expression of matrix metalloproteinases 2 and 9. *Cancer Res* 2009;69:879-86.
147. Catasus L, Gallardo A, Llorente-Cortes V, et al. Low-density lipoprotein receptor-related protein 1 is associated with proliferation and invasiveness in Her-2/neu and triple-negative breast carcinomas. *Hum Pathol* 2011;42:1581-8.
148. Gaide Chevronnay HP, Selvais C, Emonard H, Galant C, Marbaix E, Henriet P. Regulation of matrix metalloproteinases activity studied in human endometrium as a paradigm of cyclic tissue breakdown and regeneration. *Biochim Biophys Acta* 2011;1824:146-56.
149. Meng H, Chen G, Zhang X, et al. Stromal LRP1 in lung adenocarcinoma predicts clinical outcome. *Clin Cancer Res* 2011;17:2426-33.
150. de Vries TJ, Verheijen JH, de Bart AC, Weidle UH, Ruiter DJ, van Muijen GN. Decreased expression of both the low-density lipoprotein receptor-related protein/alpha(2)-macroglobulin receptor and its receptor-associated protein in late stages of cutaneous melanocytic tumor progression. *Cancer Res* 1996;56:1432-9.
151. Yamamoto M, Ikeda K, Ohshima K, Tsugu H, Kimura H, Tomonaga M. Increased expression of low density lipoprotein receptor-related protein/alpha2-macroglobulin receptor in human malignant astrocytomas. *Cancer Res* 1997;57:2799-805.
152. Obermeyer K, Krueger S, Peters B, Falkenberg B, Roessner A, Rocken C. The expression of low density lipoprotein receptor-related protein in colorectal carcinoma. *Oncol Rep* 2007;17:361-7.
153. Catasus L, Llorente-Cortes V, Cuatrecasas M, Pons C, Espinosa I, Prat J. Low-density lipoprotein receptor-related protein 1 (LRP-1) is associated with highgrade, advanced stage and p53 and p16 alterations in endometrial carcinomas. *Histopathology* 2011;59:567-71.
154. Desrosiers RR, Rivard ME, Grundy PE, Annabi B. Decrease in LDL receptor-related protein expression and function correlates with advanced stages of Wilms tumors. *Pediatr Blood Cancer* 2006;46:40-9.

155. Castellana B, Escuin D, Peiro G, et al. ASPN and GJB2 Are Implicated in the Mechanisms of Invasion of Ductal Breast Carcinomas. *J Cancer* 2012;3:175-83.
156. Hunter DJ, Spiegelman D, Adami HO, et al. Cohort studies of fat intake and the risk of breast cancer--a pooled analysis. *N Engl J Med* 1996;334:356-61.
157. Smith-Warner SA, Spiegelman D, Adami HO, et al. Types of dietary fat and breast cancer: a pooled analysis of cohort studies. *Int J Cancer* 2001;92:767-74.
158. Thiebaut AC, Kipnis V, Chang SC, et al. Dietary fat and postmenopausal invasive breast cancer in the National Institutes of Health-AARP Diet and Health Study cohort. *J Natl Cancer Inst* 2007;99:451-62.
159. Lu Y, Lin YZ, LaPushin R, et al. The PTEN/MMAC1/TEP tumor suppressor gene decreases cell growth and induces apoptosis and anoikis in breast cancer cells. *Oncogene* 1999;18:7034-45.
160. Nagata Y, Lan KH, Zhou X, et al. PTEN activation contributes to tumor inhibition by trastuzumab, and loss of PTEN predicts trastuzumab resistance in patients. *Cancer Cell* 2004;6:117-27.
161. Razis E, Bobos M, Kotoula V, et al. Evaluation of the association of PIK3CA mutations and PTEN loss with efficacy of trastuzumab therapy in metastatic breast cancer. *Breast Cancer Res Treat*;128:447-56.
162. Berns K, Horlings HM, Hennessy BT, et al. A functional genetic approach identifies the PI3K pathway as a major determinant of trastuzumab resistance in breast cancer. *Cancer Cell* 2007;12:395-402.
163. Diermeier S, Horvath G, Knuechel-Clarke R, Hofstaedter F, Szollosi J, Brockhoff G. Epidermal growth factor receptor coexpression modulates susceptibility to Herceptin in HER2/neu overexpressing breast cancer cells via specific erbB-receptor interaction and activation. *Exp Cell Res* 2005;304:604-19.
164. Peiro G, Adrover E, Sanchez-Tejada L, et al. Increased insulin-like growth factor-1 receptor mRNA expression predicts poor survival in immunophenotypes of early breast carcinoma. *Mod Pathol*;24:201-8.

165. Harris LN, You F, Schnitt SJ, et al. Predictors of resistance to preoperative trastuzumab and vinorelbine for HER2-positive early breast cancer. *Clin Cancer Res* 2007;13:1198-207.
166. Nahta R, Yuan LX, Zhang B, Kobayashi R, Esteva FJ. Insulin-like growth factor-I receptor/human epidermal growth factor receptor 2 heterodimerization contributes to trastuzumab resistance of breast cancer cells. *Cancer Res* 2005;65:11118-28.
167. Abd El-Rehim DM, Pinder SE, Paish CE, et al. Expression and co-expression of the members of the epidermal growth factor receptor (EGFR) family in invasive breast carcinoma. *Br J Cancer* 2004;91:1532-42.
168. Harris LN, Liotcheva V, Broadwater G, et al. Comparison of methods of measuring HER-2 in metastatic breast cancer patients treated with high-dose chemotherapy. *J Clin Oncol* 2001;19:1698-706.
169. Panigrahi AR, Pinder SE, Chan SY, Paish EC, Robertson JF, Ellis IO. The role of PTEN and its signalling pathways, including AKT, in breast cancer; an assessment of relationships with other prognostic factors and with outcome. *J Pathol* 2004;204:93-100.
170. Vanhaesebroeck B, Alessi DR. The PI3K-PDK1 connection: more than just a road to PKB. *Biochem J* 2000;346 Pt 3:561-76.
171. Morrow PK, Wulf GM, Ensor J, et al. Phase I/II Study of Trastuzumab in Combination With Everolimus (RAD001) in Patients With HER2-Overexpressing Metastatic Breast Cancer Who Progressed on Trastuzumab-Based Therapy. *J Clin Oncol*.
172. Nahta R, O'Regan RM. Evolving strategies for overcoming resistance to HER2-directed therapy: targeting the PI3K/Akt/mTOR pathway. *Clin Breast Cancer*;10 Suppl 3:S72-8.
173. Russell DW, Schneider WJ, Yamamoto T, Luskey KL, Brown MS, Goldstein JL. Domain map of the LDL receptor: sequence homology with the epidermal growth factor precursor. *Cell* 1984;37:577-85.

174. Montel V, Gaultier A, Lester RD, Campana WM, Gonias SL. The low-density lipoprotein receptor-related protein regulates cancer cell survival and metastasis development. *Cancer Res* 2007;67:9817-24.
175. Dedieu S, Langlois B. LRP-1: a new modulator of cytoskeleton dynamics and adhesive complex turnover in cancer cells. *Cell Adh Migr* 2008;2:77-80.
176. Langlois B, Perrot G, Schneider C, et al. LRP-1 promotes cancer cell invasion by supporting ERK and inhibiting JNK signaling pathways. *PLoS One* 2010;5:e11584.
177. Lillis AP, Van Duyn LB, Murphy-Ullrich JE, Strickland DK. LDL receptor-related protein 1: unique tissue-specific functions revealed by selective gene knockout studies. *Physiol Rev* 2008;88:887-918.
178. Li Y, Wood N, Grimsley P, Yellowlees D, Donnelly PK. In vitro invasiveness of human breast cancer cells is promoted by low density lipoprotein receptor-related protein. *Invasion Metastasis* 1998;18:240-51.
179. Chazaud B, Ricoux R, Christov C, Plonquet A, Gherardi RK, Barlovatz-Meimon G. Promigratory effect of plasminogen activator inhibitor-1 on invasive breast cancer cell populations. *Am J Pathol* 2002;160:237-46.
180. Maiti B, Kundranda MN, Spiro TP, Daw HA. The association of metabolic syndrome with triple-negative breast cancer. *Breast Cancer Res Treat* 2009;121:479-83.