

THE ROLE OF INTERLEUKIN-2 IN THE TREATMENT OF CANCER PATIENTS

The role of interleukin-2 in the treatment of cancer patients

Edited by

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Preface

Recombinant DNA technology has made it possible to produce human proteins on an industrial scale in highly pure form. Cytokines are proteins or glycoproteins which are responsible for mediating the hosts biological response to injury, inflammation and antigenic challenge. Many of these cytokines are intimately involved in controlling the activity of immune responses. At the beginning of the 1980's the first recombinant human cytokine, namely interferon- α_2 , entered clinical trial and has subsequently been registered for use both in North America and Europe for the treatment of a number of malignant diseases. In the mid 1980's Interleukin-2 entered clinical trial and has also now been registered for the treatment of metastatic renal cell carcinoma and has promising activity in a number of other tumor types. This book has been written with the intention of providing a review of what is known of the biology and clinical activity of this interesting cytokine. The aim was to provide clinicians who are using Interleukin-2 with an overview of this cytokine and to assess its future potential. The clinical development of IL-2 has taught both the laboratory scientist and clinical researcher much about the clinical use of cytokines. These lessons are important as an increasing number of these potent molecules will be entering clinical trial in the coming years.

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