

# **Advancements Utilizing Circulating Tumor Cell Technology to Predict Outcomes in Patients With Breast Cancer**

December 10, 2014  
San Antonio, Texas

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THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS

MDAnderson  
Cancer Center



# Today's Learning Objectives

- Update the concept of personalized medicine
  - Review the advantages and limitations of technologies for CTC capture and enumeration
  - Understand where CTCs fit into the current treatment paradigm and where the future is headed
  - Learn about the Phase 3 BEACON study exploratory CTC endpoint for outcomes with etirinotecan pegol
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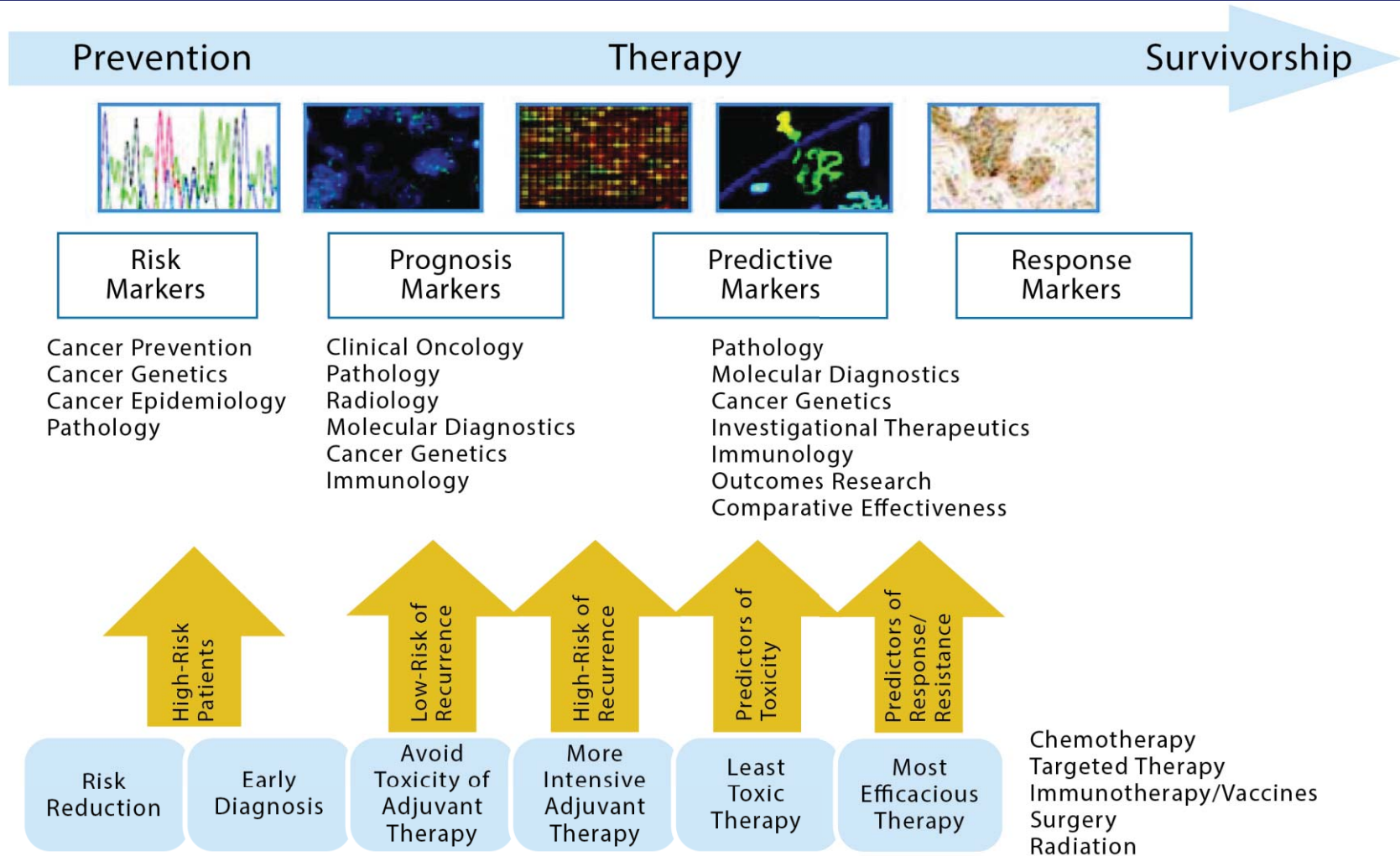


# Personalized Medicine

**Edith A. Perez, MD**

Mayo Clinic  
Jacksonville, FL

# Personalized Cancer Care Continuum



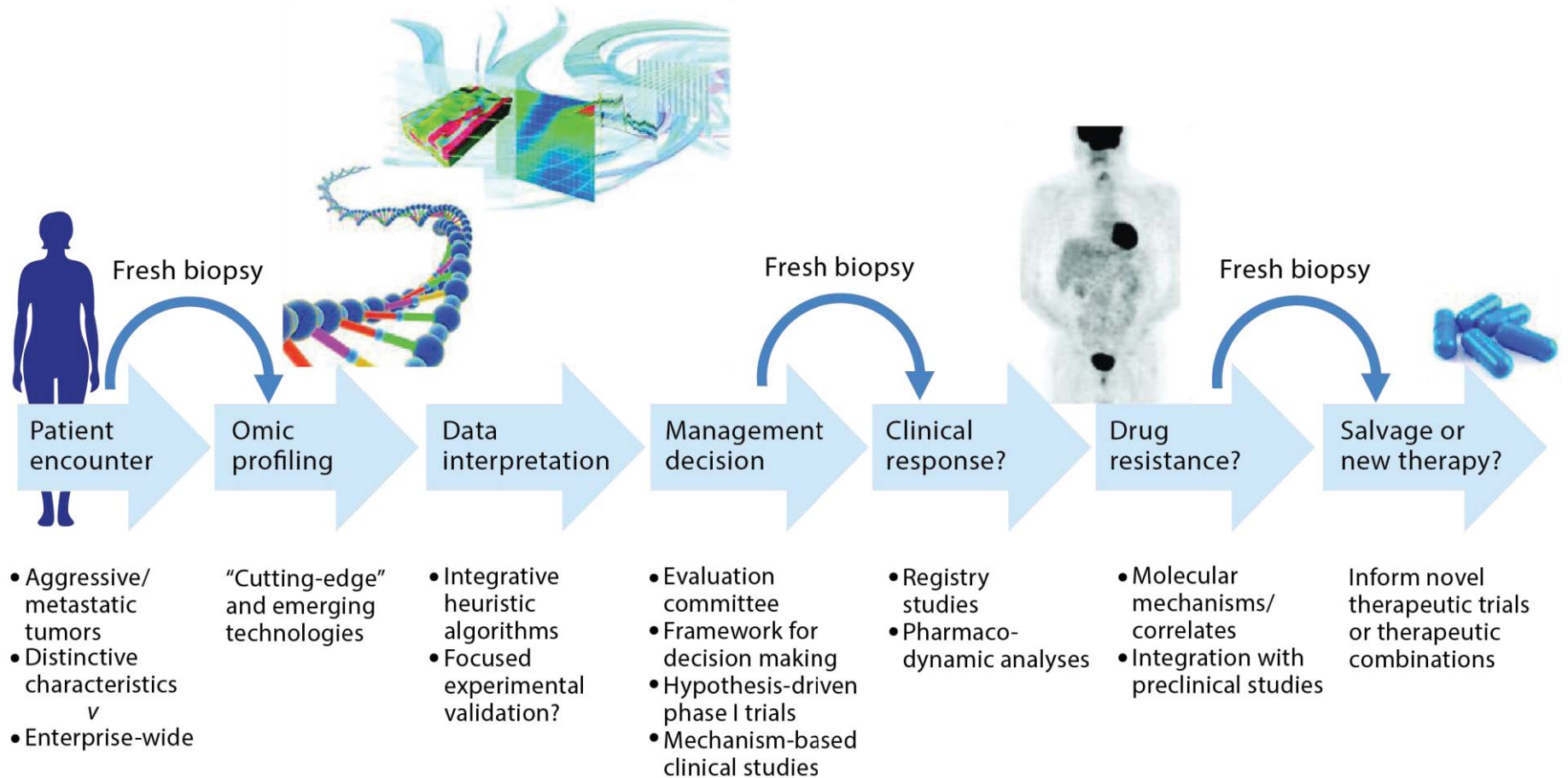


# Considerations

- Biology
  - Heterogeneity of cancer genomes and proteomes
  - Epigenetics
  - Cancer stem cells
  - Cancer cell mutations
- Therapy
  - Immunotherapy
  - New cytotoxics
  - Targeted agents
- Imaging and circulating markers



# Omics-Driven Cancer Medicine





# State of the Art Management of Breast Cancer: Personalized Medicine

## Risk reduction, early and advanced breast cancer strategies

- Utilization of optimal standards
- Application of systems biology to personalized breast cancer therapy
  - Identifying and validating molecular markers
  - Understanding molecular crosstalk and bypass mechanisms
  - Early predictors of outcome





# Circulating Tumor Cells (CTCs)

**Edith A. Perez, MD**

Mayo Clinic  
Jacksonville, FL



## **POLL QUESTION:**

Have you ever ordered CTC testing?

### **Answer Choices:**

- Yes
- No



## **POLL QUESTION:**

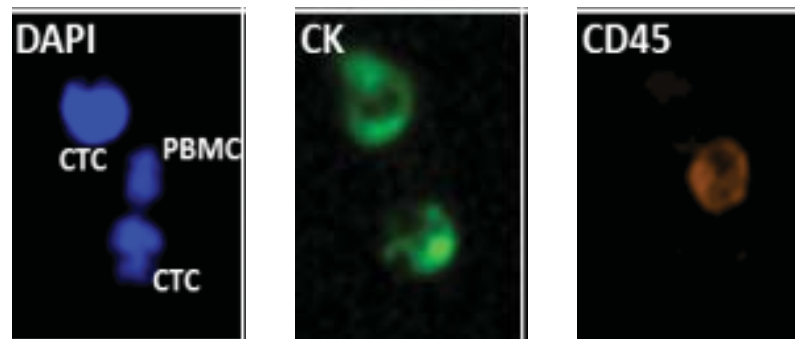
When do you think CTCs will become an important part of the clinical decision-making process in breast cancer?

### **Answer Choices:**

- Now
- 1-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 10 years+

# What Are Circulating Tumor Cells?

- First described in a woman with mBC almost 150 years ago<sup>1</sup>
- Circulating tumor cells (CTCs) are cancer cells shed from either the primary tumor or its metastases that circulate in the peripheral blood
  - Traditionally defined as having an intact, viable nucleus, presence of cytokeratins and absence of CD45, large size, and irregular shape



- Newer CTC isolation techniques increase sensitivity and allow for the expansion of the phenotypic definition and molecular characterization



## How Can CTCs Be Used?

- Liquid biopsy/noninvasive tumor sampling
- Early diagnosis
- Surrogate marker in clinical trials
- Monitor evolution of disease over time
- Monitor response to treatment
- Potential for molecular and genomic profiling of CTCs

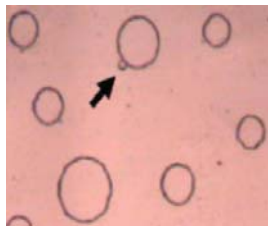
# Ideal CTC Test Components



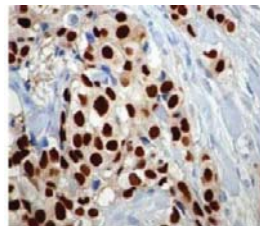
CTCs Detected in a Majority of Metastatic Patients

Comprehensive Characterization

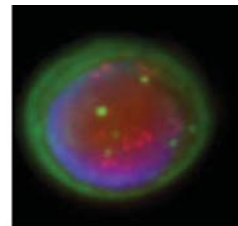
CTC Enumeration



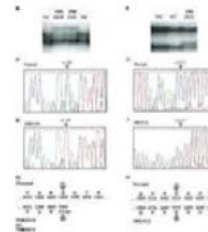
Protein Marker Analysis (e.g. ER)



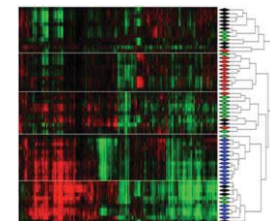
Gene Amplification (e.g. HER2)



Mutation Analysis (e.g. EGFR)



RNA Expression Profiling



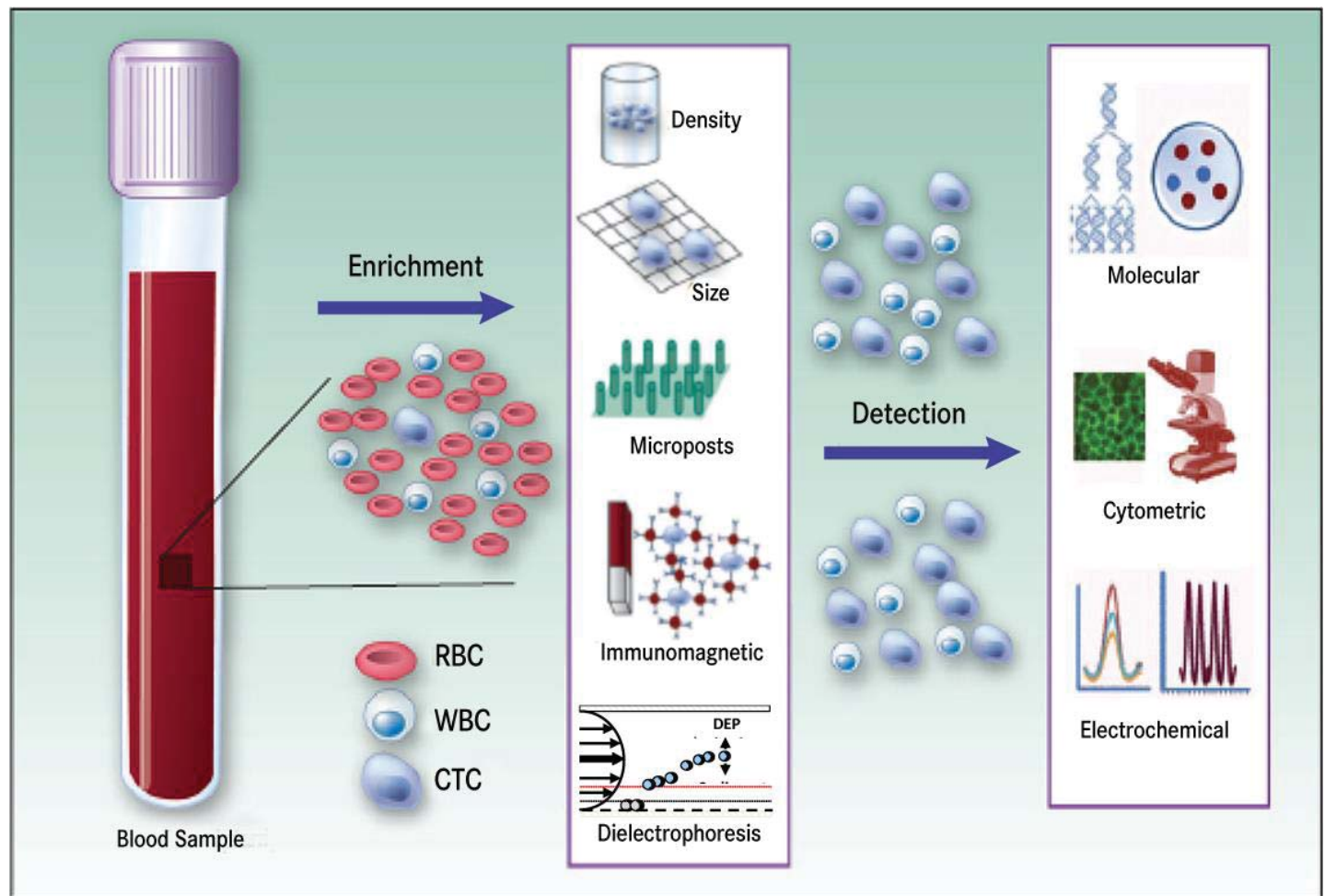


# First-Generation CTC Enrichment Technologies

- Existing CTC testing platform is CELLSEARCH<sup>®</sup> by Veridex/J&J
  - Provides CTC enumeration
  - FDA cleared for 3 cancer types (breast, CRC, and prostate) limited to metastatic patients<sup>1</sup>
- Key limitations of CELLSEARCH:
  - $\geq 5$  CTCs/7.5 mL detected in only 17%-41% of blood samples from Stage IV cancer patients<sup>2</sup>
  - Limited to epithelial CTCs
  - Low target cell recovery and purity
  - Captured cells are fixed and not viable



## Several Second-Generation CTC Recovery Methods Under Development



# Going Beyond CTC Enumeration

Cancer Patient Blood



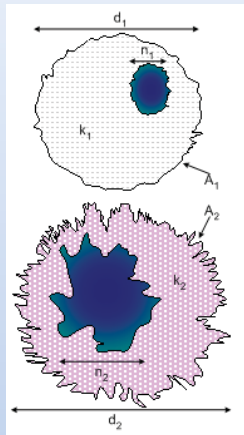
ApoStream®

- **High CTC recovery**—facilitating downstream characterization, including protein or gene expression analysis, mutation/translocation detection via NGS and single-cell sequencing, and pharmacodynamic studies
- **Isolation of viable cells**—enabling cell culture and patient-derived xenograft models
- **Universal enrichment of additional cell subsets (stem cells, EMT)**—independent of antigen expression levels or the requirement for predetermined antibody labeling

# ApoStream<sup>®</sup> Technology: Theory of Operation

## DEP

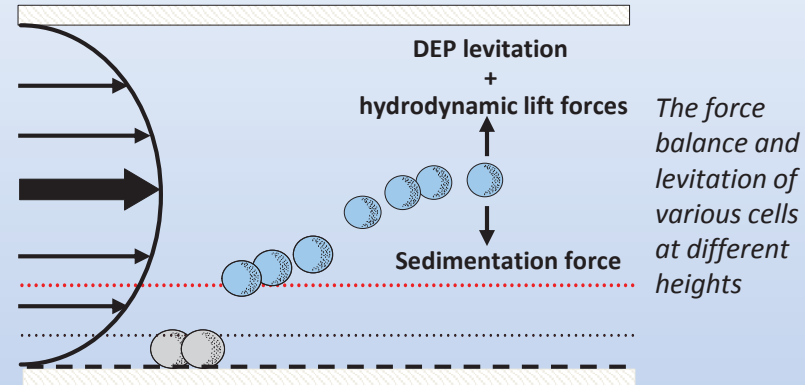
Normal cell



Tumor cell

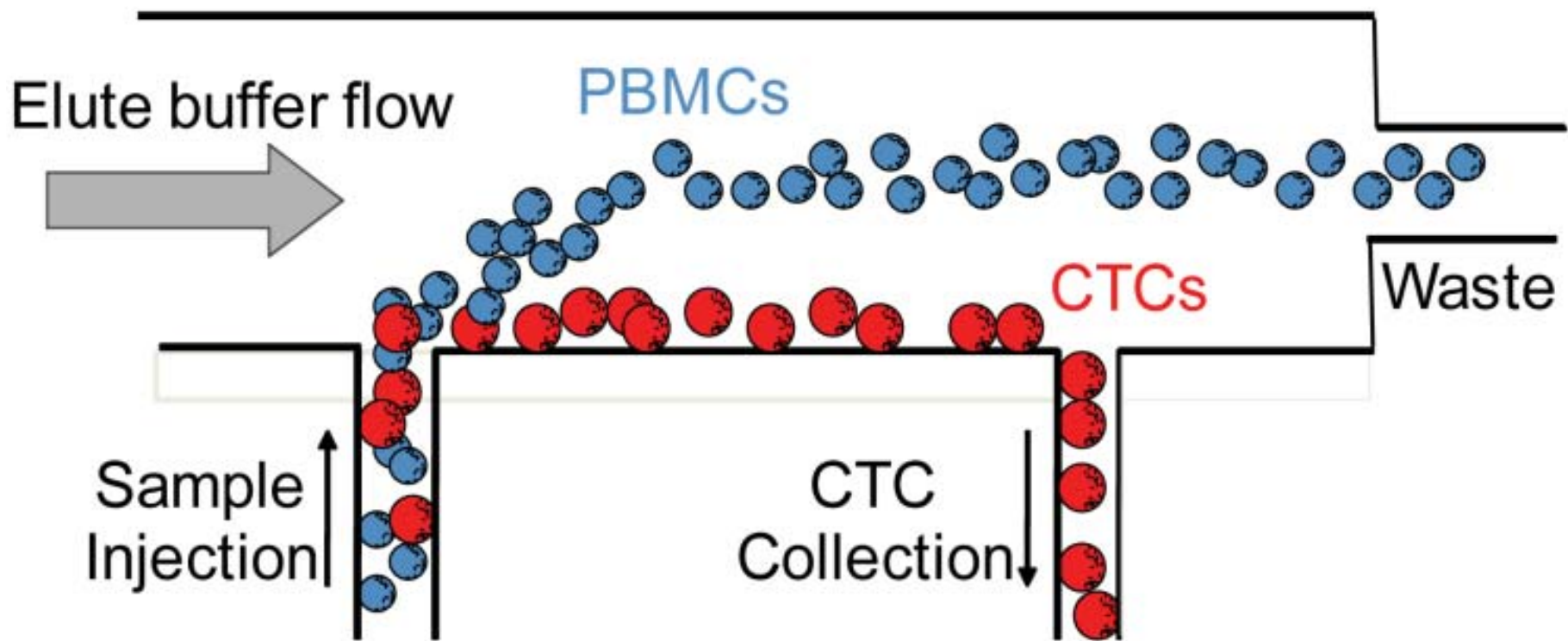
Dielectric properties (polarizability) of cells are dependant upon cell diameter, membrane area, density, conductivity and volume. Inherent differences in morphology of CTCs and normal cells result in different polarisation charges when exposed to an AC electric current.

## Micro-fluidics



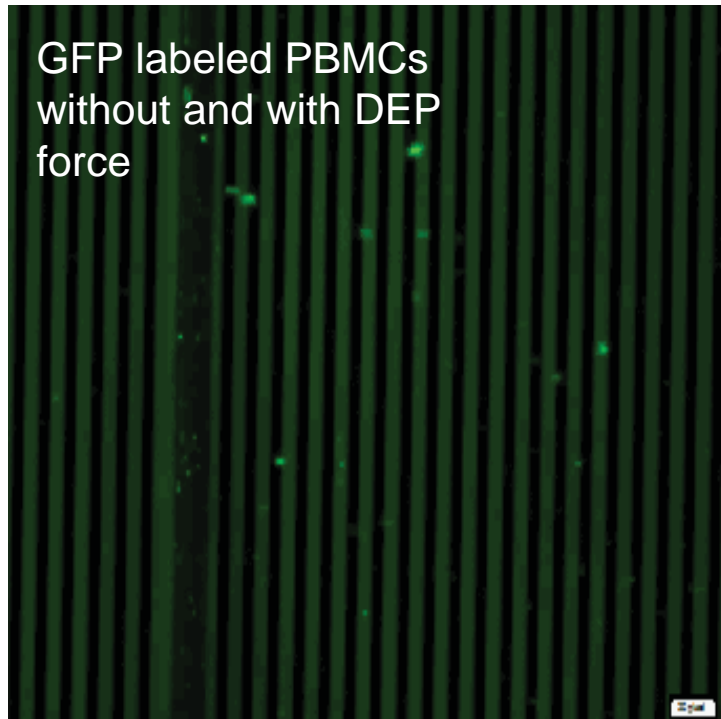
Cell levitation is controlled by balancing DEP, hydrodynamic and sedimentation forces. CTCs are collected from the bottom of the flow chamber while the other cells flow into a waste collection port.

# ApoStream<sup>®</sup> Technology: Theory of Operation

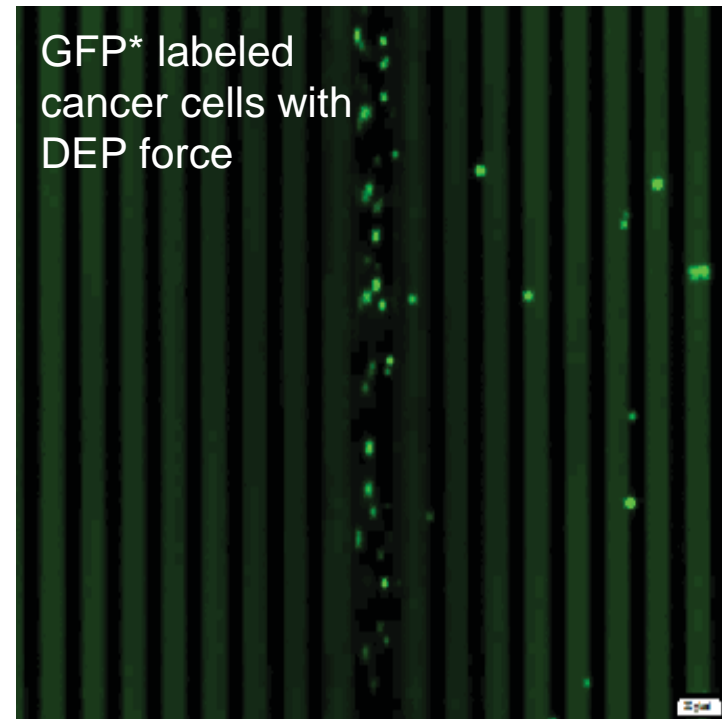


# ApoStream<sup>®</sup>: Separation of CTCs from Blood Cells Based on Dielectrophoresis (DEP) Frequency

PBMCs



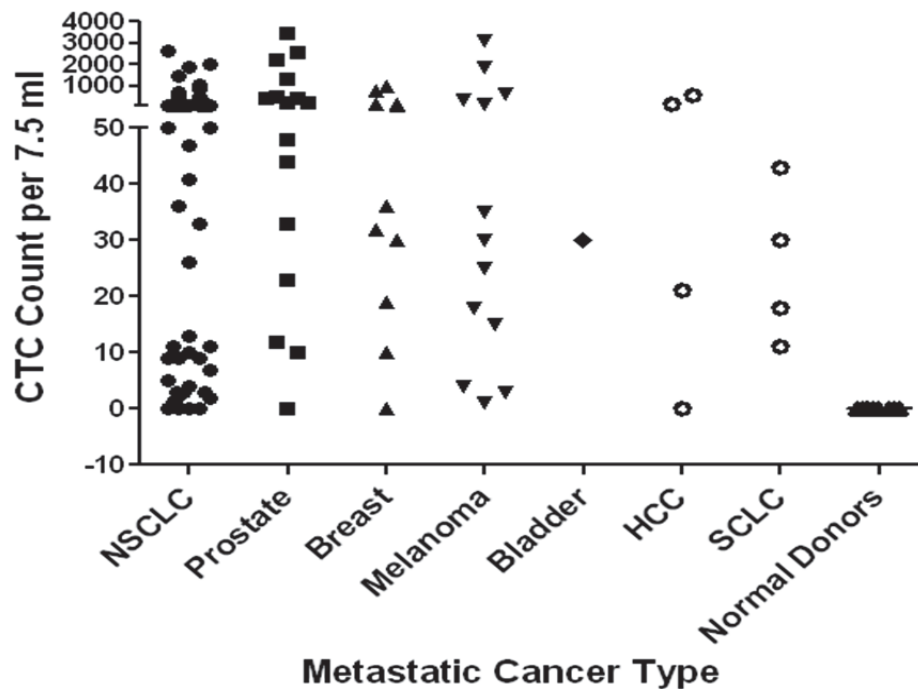
Cancer Cells



\*GFP = Green Fluorescent Protein



# ApoStream<sup>®</sup>: High CTC Recovery From Patients With Various Cancer Types



## Enumeration

<i>Metastatic Cancer Type</i>	<i># of Patients</i>	<i>Mean ± SD</i>	<i>% Patients with CTC &gt;0</i>
NSCLC	66	287	94
Prostate	16	721	94
Melanoma	13	486	100
Breast	10	203	100
Bladder	1	30	100

ApoStream<sup>®</sup> system was able to isolate high number of CTCs in >90% of patients from lung, prostate, breast, melanoma, and bladder cancer patient blood.



# ApoStream<sup>®</sup>: High Recovery and Viable CTCs

## Enumeration

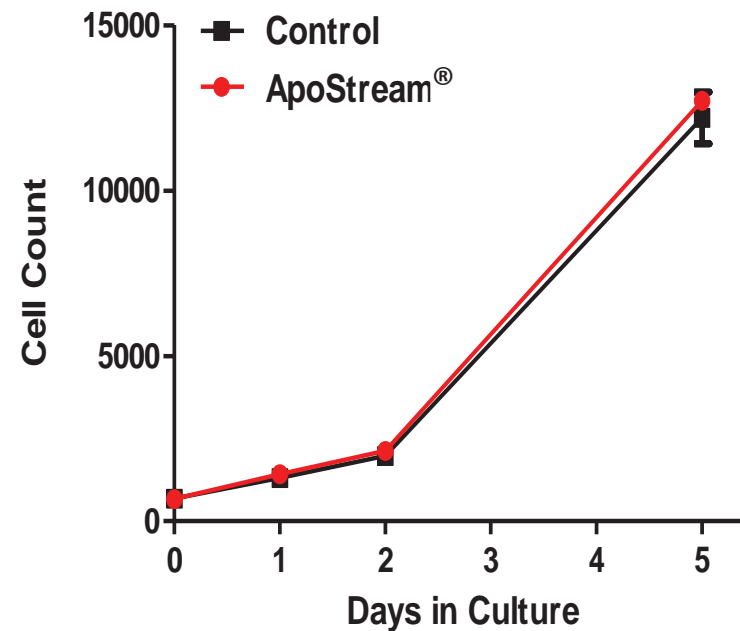
Metastatic Breast Cancer (CK+CD45-DAPI+  
CTCs per 7.5 mL of blood)<sup>1</sup>

Patient No.	CELLSEARCH <sup>®</sup>	ApoStream <sup>®</sup>
1	0	81
2	0	241
3	0	40
4	0	71
5	0	41
6	2	149
7	0	10

Anderes K, et al. *Cancer Res* 73, 2013, abstract P1-0405.

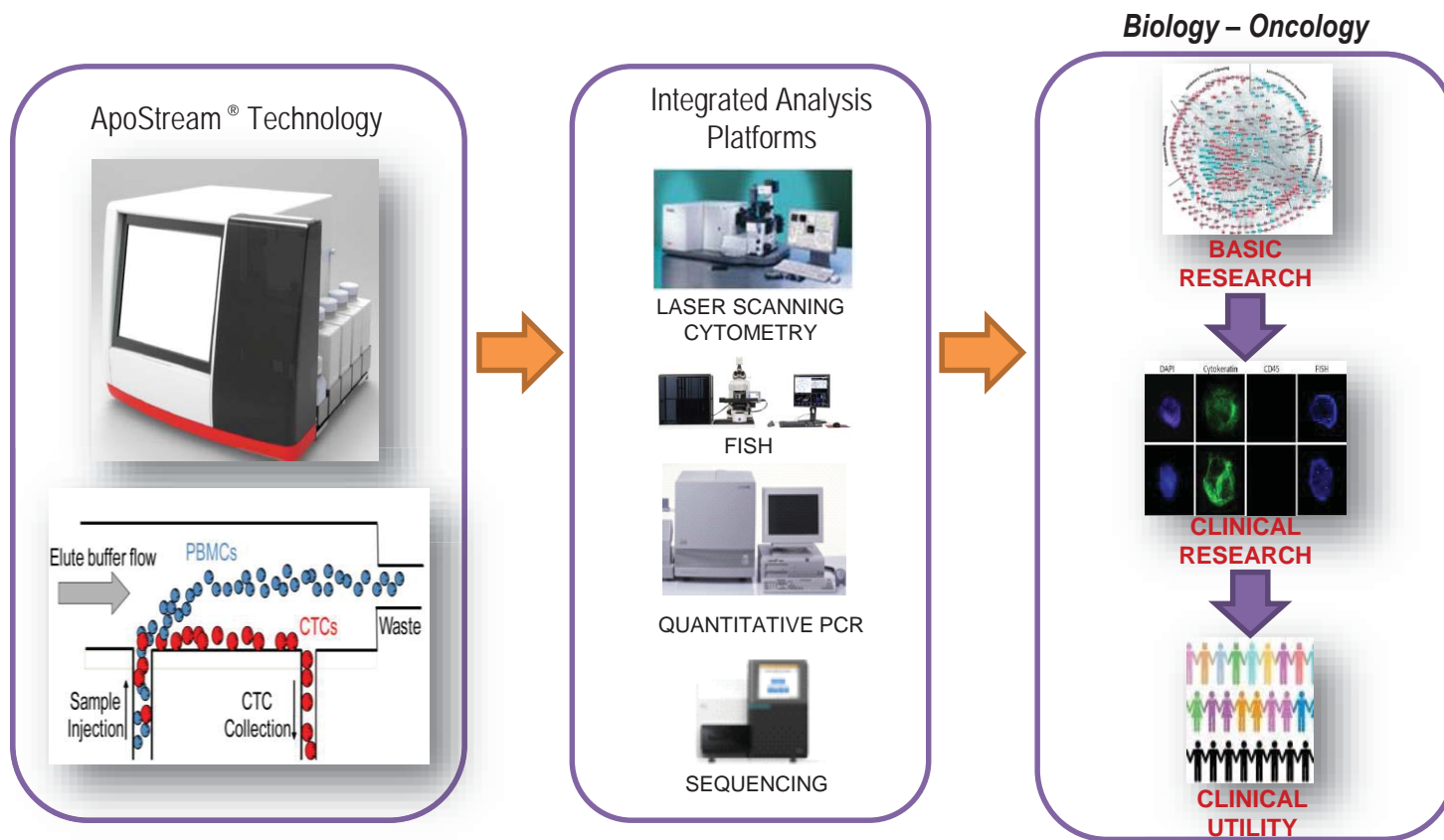
## Viability

ApoStream<sup>®</sup>-recovered SKOV3 cancer cells retain exponential growth characteristics<sup>2</sup>



Gupta V, et al. *Biomicrofluidics* 6, 024133 (2012); doi: 10.1063/1.

# ApoStream®: Enabling Molecular and Biological Investigation of Rare Cell Subsets (Stem Cells, CTC, EMT, MET)





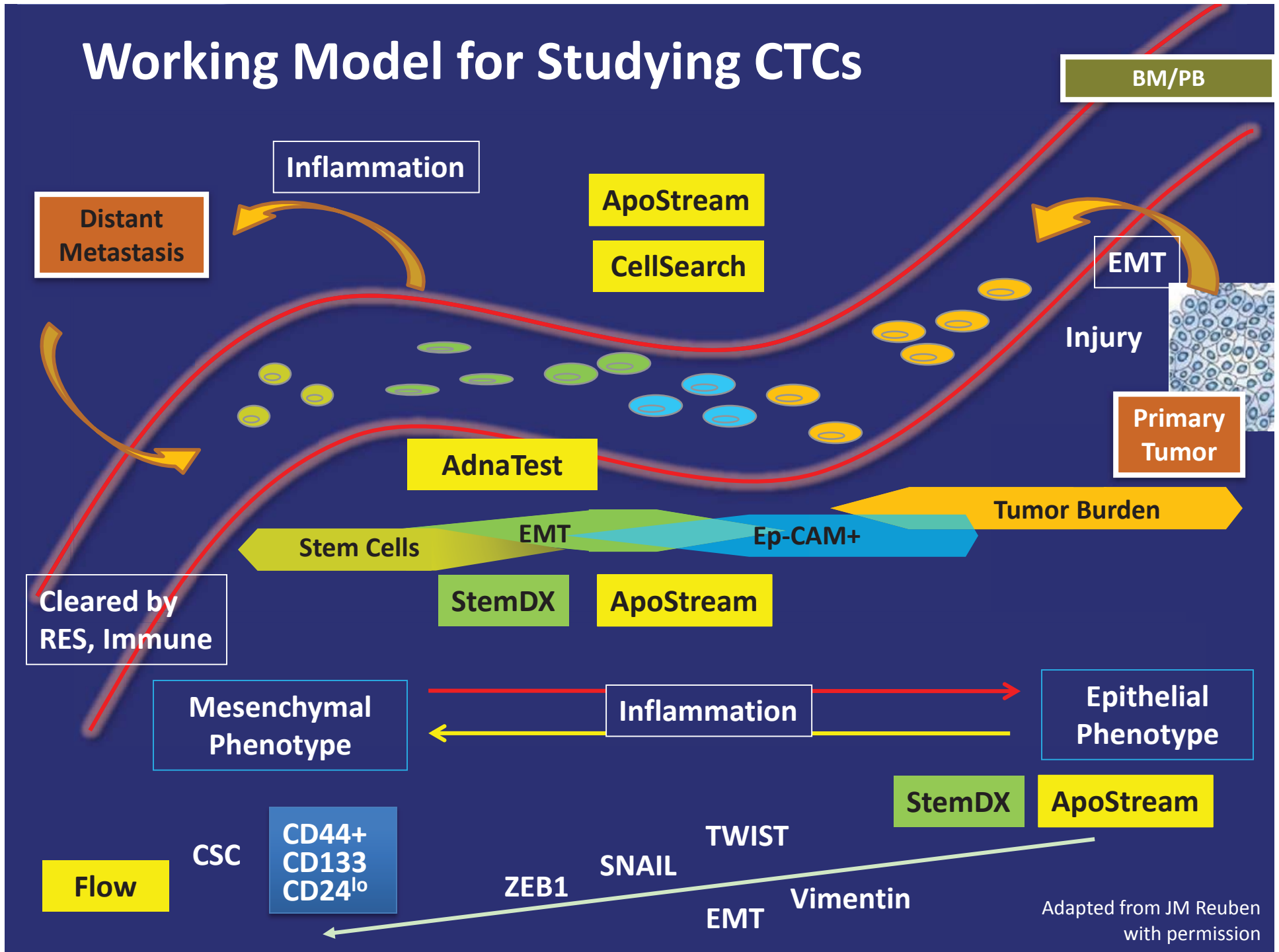
# CTC Applications in Breast Cancer

**Naoto T. Ueno, MD, PhD, FACP**

MD Anderson Cancer Center

Houston, TX

# Working Model for Studying CTCs

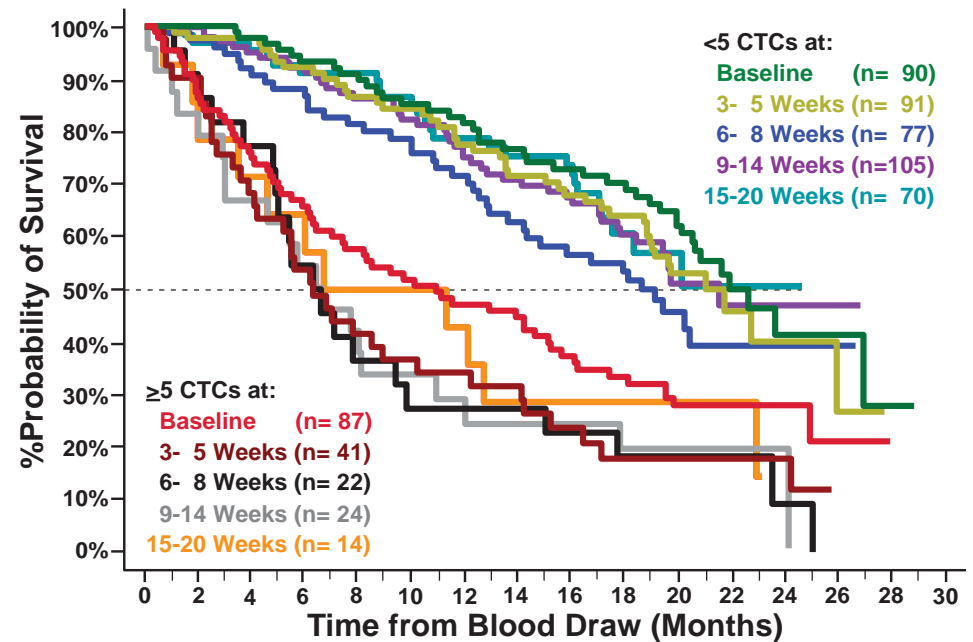
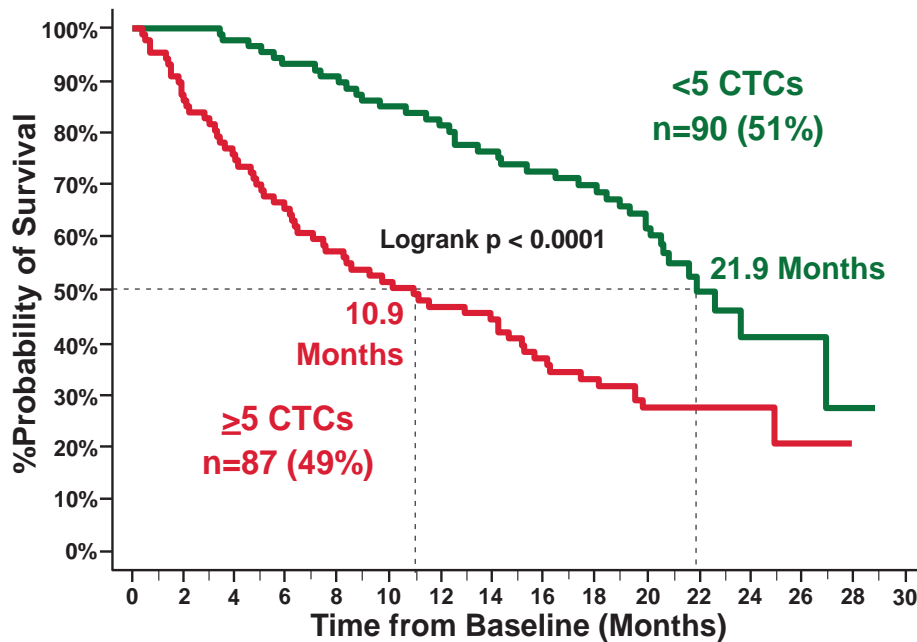


# Clinical Application of CTCs

## First Generation - Enumeration

- Prognostic value of CTCs enumeration (CellSearch®) in solid tumors
- Predictive value of CTCs enumeration (CellSearch®) in solid tumors

## Overall Survival



## Other Clinical Uses of CTCs

- Bone metastasis
- Widely metastatic HR positive disease

	No Bone Involvement	Bone	Bone & Other Sites
N	58	28	108
Mean $\pm$ SD	3.3 $\pm$ 8.7	52.7 $\pm$ 91.2	69.2 $\pm$ 206.4
Median	1	13	8.5
% $\geq$ 5 CTC	16%	69%	58%



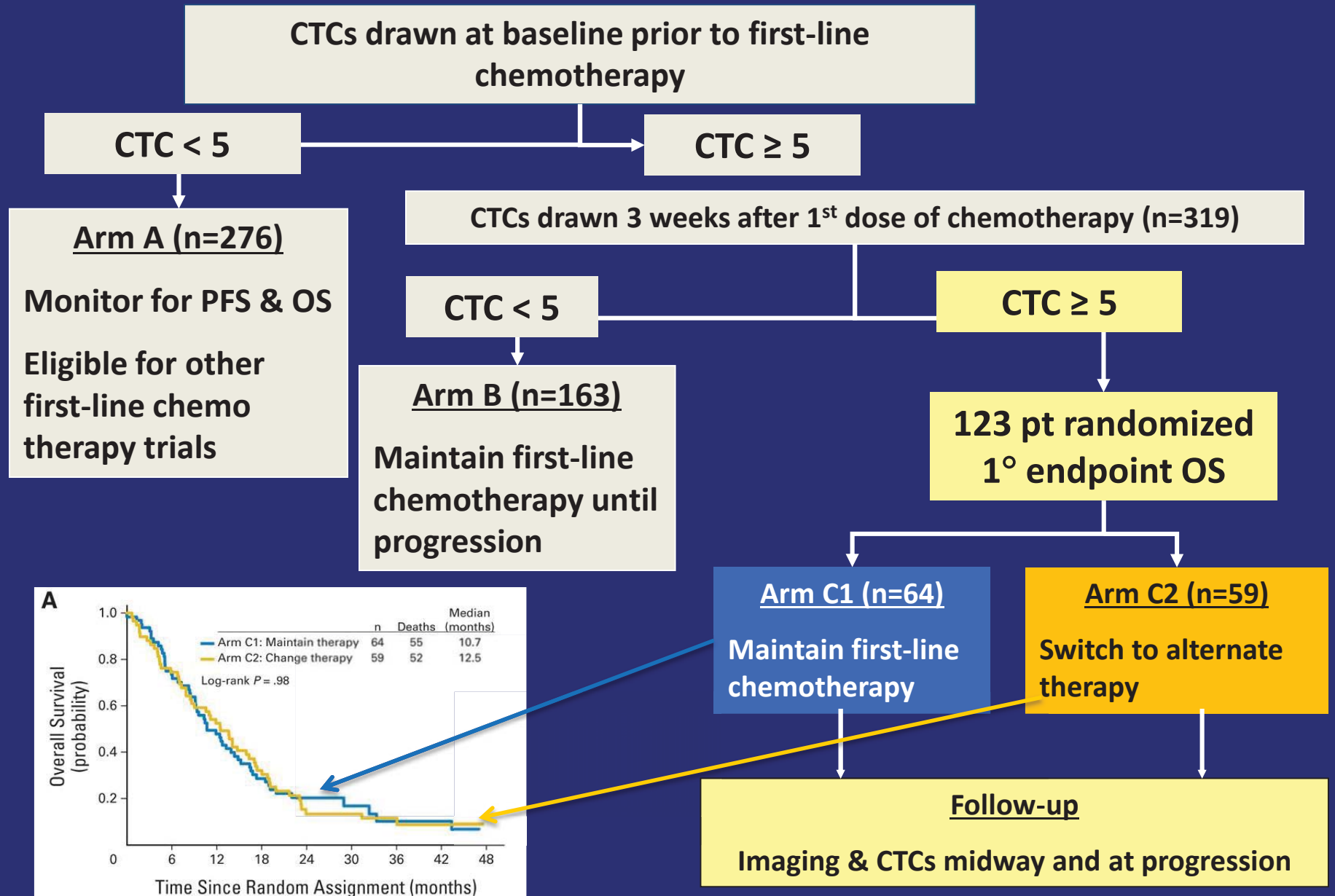
## Research/Clinical Questions

- Q1. Can we affect prognosis by changing therapy in patients with persistent elevated CTCs?
- Q2. What is the implication of biomarkers in CTCs vs. tissue for therapy?
- Q3. What is the role of Cancer Stem Cells (CSCs) and EMT-CTC in clinical outcomes?



# SWOG S0500:

## CTC (CELLSEARCH) Did Not Predict Response to Therapy



# Ongoing Trials Testing Impact of CTC (CELLSEARCH) on Treatment Decision Making Process

Trial	Randomization	Patient Population	CTC Parameter for Treatment Prediction	Primary Objective	Trial Number Accrual Date "N" Cases
STIC CTC METABREAST (France)	Clinical choice vs CTC driven choice of chemotherapy vs hormonotherapy	MBC, HR+, HER2-	CTC count ( $\geq 5$ CTC/7.5 mL vs $< 5$ CTC/7.5 mL)	Non-inferiority of the CTC arm for PFS (primary clinical end point) and a superiority of the CTC arm for the medico-economics study (co-primary end point).	NCT01710605  Preliminary Analysis  SABCS 2013
CirCe01 (France)	CTC-driven choice of chemotherapy	MBC, HR+, HER2-, third-line chemotherapy	CTC count ( $\geq 5$ CTC/7.5 mL vs $< 5$ CTC/7.5 mL)	Overall survival	NCT01349842 Jan 2018
Treat CTC (Europe)	Trastuzumab vs observation	HER2-non-amplified <b>primary</b> breast cancer with $\geq 1$ CTC/15 mL PB after completion of (neo-)adjuvant chemotherapy and surgery	CTC count ( $\geq 1$ CTC/15 mL of blood vs $< 1$ CTC/7.5 mL)	CTC detection rate at week 18	NCT01548677 April 2017 N = 2175
DETECT III (Germany)	Standard therapy or standard therapy plus lapatinib	MBC, 1 to 3 lines of previous chemotherapy, HER2-	HER2+ CTC/7.5 mL of blood	Progression-free survival	NCT01619111 March 2018 N = 228
COMETI P2 (USA, Canada)	No randomization	MBC HR+, HER2-	Expression of ER, Bcl-2, HER2, Ki67 on CTC	Progression-free survival	NCT01701050 June 2015 N = 200

# CTCs and biomarkers, implication for therapy?

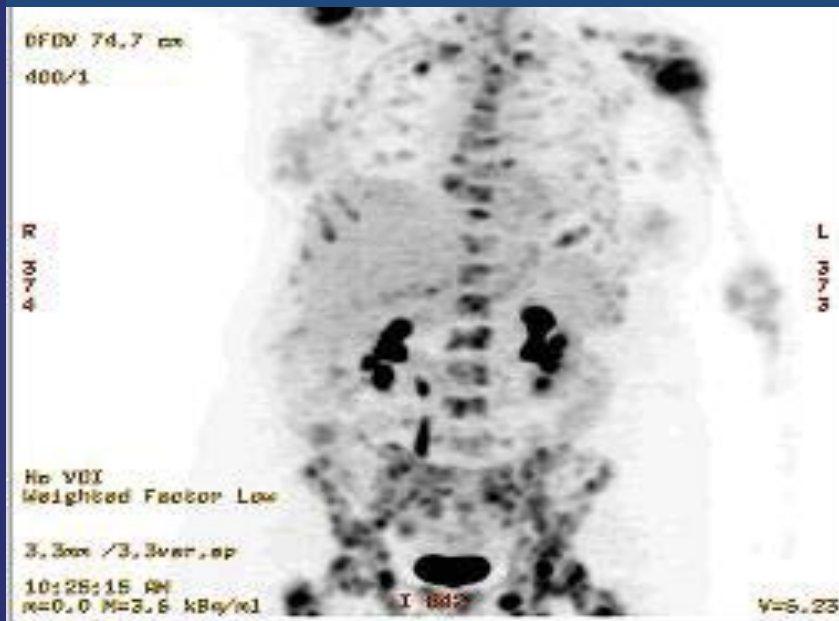
Patients with HER2- primary tumors are more likely to have discordance between primary tumor and CTCs than patients with HER2+ primary tumors

Primary Tumor	Total Patients	Patients with HER2-CTC	Patients with HER2+CTC*	Discordance
HER2+*	45	1	44	2.3%
HER2-	30	20	10	33.3%

\*HER2+ defined as the ratio of HER2/CEP17>2.0 by FISH

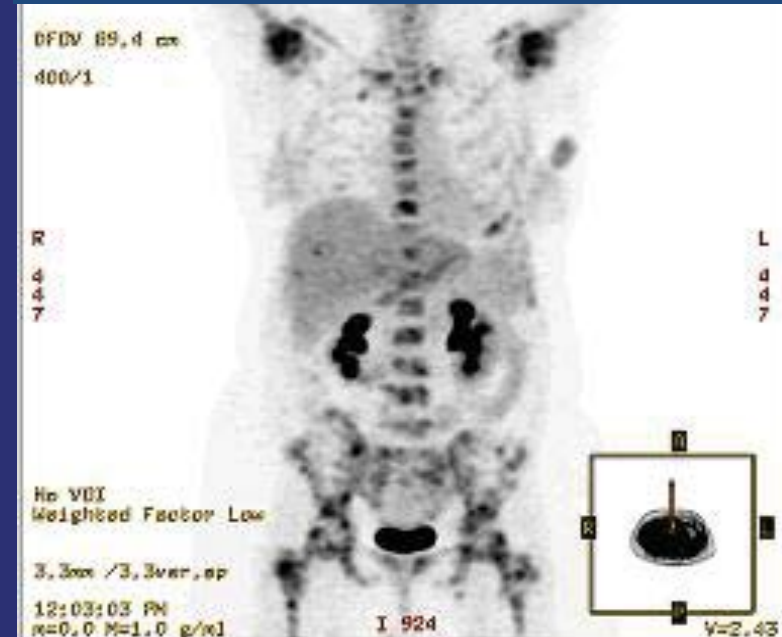
# Metastatic Breast Cancer (MBC) With Discordant HER2 Amplification in Tumor and CTCs had a Metabolic Response with a Reduction in CTCs With Trastuzumab Therapy

PT and MT= ER+, HER-2 neg  
900 CTCs = ER-, HER2+



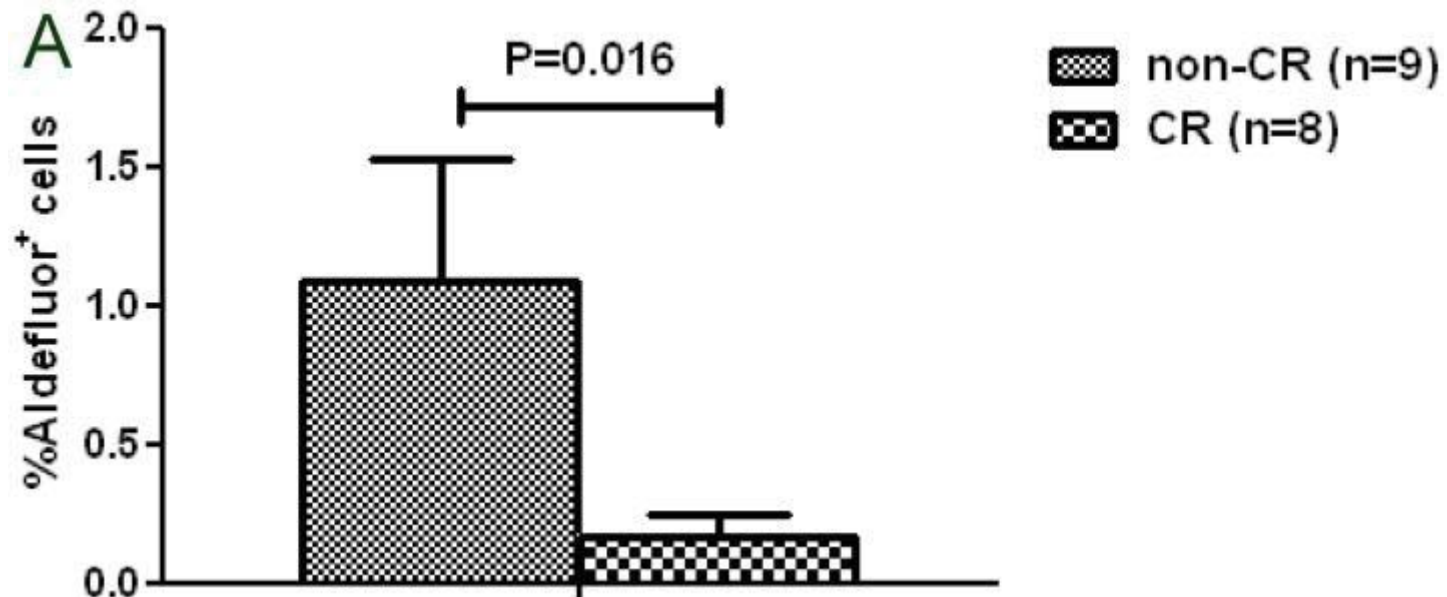
Hormonal Therapies  
4th line CHT  
CTCs = 400

Trastuzumab Therapy



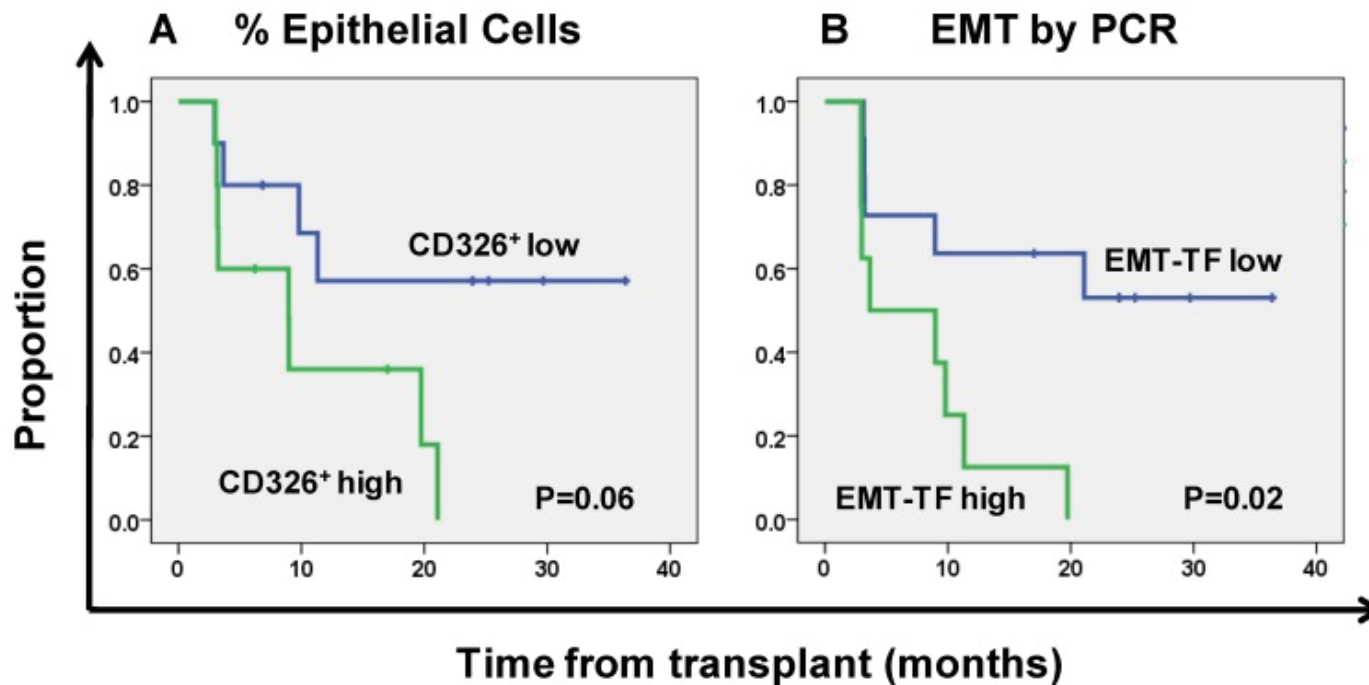
CTCs = 95

## High % Cancer Stem Cells in Apheresis Product is Associated with Non-CR in MBC Undergoing Autologous Stem Cell Transplant



# EMT-CTC in Apheresis Product of MBC Undergoing Autologous Stem Cell Transplant: Decreased PFS

## PROGRESSION-FREE SURVIVAL



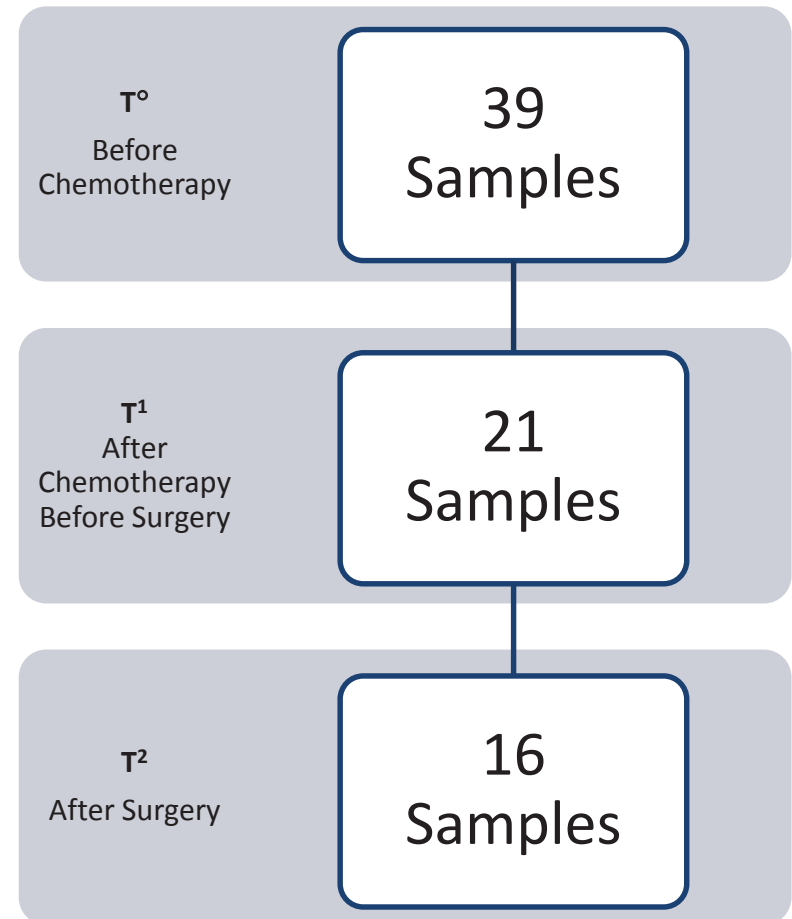
## Neoadjuvant Chemotherapy Enriches EMT Genes

	N	Positive > 1 EMT Gene	P Value
No NACT	47	12.8% (n=6)	
NACT	20	35.0% (n=7)	0.047
Pathologic CR (pCR)	6	16.6% (n=1)	
No pCR	14	42.9% (n=8)	0.3



## EMT-CTC by ApoStream<sup>®</sup>

- CTCs were also stained with additional markers and examined on a laser scanning cytometer to measure protein expression levels of epithelial (EpCAM, E-cadherin), mesenchymal ( $\beta$ -catenin, vimentin) and CSC-markers (CD44, CD24).
- pCR status after preoperative treatment was obtained to correlate baseline CTCs and marker expression with treatment response



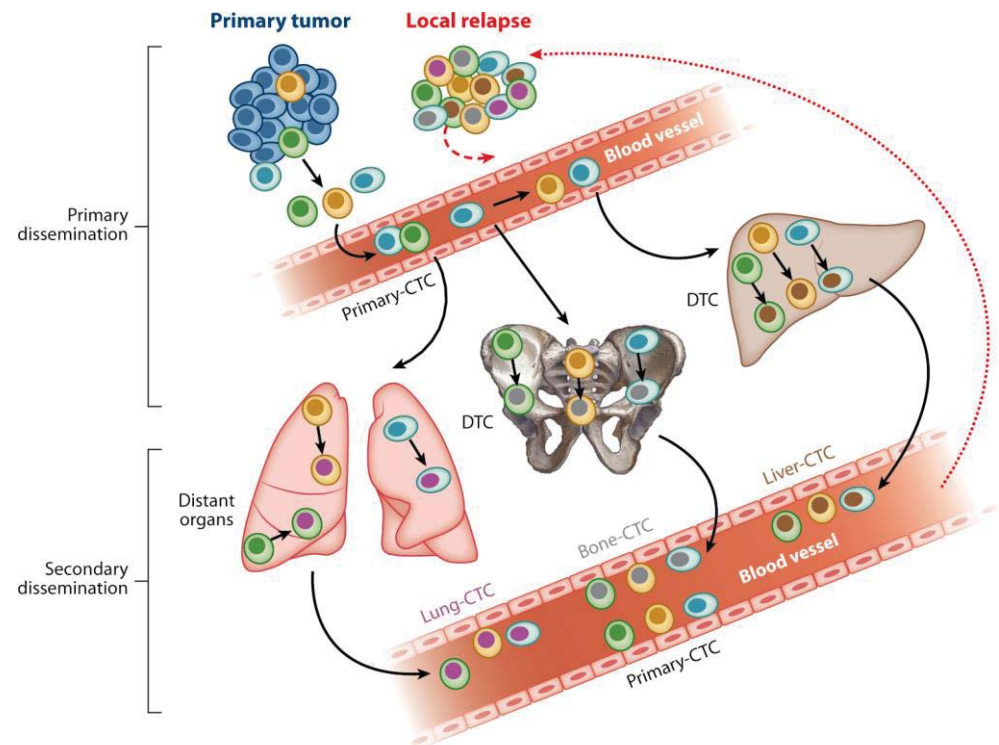


## Further information will be presented on Friday in Poster Session P4-01-10.

- **Presenter:** F. Le Du
- **Poster Number:** P4-01-10
- **Title:** Predictive impact of circulating tumor cells with an epithelial-to-mesenchymal transition phenotype in patients with primary breast cancer treated with primary systemic therapy
- **Date and Time:** Friday, December 12<sup>th</sup> from 7:30 AM – 9:00 AM
- **Location:** Halls A-B

# Next Generation Research: Liquid Biopsy

- Circulating tumor cells (CTCs) in blood
- Disseminated tumor cells (DTCs) in BM
- Circulating tumor DNA (ctDNA)






## **POLL QUESTION:**

When do you think CTCs will become an important part of the clinical decision-making process in breast cancer?

### **Answer Choices:**

- Now
  - 1-5 years
  - 6-10 years
  - 10 years+
- 

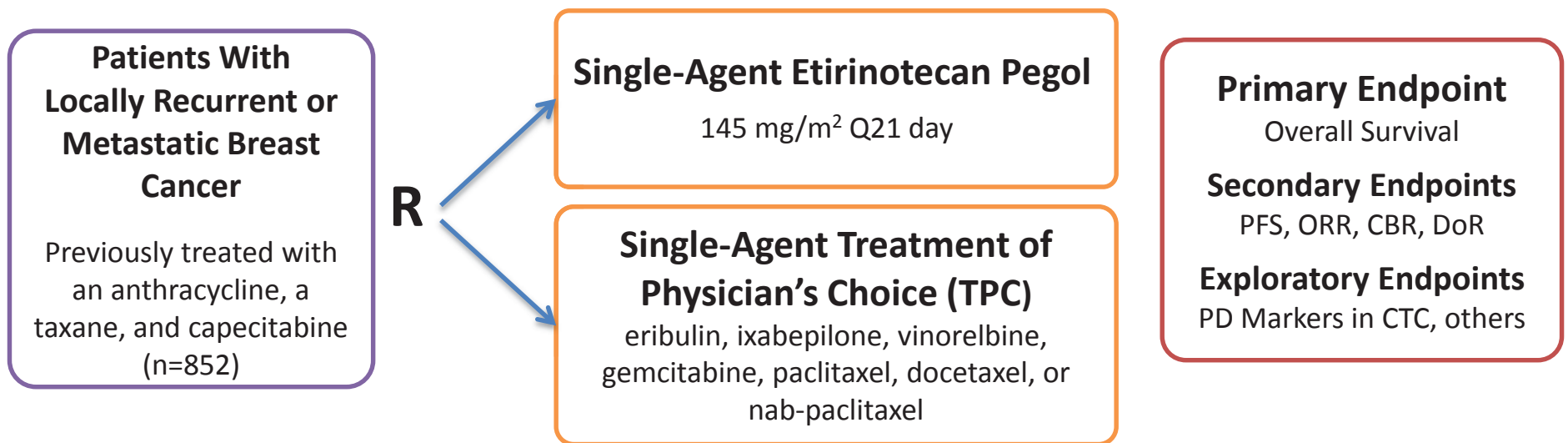


# **BEACON: An Example of a Modern Study Incorporating Latest CTC Technology**

**Edith A. Perez, MD**

Mayo Clinic  
Jacksonville, FL

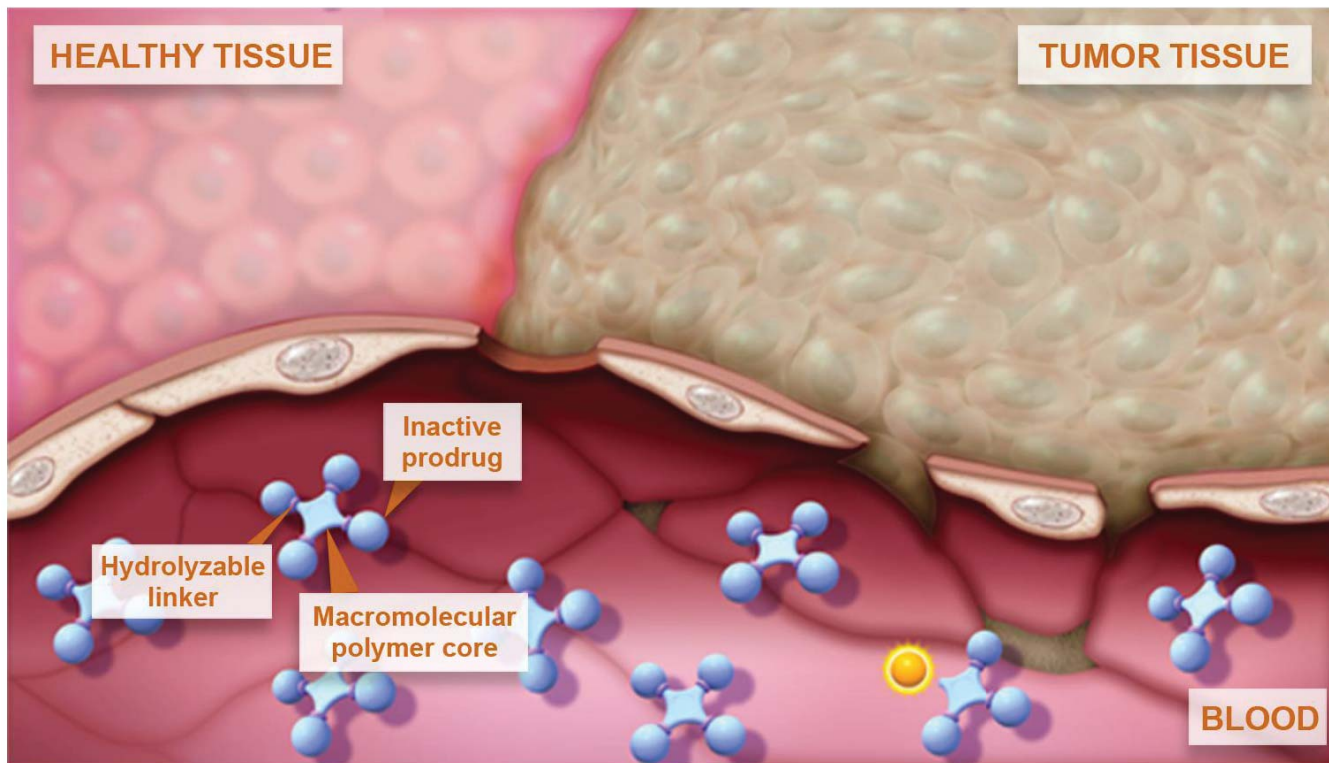
# BEACON Phase 3 Registration Study of Etirinotecan Pegol in Metastatic Breast Cancer



- Agreement with FDA and EMA on study design
- Granted Fast Track status by the FDA for MBC
- Global enrollment completed ahead of schedule in August 2013
- Top-line survival data expected early 2015

# Etirinotecan Pegol: Targeting Tumor Tissue

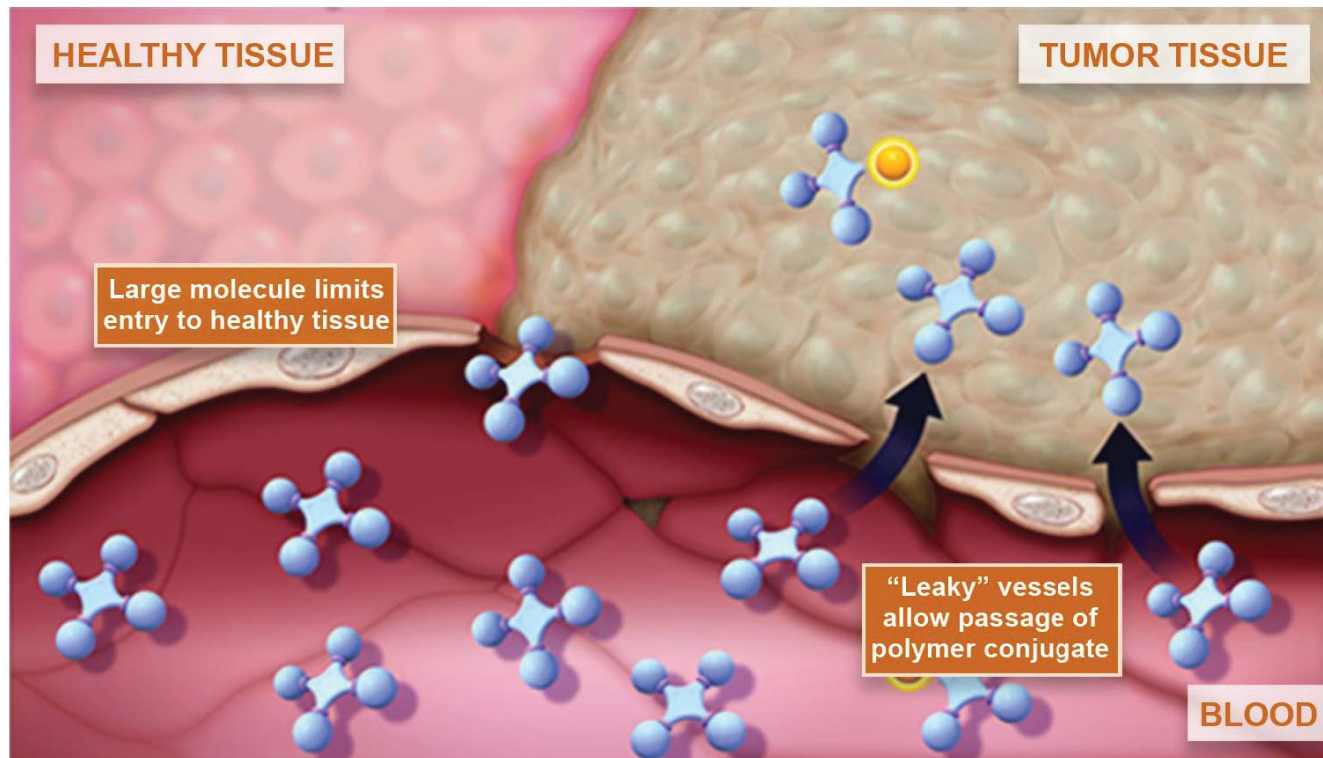
Cytotoxic small molecules are attached to a unique macromolecular polymer core using hydrolyzable linkers to target disease tissue.





# Etirinotecan Pegol: Targeting Tumor Tissue

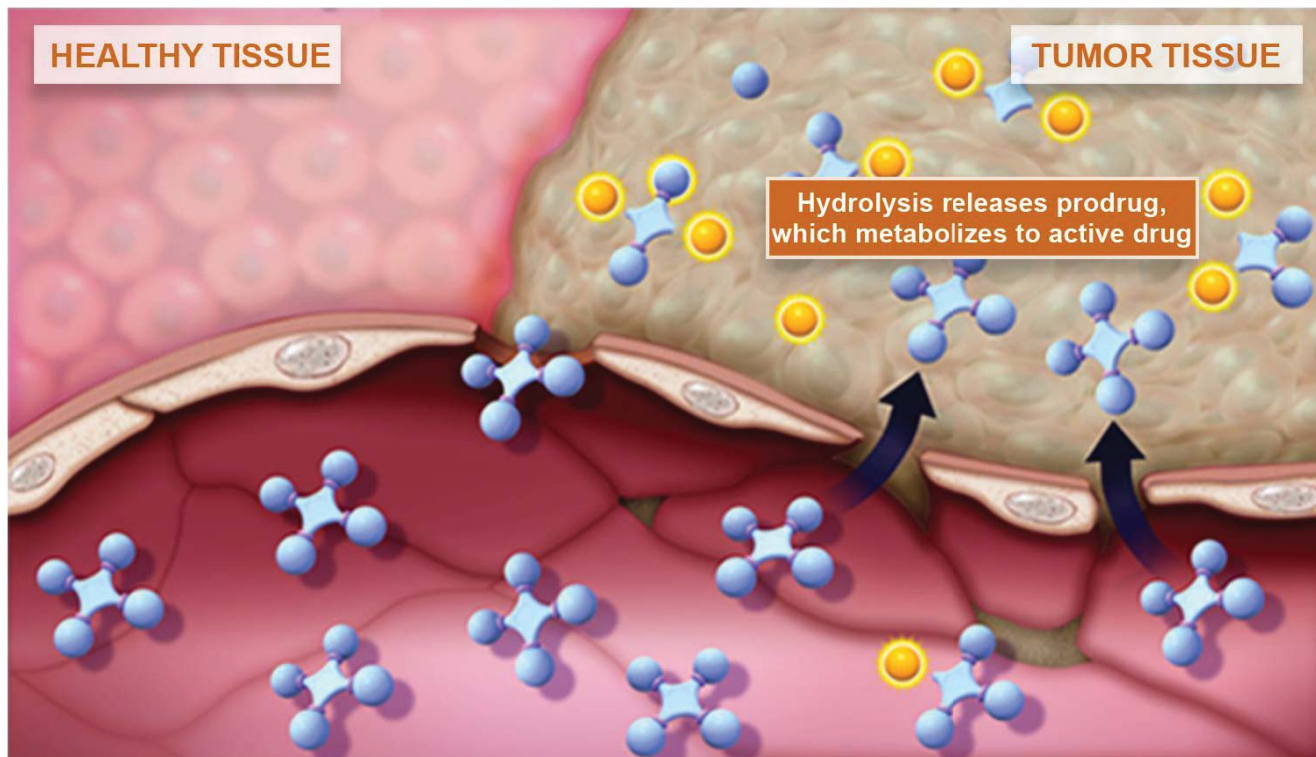
Etirinotecan pegol has been optimally sized so that it penetrates the leaky tumor vasculature more readily than normal vasculature, concentrating and trapping the drug in the tumor tissue.





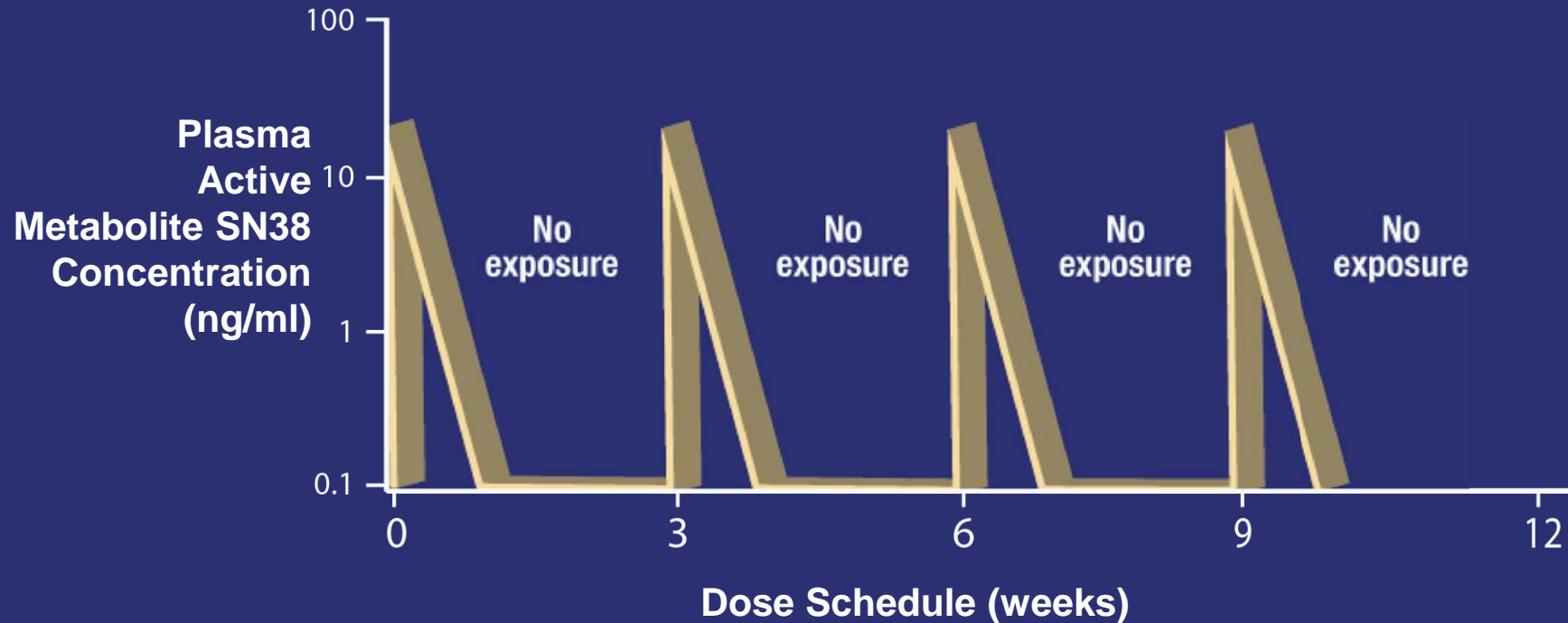
# Etirinotecan Pegol: Targeting Tumor Tissue

The linkers are hydrolyzed over time by specific mechanisms which may be enzymatic or pH-driven within the body, continuously freeing active drug within the tumor tissue and in the plasma.



# Irinotecan: Poor Pharmacokinetic (PK) Profile

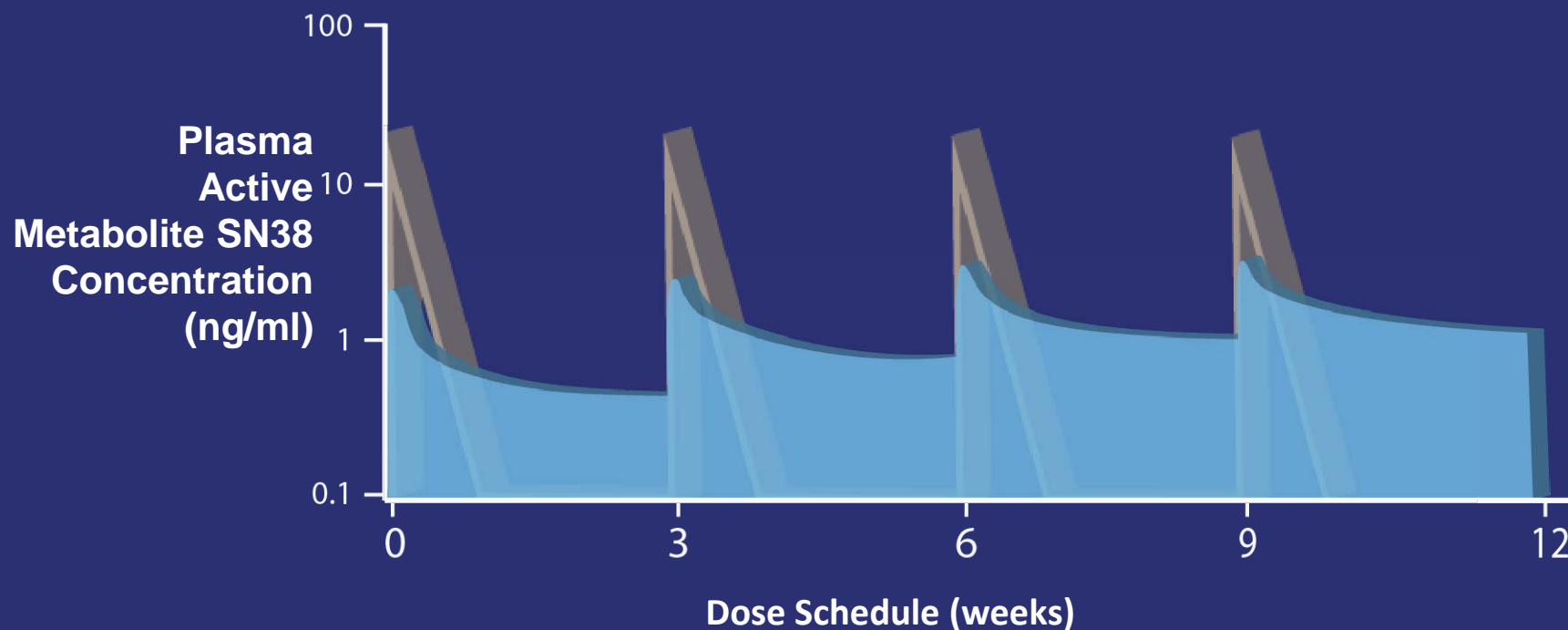
First-generation topoisomerase I inhibitors have a high initial peak concentration and short half-life



# Etirinotecan Pegol: Sustained PK Profile



Etirinotecan pegol's design results in a lower initial peak concentration of active topoisomerase I inhibitor in the blood





## Etirinotecan Pegol: Metastatic Breast Cancer Phase 2 Results

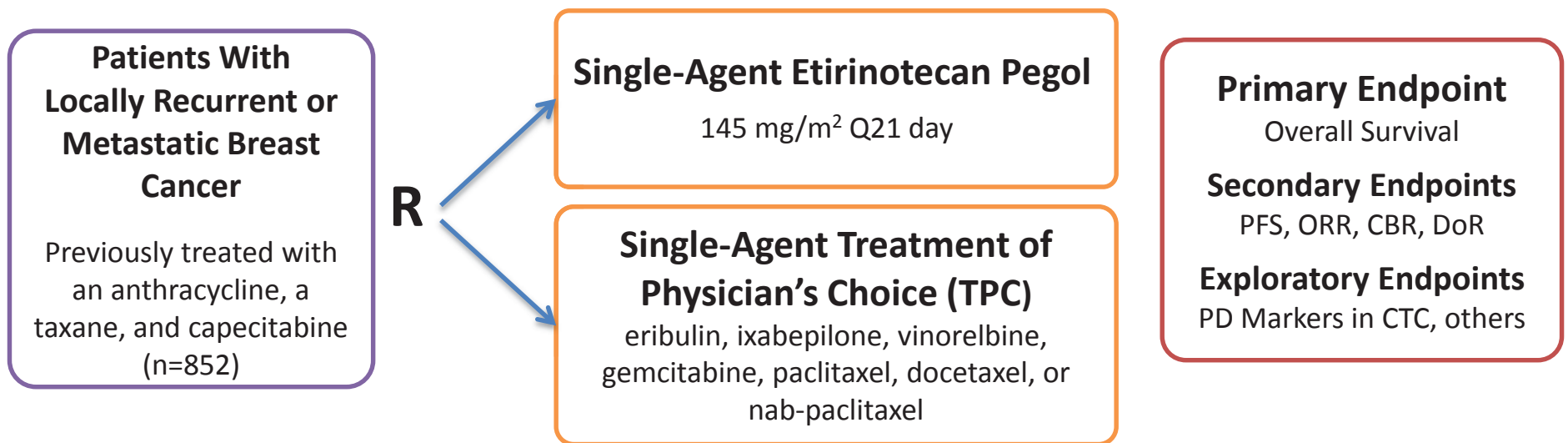
- Single-agent NKTR-102 demonstrated a 29% ORR in heavily pretreated (median 2 prior lines of therapy) advanced metastatic breast cancer
  - PFS: 4.7 months
  - Median OS: 10.3 months
  - Progression-free at 6 months: 35.5%
- ORR was maintained in heavily pretreated and poor-prognosis subsets
  - A/T/C pretreated: 33%
  - Triple-negative: 33%
  - Visceral disease: 30%
- Activity in the 3 main subtypes: TNBC, HER2+, HER2-



## Etirinotecan Pegol: Metastatic Breast Cancer Phase 2 Results

- Most common grade 3/4 toxicity was diarrhea (21%)
  - Typically occurring after approximately 3 months of therapy for both schedules
- 21-day schedule better tolerated and more efficacious
  - ORR: 29%; PFS: 5.6 months, OS: 13.1 months
  - Selected for Phase 3 BEACON study

# BEACON Phase 3 Registration Study of Etirinotecan Pegol in Metastatic Breast Cancer



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## Collection of CTCs was Successfully Incorporated in the Phase 3 BEACON Study

### Rationale:

- Challenges of using tumor biopsy in a Phase 3 trial
- CTCs are an attractive, minimally invasive alternative to tumor biopsies
- Longitudinal assessment of target-specific biomarkers possible

**80% of the 852 BEACON patients (n=665) participated in the CTC substudy and provided serial blood samples for CTC analysis.**





**Further characterization of BEACON CTC baseline samples will be presented tomorrow in Poster Session P3-10-03.**

- **Presenter:** Perez EA
- **Poster Number:** P3-10-03
- **Title:** Etirinotecan pegol target-specific pharmacodynamic biomarkers in circulating tumor cells from patients with metastatic breast cancer in the Phase 3 BEACON study.
- **Date and Time:** Thursday, December 11<sup>th</sup> from 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM
- **Location:** Halls A-B

## Molecular Profiling of CTCs Was Successfully Achieved in the Phase 3 BEACON Study

- CTC detection rate using ApoStream<sup>®</sup> was high:
  - CTCs detected in >95% of baseline samples
  - Median number of CTCs/7.5 mL was ~500
- High CTC harvest enabled assessment of etirinotecan pegol target-specific pharmacodynamic biomarkers.
  - Top1, Top2,  $\gamma$ H2Ax, Rad51, Ki67, ABCG2
- BEACON efficacy and safety results are expected in early 2015, which will allow analysis of baseline CTC data and change of CTC data over time with patient outcome.



# Take-Home Messages



# Take-Home Messages


- CTC technology has improved in the last few years
  - Potentially enabling early detection and treatment intervention
- Molecular profiling and characterization now possible with CTC technology
- Personalized medicine is evolving to include CTC research



## **POLL QUESTION:**

Would you use CTC tests routinely in your practice if they were actionable/predictive of therapy for specific agents?


### **Answer Choices:**

- Yes
  - No
- 



**Questions?**





# **Advancements Utilizing Circulating Tumor Cell Technology to Predict Outcomes in Patients With Breast Cancer**

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