Editorial

Welcome to the First Issue of *Liver Cancer*

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Editor *Liver Cancer*

Hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC) is the sixth most common cancer and the third leading cause of cancer death worldwide. HCC is a peculiar malignant tumor that is completely different from other solid tumors because of its high recurrence rate after curative treatment (80% at 5 year). HCC arises in chronically damaged liver, i.e., in patients with chronic hepatitis or liver cirrhosis caused by viral hepatitis B or C or with nonalcoholic steatohepatitis-related cirrhosis. For HCC, therefore, it is easy to define the high-risk patient group. In Asia, approximately 80% of HCCs are related to infection with hepatitis B virus, which is endemic. The exception is Japan, where hepatitis C is more prevalent than hepatitis B. Japan is the only country that has experienced both hepatitis B-related HCC (around 30 years ago) and hepatitis C-related HCC (since the 1970s). The Liver Cancer Study Group of Japan (LCSGJ) was founded in 1965; in the 1980s, it started nationwide surveillance of HCC based on serum alpha-fetoprotein levels and ultrasound examinations.

There are many unresolved issues relating to HCC, including its pathogenesis, its molecular pathology, signal transduction during hepatocarcinogenesis, curative treatment (ablation, resection, or transplantation), palliative treatment (transarterial chemoembolization), hepatic arterial infusion chemotherapy, molecular targeted therapy, imaging diagnosis, early detection, and liver transplantation.

Sorafenib, which is an orally administered small-molecule tyrosine kinase inhibitor, targets vascular endothelial growth factor receptors, the platelet-derived growth factor receptor, and Raf kinase. Various other new molecular targeted agents and their combination with conventional therapies are currently under investigation.

Ongoing developments in diagnostic techniques and treatment strategies for HCC are reported in a wide range of journals, the fields of which depend on the medical backgrounds and areas of expertise of the authors (e.g., basic research, pathology, epidemiology, radiology, hepatology, surgery, and organ transplantation); a specific journal for reviews, updates, and discussion of research on HCC is lacking. *Liver Cancer* is the first international peer-reviewed journal of its kind to focus exclusively on basic and clinical research in the field of HCC, including the treatment and management of early, intermediate, and advanced HCC. *Liver Cancer* will start by publishing invited and submitted reviews quarterly. These will be followed by original articles addressing new issues in the field. Original articles describing basic and clinical research will be important resources for information exchange provided by this academic platform. This new journal will play an important role in generalizing and updating knowledge in the field of liver cancer.

You are invited to contribute articles to *Liver Cancer* describing your recent contributions to advances in the field.