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Stem and immune subsets in colorectal primary tumour: Quantification may diagnose metastasis

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#### Abstract

An important percentage of colorectal cancer (CRC) patients will develop metastasis, mainly in liver, even after a successful curative resection, showing a very high death rate if metastasis is not detected early on.

Disseminated cancer cells develop from Metastatic Stem Cells (MetSCs). Recent knowledge has accumulated about these cells particularly in CRC, so they may now be tracked from the removed primary tumour. This approach could be specially important in metastasis prognosis because it is becoming clear that metastasis does not particularly rely on driver mutations.

Among the many traits supporting an epigenetic amplification of cell survival and self-renewal mechanisms of MetSCs, the role of many immune cell populations present in tumour tissues is becoming clear. Tumour-infiltrating lymphocytes (T,B and NK cells), dendritic cells and some regulatory populations have also showed prognostic value or correlated with disease-free survival time, mainly in immunohistochemistry studies of unique populations.

It is expected that parallel analyses of these immune cell populations together with MetSCs in the primary tumour of patients will help to detect the

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