Introduction

Melanoma is the most serious type of skin cancer, causing about 75% of skin cancer related deaths worldwide. Standard treatment involves surgery, chemo- and radiation therapy, and immunotheraphy for metastatic melanoma. However, these treatments have their shortcomings often leading to relapse post treatment.

LTX-315 (Oncopore®) is a chemically modified cationic cytolytic peptide which is equally active against drug-sensitive and drug-resistant cancer cells. Previous in vivo studies have demonstrated that treatment of syngeneic murine A20 B-cell lymphomas and CT26WT colon carcinomas with intratumoral (i.t.) injection of LTX-315 resulted in complete tumor regression and long-term protective effect against re-inoculated tumor cells (unpublished data).

B16F1 is a highly aggressive and non-immunogenic murine melanoma syngeneic to the C57BL/6 mouse model.

Aim

The present study was undertaken to investigate whether i.t. injections of LTX-315 induced an antitumor immune response in vivo in a highly aggressive murine melanoma tumor model.

Results

LTX-315 rapidly kills murine and human melanoma cell lines in vitro. MTT cytotoxicity data for LTX-315 against a selection of normal and melanoma cell lines after 4 hours.

Methods

In vitro: The colorimetric 3-(4,5-dimethylthiazol-2-yl)-2,5-diphenyltetrazodium bromide (MTT) viability assay was used to investigate the cytotoxic effect of LTX-315 against a selection of human and murine cell lines. Cell lines were incubated with peptide solution for 4 hours.

In vivo: Pre-cultured B16F1 melanoma cells (5 x 10⁴) were subcutaneously inoculated into the abdomen of syngeneic C57BL/6N mice and established tumors treated i.t. with LTX-315 or vehicle (three consecutive injections).

Conclusion

LTX-315 treatment induced complete regression of established B16F1 melanoma tumors.

Intratumoral administration of a cytolytic peptide might represent a novel local treatment for melanoma malignancies.

LTX-315 is currently being investigated in a Phase I clinical study.

This work was supported by: Norwegian Research Council