Reply to the letter by Filik and Biyikoglu regarding the hypothesis that changes in the extracellular matrix incurred by systemic hernia disease (herniosis) are hostile to the development of colon cancer

R. C. Read

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These gastrointestinal investigators from Turkey [1] are the first to provide evidence that this hypothesis [2] may actually be fact. Their data, obtained from 435 consecutive patients who in 2009 underwent total colonoscopy, showed that, whereas 35 had diverticulosis and 24 had cancer, only two had both. In the latter, neoplasms arose in the rectum. These patients were smokers, suffering an addiction known to induce malignancy. Further support for this hypothesis can be gleaned from research conducted by Ghajar and Bissell [3] on cancer of the breast, the most common malignancy in women. They point out that the ECM in the mammary gland, which comprises 80% of its tissue, was once thought only to provide infrastructure but is now known to be a key component of the cellular micro-

environment that influences genetic expression. They maintain that in other organs (kidney, skin, lung, colon, and ovary), the genome is similarly influenced by the ECM.

References

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R. C. Read (✉)
University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences,
304 Potomac Street, Rockville, MD 20850, USA
e-mail: read@post.harvard.edu