Background

- The 31-gene expression profile (31-GEP) test for cutaneous melanoma (CM) assesses gene expression measurements from formalin-fixed paraffin-embedded primary tumor tissue to predict risk of tumor recurrence or metastasis.
- The 31-GEP stratifies risk into one of three risk categories: low risk (Class 1A), intermediate risk (Class 1B/2A), and high risk (Class 2B) and has been validated in multiple prospective and retrospective studies.

Objective

- Understand patients’ perspectives on prognostic and 31-GEP testing and whether patients experience decision regret after having 31-GEP testing performed.

Methods

- A 43-question online survey was distributed by the Melanoma Research Foundation from June 14, 2021, through August 2, 2021.
- Patients were asked a series of five validated questions that gauge patients’ level of regret regarding the decision to undergo 31-GEP testing and the extent to which they experienced decision regret, which was scored on a scale of 1-5, 1 being no regret, 5 being high regret, and 3 neutral. Responses were limited to those self-reporting a melanoma diagnosis in or after 2014 (n=120), at which time 31-GEP prognostic testing became available.

Results

Table 1. Participant Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographics</th>
<th>Total, n (%)</th>
<th>Tested, n (%)</th>
<th>Not Tested, n (%)</th>
<th>Unknown, n (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>19 (24.2%)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>90 (75.8%)</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefer not to share</td>
<td>1 (0.8%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did you have GEP testing?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>28 (23.3%)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>75 (62.5%)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>17 (14.2%)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance coverage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>84 (71.7%)</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial with MedAdvantage</td>
<td>6 (5.3%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicare</td>
<td>21 (18.4%)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1 (0.9%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don't know</td>
<td>2 (1.8%)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents who received 31-GEP testing were asked if they felt the results were useful. The graph indicates the number of respondents that chose a particular class and their reported 31-GEP class. Most patients thought the 31-GEP was at least somewhat useful.

Respondents who received 31-GEP testing were asked how they benefited from their 31-GEP test results. Respondents were first asked to select all the benefits they felt they gained (select as many responses as applied), and the percent of respondents that selected a given choice are shown.

Conclusions

- 90% of patients wanted prognostic information about their tumors at the time of diagnosis.
- Patients wanted 31-GEP testing to increase their knowledge about their disease (76.9%) and inform treatment decisions (46.2%).
- Patients (>90%) felt 31-GEP testing was useful and felt they gained understanding (60.7%) and relief from uncertainty (39.3%).
- Patients receiving 31-GEP results did not experience decision regret, even among patients who had Class 2, high-risk tumors.

References


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Attitudes of Patients with Cutaneous Melanoma Towards Prognostic Testing Using Gene Expression Profiling

Lorrie-Beth Miley1, Kelli Ahmed PhD2, Jennifer J. Siegel PhD3, Sonia K. Morgan-Linnell PhD2, Kyleigh LiFira1

1. Melanoma Research Foundation; Washington, DC, USA; 2. Castle Biosciences, Inc. Friendswood, Texas

Figure 1. Did you want prognostic testing at the time of your diagnosis?

Figure 2. Factors that influenced patients’ decisions to get 31-GEP testing

Figure 3. Utility of 31-GEP test information

Figure 4. Benefits of 31-GEP testing for patients

Figure 5. Decision Regret Scores

Respondents were asked a validated series questions regarding the level of regret they experienced with their decision to undergo 31-GEP testing. Blue (Class 1) and orange (Class 2) circles represent the mean decision regret score for each respondent. The dashed line indicates decision regret (0.05). Median decision regret scores for all Class 1 or Class 2 respondents (red circles) were not significantly different (p=0.058). Both Class 1 (p<0.001) and Class 2 (p=0.036) median decision regret scores were significantly below the decision regret line, indicating no or little regret regardless of high or low risk results. *, statistically significant; ns, not significant.

Figure 1. Did you want prognostic testing at the time of your diagnosis?

Respondents who received 31-GEP testing were asked if they wanted prognostic information about their tumor at the time of diagnosis. Most respondents, whether they received 31-GEP or not, desired prognostic testing about their tumor. Testing gave them increased knowledge, relief from uncertainty, personalized treatment options, and information for life planning.