DirectConnect

Inside Yale Cancer Center

October 11, 2013

Announcements

New Grateful Patient Program Launched
I am pleased to announce the pilot phase of a new cancer grateful patient fundraising program that is a collaboration of the development offices at Yale-New Haven Hospital and Yale Cancer Center/Yale School of Medicine. Kevin Walsh, VP for Development at Yale-New Haven Hospital, and Peter Lamothe, Director of Development for Yale Cancer Center, are leading this program. The new program is a well-planned approach to helping patients and families understand how they can help us achieve our goals in the clinics and the labs.

I expect that this program will have a considerable impact at Yale Cancer Center and Smilow Cancer Hospital in the years to come and believe sections, departments and disease teams that embrace this opportunity will benefit from those patients and their families who choose philanthropy as a means of expressing their gratitude.

Patients and families often ask "How can I help?" or "What are you doing to move the field forward?" An area for you and your team to think about now is which of your top priorities or goals could benefit from private philanthropy? These priorities and goals will be the basis for most conversations with patients and families who are interested in making a gift.

In the weeks ahead, development officers at YCC and YNHH will be contacting you to meet in person - or with your disease teams if you prefer - to present the new grateful patient program in much more detail. We are committed to supporting the grateful patient program and welcome your feedback so please don't hesitate to contact me, Peter Lamothe or Kevin Walsh with questions or concerns.

Caroline Cromwell Joins Hematology
Dr. Madhav Dhodapkar has appointed Dr. Caroline Cromwell to the faculty in the section of Hematology. Her appointment

from the desk of
Thomas J. Lynch, Jr., MD
Director, Yale Cancer Center
Physician-in-Chief Smilow Cancer Hospital at Yale-New Haven

Smilow Cancer Hospital at Yale-New Haven

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Closer to Free

closer to free
The fund to advance cancer research and enhance patient care

Links of Interest

CV Library
The CV library is a new resource available to our members, with CVs of post-docs and others looking for positions at

began on October 1. Dr. Cromwell is a well-known hematologist, specializing in benign hematology, particularly clotting and bleeding disorders, and a major thought leader in this area. Most recently she was an Assistant Professor and Director of the Sickle Cell Program at the School of Medicine at Mount Sinai.

Dr. Cromwell received her undergraduate and graduate degrees from Harvard University and her MD from the School of Medicine at Mount Sinai. She completed her residency and internship at Mount Sinai before joining the faculty in 2008.

Yale Cancer Center Announces Annual Awards
Yale Cancer Center is pleased to announce four annual awards in the areas of excellence in research and clinical care. Each award will be announced at the Yale Cancer Center Conclave on Monday, November 25, 2013. The nomination deadline for all four awards is Friday, October 25, 2013.

Yale Cancer Center Research Prize
This award is in support of excellence in the areas of basic science, translational research, clinical research, cancer prevention and control, epidemiological research, or case review. It will be awarded to the Cancer Center investigator whose paper is considered to have had the greatest impact on their field this year. Applicant must be a current member of the Cancer Center. The science in the publication must be cancer focused. Please submit a PDF of your best publication (publication date from October 2012 to Sept 2013). To be eligible you must be either the first or last author of the publication. Email your publication to Hilary Prosnitz.

Yale Cancer Center Award for Clinical Excellence
This award will be given to the physician who best exemplifies excellence in clinical care including superb clinical skills, use of a patient and family centered approach to care, and inclusion of a multi-disciplinary care model. Nominee must be a current member of Yale Cancer Center. Please nominate yourself or a peer and send a brief nomination letter (one page maximum) to Hilary Prosnitz.

Yale Cancer Center Lifetime Achievement Award
Yale Cancer Center recognizes the achievements of one of our senior members through our annual Lifetime Achievement award. Please send nomination suggestions for the award to Dan DiMaio.

Ruth McCorkle Oncology Advanced Practice Provider Award
This annual recognition from Yale Cancer Center/Smilow Cancer Hospital is a unique opportunity to recognize the contributions of our APP colleagues who contribute so much to oncology patient care.

Yale. Please browse the listings if you have openings, and send the CVs you receive to share.
Learn More >>

In the News
Read recent articles featuring experts from Yale Cancer Center.
Read More >>

Subscribe to Yale Cancer Center Answers on iTunes
Yale Cancer Center's weekly radio program on CT Public Radio is ranked number 2 in the world for cancer programs on iTunes. Subscribe to the show.
Learn More >>

Yale Cancer Center Grand Rounds
Video presentations from Yale Cancer Center members are now available online.
Learn More >>

DirectConnect Archives
Learn More >>

ASCO Connection Blog
The Power of Cancer
by Anees Chagpar, MD
Read More >>

Events

October 11; 1:00 PM
YCC Molecular Virology Research Program
SHM I-116
UBXN1 and Viral Replication
Richard Sutton, PhD
Learn More >> (PDF)

October 13; 6:00 PM
Yale Cancer Center Answers WNPR
Treatment of Kidney Cancer
Brian Shuch, MD
Learn More >>

October 15; 9:30 AM
Pathology Research in Progress Talks
The Anlyan Center, N-107
TBA
Karin Finberg MD, PhDandRanjit Bindra MD, PhD

Please consider nominating yourself or a colleague for this award by completing the nomination form and submitting it to Cathy Lyons by November 5, 2013.

Download nomination form >>

Research in the News

In Stem Cells, Like Real Estate, Location is Most Important Factor

Stem cells and real estate have this in common: the most important thing is location, location, and location.
Stem cells are extensively studied because of their ability to generate a wide variety of tissue types - from new heart, liver and even brain cells. A new study by Yale School of Medicine researchers published online Oct. 6 in the journal *Nature* shows that the fate of stem cells depends upon their immediate surroundings.

"The emphasis in regeneration has been on studying the intrinsic properties of stem cells, but we have found that where those cells are placed play a much bigger role than the cells themselves," said Valentina Greco, PhD, Assistant Professor of Genetics and of Dermatology and senior author of the paper. "In a way, it is analogous to human children - what they are exposed to in their environment determines what they become as adults."

Greco's lab developed a novel form of microscopy that allowed them to track over time individual stem cells in the hair follicles of mice. They found that the fate of those stem cells was determined by where along the follicle "niche" they were located. Those at the top showed little activity and only divided periodically to replenish their pool. However, cells in the middle portion of the follicle "niche" proliferated more and produced cells that could create a wide variety of tissue types while those at the base tended to differentiate into specialized cells that build the actual hair shaft.

To their surprise, when they eradicated stem cells in one location,

Learn More >>

October 15; 12:00 PM
Yale Cancer Center Grand Rounds
Park Street Auditorium
Patient Experience as a Measure of Quality
Michael C. Bennick, MD
Learn More >> (PDF)

October 16; 11:00 AM
Yale Cancer Center Radiobiology and Radiotherapy Research Program
SHM I-304
ATM Modulates miR-34 Activity in Response to DNA Damage
David Salzman, PhD
Learn More >> (PDF)

October 16; 12:00 PM
Yale Cancer Center Cancer Prevention and Control Research Program
LEPH Conf. Room 216
Female Smokers, Perceived Risks of Quitting, and Smoking Cessation: A Treatment Development Study
Andrea Weinberger, PhD
Learn More >> (PDF)

October 17; 9:00 AM
Therapeutic Radiology Grand Rounds
Smilow, LL-412, Room E
Best of ASTRO
James Yu, MD
Learn More >>

October 17; 3:30 PM
YCCI Symposia Conducting Clinical Trials/Lessons Learned and Useful Tips
Park Street Auditorium
Penn Experience: Facilitating Compliant Clinical and Translational Research
Emma Meagher, MD
Learn More >> (PDF)

October 17; 5:00 PM
YCC Humanities/Howard Spiro Lecture Series
TAC N-107
Cultural Challenges of Introducing Medical Programs in Developing Countries
Frederic Finkelstein, MD and Susan Finkelstein, MSW
Learn More >>

surrounding cells rushed into the "niche" and began regenerating the tissue.
Read More >>

New Study Changes View About the Genetics of Leukemia Risk

A gene that helps keep blood free of cancer is controlled by tiny pieces of RNA, a finding that may lead to better ways to diagnose blood cancers and even lead to new forms of treatment, Yale School of Medicine researchers reported online Oct. 10 in the journal *Cell Reports*.

In the past few years researchers have identified the crucial role of the gene TET2 in keeping blood cells healthy. Mutations of the gene have been found in about 20% of leukemias and indicate a poor prognosis for patients. However, the gene was thought to be irrelevant in 80% of leukemia cases.

The new study changes this view. The researchers identified the agents that could be responsible for many leukemias without TET2 mutation - a host of microRNAs from the large expanse of DNA that do not code for proteins. They found that patients with large numbers of these microRNAs are more likely to have impaired TET2 function, even without a known mutation, and are thus likely to have aggressive forms of cancer.

This knowledge could help doctors develop a course of treatment for leukemia patients, said Jun Lu, PhD, Assistant Professor of Genetics, researcher in the Yale Stem Cell Center and Yale Cancer Center, and senior author of the paper.
Lu points out that half of leukemia patients who lack these markers may be spared side effects of aggressive treatments.
Read More >>

High Medicare Spending on Prostate Cancer Screenings, but Little Benefit for Older Men

October 20; 11:00 AM
YNHH/American Cancer Society Event
Lighthouse Point Park
Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk
Learn More >>

October 20; 6:00 PM
Yale Cancer Center Answers
WNPR
Breast Cancer Awareness Month 2013
Sarah Mougalian, MD
Learn More >>

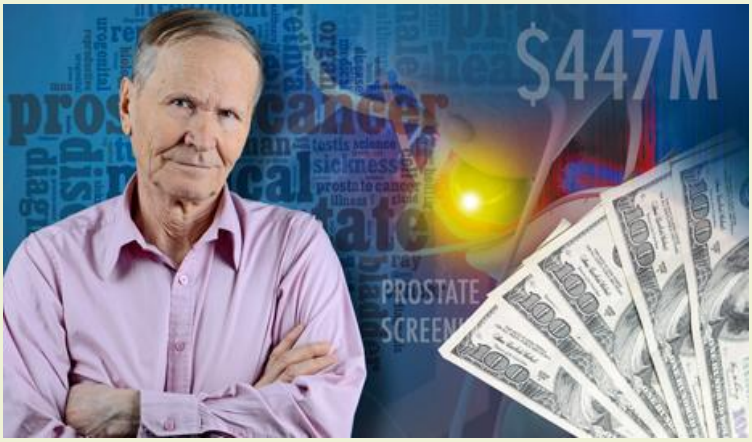
October 21; 12:00 PM
Cancer Genetics and Genomics Faculty Lunch
Breast Medical Oncology Conference Room, Suite 120, Room 129
Breast Cancer Genomics
Lajos Pusztai, MD, DPhil
Understanding and Exploiting OncomiR Addiction
Frank Slack, PhD
Learn More >>

October 22; 9:30 AM
Pathology Research in Progress Talks
The Anlyan Center, N-107
TBA
Philip Askenase, MD and Jason Brown
Learn More >>

October 22; 12:00 PM
Yale Cancer Center Grand Rounds
Park Street Auditorium
Yale Pathology Tissue Services: The Pathology Research Resource
David Rimm, MD, PhD
TBD
James Farrell, MD
Learn More >>

October 24; 9:00 AM
Therapeutic Radiology Grand Rounds
Smilow, LL-412, Room E
Roentgen Rays in Treatment of Non Melanoma Skin Cancer
Pradip Pathare, MD
Learn More >>

October 24; 5:00 PM
YCC Humanities/Howard Spiro Lecture Series
TAC N-107
Looking In: Organs and the Way



Prostate cancer screening has little benefit for men aged 75 and older, yet over three years, the Medicare fee-for-service program spent $447 million annually on PSA-based screenings-one-third of which was for men in the over 75 age group, according to a study by researchers at the Yale Cancer Outcomes, Public Policy, and Effectiveness Research (COPPER) Center.
Published in the Oct. 4 issue of the journal *Cancer*, the study also found considerable geographic variation in the cost of prostate cancer screening.

Many prostate cancers are slow-growing and unlikely to become problematic. Widespread screening with a serum-based PSA test may result in unnecessary invasive biopsies, which can be a physical burden or even harmful. In 2012, the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force decided to stop recommending PSA screening for men of any age. Medicare, however, continues to reimburse for this test and the subsequent procedures.

Lead author Xiaomei Ma, PhD, Associate Professor at Yale School of Public Health, and her Yale COPPER Center colleagues conducted an observational study of older male Medicare beneficiaries who were free of prostate cancer and other lower urinary tract symptoms at the end of 2006, and followed them for three years.
Read More >>

Analysis of Little-Explored Regions of Genome Reveals Dozens of Potential Cancer Triggers

We View Them
Lucinda Liu and Kathryn Parker Almanas
Learn More >> (PDF)

Employment Opportunities

We seek your assistance in the recruitment of qualified Oncology Research Nurses to join the Cancer Center for full time research opportunities. Positions traditionally require a minimum of BSN and 4 years of research nursing experience with a strong preference within oncology. In lieu of research experience, trained oncology nurses with little or no research experience are considered for positions of the same level. Should you know of any potential candidates, please encourage them to go on-line to www.yale.edu/jobs and navigate to the STARS employment website in search of positions 18343BR and 18943BR, upload the resume and apply. They may also contact Sandra Greer for further information.

Submissions

Please submit your recent publication and grant announcements to:

Renee Gaudette
Director, Public Affairs and Marketing

renee.gaudette@yale.edu

A massive data analysis of natural genetic variants in humans and variants in cancer tumors has implicated dozens of mutations in the development of breast and prostate cancer, a Yale-led team has found.

The newly discovered mutations are in regions of DNA that do not code for proteins but instead influence activity of other genes. These areas represent an unexplored world that will allow researchers and doctors to gain new insight into the causes and treatment of cancer, said the scientists.

"This allows us to take a systematic approach to cancer genomics," said Mark Gerstein, PhD, the Albert L. Williams Professor of Biomedical Informatics and co-senior author of the paper, which appeared in the Oct. 4 issue of *Science*. "Now we do not need to limit ourselves to the roughly 1% of the genome that codes for proteins but can explore the rest of our DNA."

Read More >>

Notables

Qin Yan, PhD has received an **American Cancer Society Research Scholar Award** for $720,000 over four years to support his project, "Functional Analysis of Histone Demethylase RBP2 in Breast Cancer." The major goals of this project are to determine the roles of an epigenetic regulator RBP2 in breast cancer initiation and progression.

Christen Ruff has joined Yale Cancer Center as Dr. Thomas Lynch's senior administrative assistant and as team leader for the WWW group. Christen comes to us from Clayton State University in Atlanta where she was most recently an Assistant Director.

Yang Zhou, PhD has joined the Cancer Center as a Project Manager supporting Dr. Roy Herbst and Dr. Howard Hochster. Yang's responsibilities include supporting Dr. Herbst's translational work such as master protocol coordination as well as Dr. Hochster's role as GI leader for SWOG. Yang has just completed

her PhD in the School of Public Health.

Congratulations to the following Yale Cancer Center employees who are celebrating service milestones at Yale University this year:
Katherine Antos: 10 Years
Rachel Barnett: 10 Years
Adrienne Burns: 10 Years
Rocco Carbone: 30 Years
Mary Beth Clark: 35 Years
Elizabeth Cornelio: 5 Years
Nakia Dawson: 10 Years
Michele Dingus: 5 Years
Eric Festa: 5 Years
Deborah Finger: 15 Years
Clara Garguilo: 15 Years
Kristin Kaley: 5 Years
Rajni Mehta: 15 Years
Jennifer Mulligan: 20 Years
Lucille Muro-Marturano: 25 Years
Elin Rowen: 10 Years
Bonney Sauro: 25 Years
Pamela Schontag: 25 Years
June Williams: 20 Years

Closer to Free

The **Closer to Free** Fund benefits from many events organized by patients, families and friends. Each event is inspired by a personal experience with cancer and intended to support research and patient care at Smilow and Yale. Cut-a-thons, walk-a-thons and many other fun and creative events are being held during the month of October with the net proceeds benefiting Closer to Free. You can find these on our Closer to Free Facebook page - please visit and "like" us! Every event, large or small, has a positive impact - not only to Closer to Free, but to patients, families, and friends who wish to make a difference. Information about organizing an event is available on the website or by contacting Susan Frankenbach.

Funding and Award Opportunities

CTSA Spirit Call for Ideas
CTSA SPIRiT: Sharing Partnership for Innovative Research in Translation, Members of the National NIH CTSA Consortium include Johns Hopkins University, University of Chicago, University of

Pennsylvania, University of Pittsburgh, Washington University in St. Louis, and Yale University.

The SPIRiT Consortium is looking for broad-based, high impact ideas for clinical and translational research projects, which can be conducted across all 6 SPIRiT partner institutions. Funding is for $300,000 in direct costs for one year.

Ideas Deadline: October 28, 2013

Request Application >>

American Association for Cancer Research Pancreatic Leadership Grant

The American Association for Cancer Research is seeking applications from AACR members for the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network-AACR Pathway to Leadership Grant, a joint effort with the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network to support outstanding early career investigators beginning in their postdoctoral cancer research positions and continuing through their successful transition to independence.

Research projects must have direct applicability and relevance to pancreatic cancer; may be in any discipline of basic, clinical, translational, or epidemiological research; and may fall within at least one of the categories of the Common Scientific Outline (biology; etiology; prevention; early detection, diagnosis, and prognosis; treatment; or cancer control, survivorship, and outcomes research).

Application Deadline: October 29, 2013

Learn More >>

Women's Health Research at Yale Pioneer and Pilot Project Opportunities

The Pioneer and Pilot Project Program Awards are provided to investigators who are full-time Yale faculty. Because we are interested in encouraging interdisciplinary and inter-institutional research, investigators outside the Yale community are invited to collaborate with Yale principal investigators.

Letters of Intent Due: October 21, 2013

Learn More >>

Terri Brodeur Breast Cancer Foundation 2013 Grants

This award is intended to support PhD, MD/PhD and MD physician scientists at early stages of their research careers to enable them to develop independent careers in breast cancer research. The foundation seeks to fund broadly across all relevant disciplines and as such focus areas can include basic, preclinical and clinical research. The award period is for two years with an interim renewal to occur upon successful completion of the first year. Stipends are $45,000 - $50,000
per year.

Prospective applicants are expected to submit a research plan, pre-approved by their mentor, to the foundation's Scientific Advisory

Committee. The research plan must be fundamentally sound and will include statements of: (a) The scientific and technical merit of the research question; (b) The design, methodology, and feasibility of the study; (c) The relevance of the proposed research plan to the applicant's career objectives; (d) The medical and health significance of the proposed research to breast cancer prevention, control and/or treatment; and (e) The appropriateness of the research plan as a vehicle for developing necessary research skills.

Application Deadline: October 31, 2013

Learn More >>

The Mathew Larson Foundation for Pediatric Brain Tumor Research

The Mathew Larson Foundation for Pediatric Brain Tumor Research seeks to fund translational and clinical projects in Pediatric Brain Tumor Research. The Primary Investigator on the application must be an MD or PhD at a not-for-profit, medical or scientific institution and must hold an academic rank of assistant professor (or equivalent) or instructor (or equivalent.) Investigators at higher ranks are excluded. Investigators at multiple institutions are invited to submit joint applications as long as both institutions give permission and agree to abide by all Foundation requirements.

Pre-Application Deadline: October 27, 2013

Learn More >>

ASH Bridge Grant Program

In 2013 and for the next two years, ASH's new bridge grant program will provide at least 30 one-year awards annually, in the amount of $100,000 each, to ASH members who applied for an NIH R01 grant or equivalent but were denied funding due to budget cutbacks. The long-term goal of the award is to help sustain recipients' research and contribute to their retention in hematology investigation.

Application Deadline: November 1, 2013

Learn More >>

Employee Profile: Etienne Holder

The Employee Profile recognizes the diverse contributions made by Yale Cancer Center and Smilow Cancer Hospital staff to meet our patient care, research, education, and outreach goals. The staff profiled are examples of the great work being done here, and the dedication and values we possess.
To suggest someone to be profiled, please contact Emily Fenton.

Etienne Holder is a Data Manager for the GI Disease Team in the Clinical Trials Office at Yale Cancer Center. She describes her job as very much a team effort, with the goal of working to cure GI cancers and improve quality of life for patients. She works with Clinical Research Nurses, Principal Investigators and sponsors to ensure that the quality and compliance of the protocols are being followed.

Protocol compliance consists of knowing the ins and outs of every protocol in order to be able to identify and resolve discrepancies. On average Etienne manages 6-7 protocols at a time and must be an expert on all of them. Occasionally, she will meet with the patients that are on the protocols along with the CRN and the PI. This gives her an opportunity to resolve discrepancies with subject data, and continually learn from the patient and research team.

"Following a patient's progress is one of the most rewarding aspects of my job. Several of our patients are very sick when they enter into a protocol, and it is wonderful to see them slowly get better, and know that the trial is working," said Etienne. Ultimately the data that is collected during the trial will be analyzed by the sponsor to deem whether or not the protocol treatment is effective. This can impact the future treatment of patients with GI cancers and therefore it is Etienne's responsibility to make sure the data reported is as accurate as possible and that the sponsor has everything they need to base their decision on.

Kathleen Uscinski, Associate Director for Clinical Trials Operations, commented, "Etienne brings 100% effort, tenacity and dedication to work each and every day. That's why she is an incredibly valuable member of our team!"

Recent Publications

Primary Breast Fibromatosis.
Samim M, Honarpisheh H, Durand M, Butler R.
ACR Case-in-Point.
Read More >>

Spatial organization within a niche as a determinant of stem-cell fate.
Rompolas P, Mesa KR, Greco V.
Nature. 2013 Oct 6.

Read More >>

Integrative Annotation of Variants from 1092 Humans: Application to Cancer Genomics.
Khurana E, Fu Y, Colonna V, Mu XJ, Kang HM, Lappalainen T, Sboner A, Lochovsky L, Chen J, Harmanci A, Das J, Abyzov A, Balasubramanian S, Beal K, Chakravarty D, Challis D, Chen Y, Clarke D, Clarke L, Cunningham F, Evani US, Flicek P, Fragoza R, Garrison E, Gibbs R, Gümüs ZH, Herrero J, Kitabayashi N, Kong Y, Lage K, Liluashvili V, Lipkin SM, Macarthur DG, Marth G, Muzny D, Pers TH, Ritchie GR, Rosenfeld JA, Sisu C, Wei X, Wilson M, Xue Y, Yu F; 1000 Genomes Project Consortium, Dermitzakis ET, Yu H, Rubin MA, Tyler-Smith C, Gerstein M.
Science. 2013 Oct 4;342(6154):1235587.
Read More >>

Minimally invasive oesophagectomy more expensive than open despite shorter length of stay.
Dhamija A, Dhamija A, Hancock J, McCloskey B, Kim AW, Detterbeck FC, Boffa DJ.
Eur J Cardiothorac Surg. 2013 Oct 3.
Read More >>

Gene Expression Profiling for Cardiac Rejection Surveillance is not Predictive of Post-Transplantation Skin Cancer.
Hanlon A, O'Neill M, Fang F, Chen H, Lott J, Wigger M, Stasko T.
Dermatol Surg. 2013 Oct;39(10):1507-1513.
Read More >>

Reproducibility of research and preclinical validation: problems and solutions.
Pusztai L, Hatzis C, Andre F.
Nat Rev Clin Oncol. 2013 Oct 1.
Read More >>

Influence of genomics on adjuvant treatments for pre-invasive and invasive breast cancer.
Abu-Khalf M, Pusztai L.
Breast. 2013 Aug 1;22S2:S83-S87.
Read More >>

SOX2-specific adaptive immunity and response to immunotherapy in non-small cell lung cancer.
Dhodapkar KM, Gettinger SN, Das R, Zebroski H, Dhodapkar MV.
Oncoimmunology. 2013 Jul 1;2(7):e25205.
Read More >>

A National Survey of Radiation Oncologists and Urologists on Recommendations of Prostate-Specific Antigen Screening for Prostate Cancer.
Kim SP, Karnes RJ, Nguyen PL, Ziegenfuss JY, Thompson RH, Han LC, Shah ND, Smaldone MC, Gross CP, Frank I, Weight CJ, Beebe TJ, Tilburt JC.
BJU Int. 2013 Aug 23.
Read More >>

Antagonist Antibodies to PD-1 and B7-H1 (PD-L1) in the Treatment of Advanced Human Cancer--Response.
Sznol M, Chen L.
Clin Cancer Res. 2013 Oct 1;19(19):5542.
Read More >>

Racial differences in nasopharyngeal carcinoma in the United States.
Wang Y, Zhang Y, Ma S.
Cancer Epidemiol. 2013 Sep 12.
Read More >>