

Adjuvant breast cancer vaccine improves disease free survival of breast cancer patients with depressed lymphocyte immunity

Robert L. Elliott

Burdine Breast Foundation, USA

Breast cancer patients were vaccinated in the adjuvant setting with an autologous, allogeneic whole cell vaccine to evaluate the effect on host lymphocyte immunity and disease free survival. We began preparing whole cell preparations for a vaccine study in 1995. Stage I and II breast cancer patients had host lymphocyte immunity against tumors associated antigens evaluated before and after treatment. Those patients with depressed immunity after therapy determined by a lymphocyte blastogenesis assay (LBA) were offered the whole cell vaccine. Patients were given six intradermal injections (three weekly followed by three monthly). Ten weeks after the last injection the LBA was repeated. Thirty-seven patients were vaccinated in the adjuvant setting with the whole cell autologous, allogeneic vaccine. There were no severe toxicities and the vaccine was well tolerated. Some patients experienced slight pain and swelling at the injection site. There has been a seventeen year follow-up for all vaccinated patients. The survival data of the vaccinated patients with depressed immunity, compared to historic controls of unvaccinated patients with normal and depressed immunity to their tumor associated antigens, strongly suggest an overall improvement in survival of vaccinated patients. This study confirms the importance of maintaining good host lymphocyte immunity after completion of standard therapy and validates the value of cancer immunotherapy especially in the adjuvant setting.

Biography

Elliott completed his M.D. from University of Mississippi and completed an integrated Gen & Thoracic surgery residency. He had a fellowship in anatomy, cell biology, and electron microscopy at Washington University School of Medicine, St. Louis, MO. He has been director of Breast Center for 39 years, and has published many papers and made many presentations at international meetings and societies.

relliott@eehbrestca.com