# Exploring the Evolution of the Biotherapies Revolution

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## Disclosures

- No relevant financial disclosures
- Board of Directors Association for the Advancement of Blood and Biotherapies (AABB)
- Member of apheresis working group in the NHLBI Cure Sickle Cell Initiative

# Learning objectives

By the end of this presentation, audience members should be able to:

- Describe general characteristics of biotherapies in clinical use
- Compare biotherapies under development in anticipation of clinical use

# Defining biotherapies

- Substances made from living organisms to treat disease that may occur naturally in the body or may be made in the laboratory
- Types of biotherapy can include (a few examples):
  - Molecules
    - cytokines
    - cancer vaccines
    - Antibodies
  - Cells
    - Blood transfusions (the original biotherapy!)
    - hematopoeitic stem cell transplants
  - Genetically modified cells
    - Chimeric antigen receptor T cells
    - Genetically modified hematopoietic stem cells



https://www.cancer.gov/publications/dictionaries/cancer-terms/def/biotherapy, https://www.aabb.org/news-resources/resources/cellular-therapies

### Manufacturing genetically modified cells is a complex process



Adapted from: Dinh A and Stroncek D. Transfusion.2024;64:357–366

### Manufacturing genetically modified cells is a complex process



Adapted from: Blood Cancer Discov. 2021;2(5):408-422. doi:10.1158/2643-3230.BCD-21-0084

### Chimeric Antigen Receptor (CAR) T cells combines the best of B cell and T cell functions



BMJ 2022;378:e068956

### There are currently 6 CAR T cells approved for clinical use



### Each approved CAR T cell has unique attributes



Cappell, K.M., Kochenderfer, J.N. Nat Rev Clin Oncol 20, 359-371 (2023)

### Not just CARs anymore: genetically modified hematopoietic stem cells were recently approved

Sickle cell disease is caused by a single base mutation in the hemoglobin (red blood cell) gene. This changes standard, round-shaped red blood cells into sickleshaped red blood cells. A new treatment called gene therapy may be able to change the expression of this gene in sickle cell patients by replacing the abnormal hemoglobin gene with a standard hemoglobin gene.

Gene therapy is done by first taking the patient's own hematopoietic (blood) stem cells, which are found in the bone marrow.

> How Can Gene Therapy Cure Sickle Cell Disease?

Then the removed stem cells are repaired using a vector that carries both the standard gene as well as a part of a virus that has been modified not to cause any infection. The vector acts like a shuttle and can carry the standard hemoglobin cell gene into the stem cell.

The newly created stem cells made by the standard hemoglobin gene are then given back to the patient (through transfusion) to help produce both non-sickled red blood cells and more healthy stem cells. These new stem cells will continue to produce non-sickled red blood cells, helping to significantly reduce the need for regular blood transfusions, as well as reducing pain and other related symptoms.

https://curesickle.org/sites/scdc/themes/scdc/images/CSC\_GenetherapyInfographicSELF.png

#### Each approved genetically modified hematopoietic stem cell has unique attributes

#### exagamglogene autotemcel (exa-cel)



#### lovotibeglogene autotemcel (lovo-cel)



5 Engineered stem cells make healthy fetal haemoglobin and normal red blood cells

https://www.bbc.com/news/health-67435266, https://investor.bluebirdbio.com/static-files/1953f998-cf49-4cfb-8e88-d52c0a9b7528

### The future of cell and gene therapies is wide open



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### The future of cell and gene therapies is wide open



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### Any substantial change in the process = a new product



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### New products must be fully vetted at every stage of the process

#### Cell therapy production process

	Cell source	Modification	Manufacturing	Testing	Distribution/delivery	<b>Clinical application</b>
Option	<ul> <li>Autologous</li> <li>Allogeneic</li> <li>Xenogeneic</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Transgenes and synthetic circuits</li> <li>Cas9 genome an epigenome edition</li> <li>Surface modification</li> <li>Biomaterials</li> </ul>	s d ng • Media composition • Feeder cells, aAPCs	<ul> <li>Cell assays (qPCR, cell phenoty)</li> <li>Analytical as (non-cell components)</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Temperature requirements</li> <li>Shipment size and location logistics</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Location and time of administration</li> <li>Timing of stay and recovery</li> </ul>
Challer	<ul> <li>Testing for safe</li> <li>Source/donor variability</li> <li>Complex IP consideration</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Design of function</li> <li>Efficiency of modification</li> <li>Avoid immune response</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Scalability from preclinical to clinical</li> <li>Batch-to-batch reproducibility</li> <li>Sourcing GMP components</li> </ul>	al • Potency • Sterility • Viability • Purity/identi	<ul> <li>Logistics</li> <li>Delivery time and cost</li> <li>Storage</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Long-term monitoring</li> <li>Safety</li> <li>Durability of response</li> </ul>

### New products can take decades to reach approval

#### **Drug Development Pipeline**

Gene therapy



Witkowsky, et al. Gene Ther 30, 747–752 (2023)

### No treatment is without risk

WARNING: HEMATOLOGIC MALIGNANCY See full prescribing information for complete boxed warning.

Hematologic malignancy has occurred in patients treated with Monitor patients closely for evidence of malignancy through complete blood counts at least every 6 months and through integration site analysis at Months 6, 12, and as warranted. (5.1)

#### 4/18/24

FDA Requires Boxed Warning for T cell Malignancies Following Treatment with BCMA-Directed or CD19-Directed Autologous Chimeric Antigen Receptor (CAR) T cell Immunotherapies



# **Conclusions and considerations**

- Genetically modified biotherapies in clinical use include:
  - CAR T cells for B cell malignancies
  - CAR T cells for multiple myeloma
  - Genetically modified hematopoietic stem cells for hemoglobinopathies

- Many parts of the process are under study for new products
  - Source of cells
  - Target
  - disease indication
  - Manufacturing process
  - Etc.

It is an exciting time to be in the field of biotherapies!

# Thank you!

