EXTENDING TIME TO DISEASE PROGRESSION OR SURVIVAL IN CANCER PATIENTS

This is a continuation application which claims priority to continuation application Ser. No. 12/271,564, filed Nov. 14, 2008 (now abandoned), which claims priority under 35 USC §120 to non-provisional application Ser. No. 11/359,185, filed Feb. 21, 2006 (now abandoned), which claims priority under 35 USC §119 to provisional application No. 60/655,277, filed Feb. 23, 2005, the entire disclosures of which are incorporated herein by reference.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention concerns extending time to disease progression or survival in a cancer patient, where the patient's cancer displays HER activation, by treating the patient with a HER dimerization inhibitor, such as pertuzumab.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

HER Receptors and Antibodies Thereagainst

The HER family of receptor tyrosine kinases are important mediators of cell growth, differentiation and survival. The receptor family includes four distinct members including epidermal growth factor receptor (EGFR, ErbB1, or HER1), HER2 (ErbB2 or p185^{neu}), HER3 (ErbB3) and HER4 (ErbB4 or tyro2).

EGFR, encoded by the erbB1 gene, has been causally implicated in human malignancy. In particular, increased expression of EGFR has been observed in breast, bladder, lung, head, neck and stomach cancer as well as glioblastomas. Increased EGFR receptor expression is often associated with increased production of the EGFR ligand, transforming growth factor alpha (TGF-α), by the same tumor cells resulting in receptor activation by an autocrine stimulatory pathway. Baselga and Mendelsohn *Pharmac. Ther.* 64:127-154 (1994). Monoclonal antibodies directed against the EGFR or its ligands, TGF-α and EGF, have been evaluated as therapeutic agents in the treatment of such malignancies. See, e.g., Baselga and Mendelsohn, supra; Masui et al. *Cancer Research* 44:1002-1007 (1984); and Wu et al. *J. Clin. Invest.* 95:1897-1905 (1995).

The second member of the HER family, p185^{neu}, was originally identified as the product of the transforming gene from neuroblastomas of chemically treated rats. The activated form of the neu proto-oncogene results from a point mutation (valine to glutamic acid) in the transmembrane region of the encoded protein. Amplification of the human homolog of neu is observed in breast and ovarian cancers and correlates with a poor prognosis (Slamon et al., *Science,* 235:177-182 (1987); Slamon et al., *Science,* 244:707-712 (1989); and U.S. Pat. No. 4,968,603). To date, no point mutation analogous to that in the neu proto-oncogene has been reported for human tumors. Overexpression of HER2 (frequently but not uniformly due to gene amplification) has also been observed in other carcinomas including carcinomas of the stomach, endometrium, salivary gland, lung, kidney, colon, thyroid, pancreas and bladder. See, among others, King et al., *Science,* 229:974 (1985); Yokota et al., *Lancet:* 1:765-767 (1986); Fukushige et al., *Mol Cell Biol.,* 6:955-958 (1986); Guerin et al., *Oncogene Res.,* 3:21-31 (1988); Cohen et al., *Oncogene,* 4:81-88 (1989); Yonemura et al., *Cancer Res.,* 51:1034 (1991); Borst et al., *Gynecol. Oncol.,* 38:364 (1990); Weiner et al., *Cancer Res.,* 50:421-425 (1990); Kern et al., *Cancer Res.,* 50:5184 (1990); Park et al., *Cancer Res.,* 49:6605 (1989); Zhau et al., *Mol. Carcinog.,* 3:254-257 (1990); Aasland et al. *Br. J. Cancer* 57:358-363 (1988); Williams et al. *Pathobiology* 59:46-52 (1991); and McCann et al., *Cancer,* 65:88-92 (1990). HER2 may be overexpressed in prostate cancer (Gu et al. *Cancer Lett.* 99:185-9 (1996); Ross et al. *Hum. Pathol.* 28:827-33 (1997); Ross et al. *Cancer* 79:2162-70 (1997); and Sadasivan et al. *J. Urol.* 150:126-31 (1993)).

Antibodies directed against the rat p185^{neu} and human HER2 protein products have been described.

Drebin and colleagues have raised antibodies against the rat neu gene product, p185^{neu} See, for example, Drebin et al., *Cell* 41:695-706 (1985); Myers et al., *Meth. Enzym.* 198:277-290 (1991); and WO94/22478. Drebin et al. *Oncogene* 2:273-277 (1988) report that mixtures of antibodies reactive with two distinct regions of p185^{neu} result in synergistic anti-tumor effects on neu-transformed NIH-3T3 cells implanted into nude mice. See also U.S. Pat. No. 5,824,311 issued Oct. 20, 1998.

Hudziak et al., *Mol. Cell. Biol.* 9(3):1165-1172 (1989) describe the generation of a panel of HER2 antibodies which were characterized using the human breast tumor cell line SK-BR-3. Relative cell proliferation of the SK-BR-3 cells following exposure to the antibodies was determined by crystal violet staining of the monolayers after 72 hours. Using this assay, maximum inhibition was obtained with the antibody called 4D5 which inhibited cellular proliferation by 56%. Other antibodies in the panel reduced cellular proliferation to a lesser extent in this assay. The antibody 4D5 was further found to sensitize HER2-overexpressing breast tumor cell lines to the cytotoxic effects of TNF-α. See also U.S. Pat. No. 5,677,171 issued Oct. 14, 1997. The HER2 antibodies discussed in Hudziak et al. are further characterized in Fendly et al. *Cancer Research* 50:1550-1558 (1990); Kotts et al. *In Vitro* 26(3):59A (1990); Sarup et al. *Growth Regulation* 1:72-82 (1991); Shepard et al. *J. Clin. Immunol.* 11(3):117-127 (1991); Kumar et al. *Mol. Cell. Biol.* 11(2):979-986 (1991); Lewis et al. *Cancer Immunol. Immunother.* 37:255-263 (1993); Pietras et al. *Oncogene* 9:1829-1838 (1994); Vitetta et al. *Cancer Research* 54:5301-5309 (1994); Sliwkowski et al. *J. Biol. Chem.* 269(20):14661-14665 (1994); Scott et al. *J. Biol. Chem.* 266:14300-5 (1991); D'souza et al. *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci.* 91:7202-7206 (1994); Lewis et al. *Cancer Research* 56:1457-1465 (1996); and Schaefer et al. *Oncogene* 15:1385-1394 (1997).

A recombinant humanized version of the murine HER2 antibody 4D5 (huMAb4D5-8, rhuMAb HER2, trastuzumab or HERCEPTIN®; U.S. Pat. No. 5,821,337) is clinically active in patients with HER2-overexpressing metastatic breast cancers that have received extensive prior anti-cancer therapy (Baselga et al., *J. Clin. Oncol.* 14:737-744 (1996)). Trastuzumab received marketing approval from the Food and Drug Administration Sep. 25, 1998 for the treatment of patients with metastatic breast cancer whose tumors overexpress the HER2 protein.

Other HER2 antibodies with various properties have been described in Tagliabue et al. *Int. J. Cancer* 47:933-937 (1991); McKenzie et al. *Oncogene* 4:543-548 (1989); Maier et al. *Cancer Res.* 51:5361-5369 (1991); Bacus et al. *Molecular Carcinogenesis* 3:350-362 (1990); Stancovski et al. *PNAS (USA)* 88:8691-8695 (1991); Bacus et al. *Cancer Research* 52:2580-2589 (1992); Xu et al. *Int. J. Cancer* 53:401-408 (1993); WO94/00136; Kasprzyk et al. *Cancer Research* 52:2771-2776 (1992); Hancock et al. *Cancer Res.* 51:4575-4580 (1991); Shawver et al. *Cancer Res.* 54:1367-1373 (1994); Arteaga et al. *Cancer Res.* 54:3758-3765 (1994);