SCIENTIFIC/EXPERT SYMPOSIUM

Oncolytic virotherapy in modern cancer treatment

From research to clinical application

11 June 2026
School of Public Health "Andrija Štampar" Rockefeller Street 4, Zagreb, Croatia
Start at 2:00 p.m.

As part of the project **"Development of Oncolytic Virotherapy for Cancer Treatment in Animals"**, the University of Zagreb and the Centre of Excellence for Viral Immunology and Vaccines, in cooperation with the Croatian Academy of Medical Sciences and the Andrija Štampar School of Public Health, are organizing a scientific/expert symposium dedicated to modern approaches in oncolytic virotherapy and its clinical application. The symposium brings together national and international experts in virology, oncology, immunotherapy, and translational medicine, with the aim of presenting current scientific and clinical insights into the application of oncolytic viruses in the treatment of malignant diseases.

The event is intended for physicians, researchers, representatives of the healthcare and scientific sectors, and all those interested in the development of innovative therapeutic approaches in oncology.

Please find the program below this invitation.

We look forward to welcoming you!

Sincerely,

Organizing Committee

Funded by the European Union
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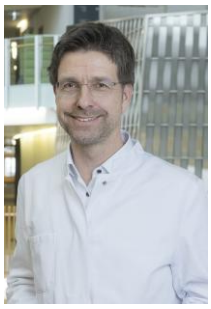
The content of this material is the sole responsibility of the beneficiary of the project "Development of oncolytic virotherapy for the treatment of cancer in animals" (NPOC.3.2.R3-I.104.0124), University of Zagreb, Centre for Research and Knowledge Transfer in Biotechnology.

Speakers

Prof. dr. med. dr. rer. nat. Guy Ungerechts / CV

German Cancer Research Center (DKFZ) and National Center for Tumor Diseases (NCT), Heidelberg



Lecture title: Immunovirotherapy – Clinical translation

Various early clinical trials with oncolytic viral vectors including Measles virus (MeV) for the treatment of different cancer types have been completed. To engineer next generation MeV vectors for more efficient immunovirotherapy we encoded various immunomodulators including immune checkpoint inhibitors (e. g. anti-PD1), bispecific T cell engagers (BiTEs), cytokines (e. g. IL-12), as well as tumor associated antigens (TAA) for monotherapy, and to explore combination with adoptive cell transfer (ACT) approaches. MeV-IL12 is our lead candidate for clinical translation and GMP manufacturing is currently ongoing. A phase I/II dose escalation trial in patients with advanced/metastasized solid tumour's will be launched next year. Upfront, we treated four patients within an early clinical access program.

Dr. sc. Beata Halassy/ CV

University of Zagreb, Centre for Research and Knowledge Transfer in Biotechnology

Lecture title: Oncolytic viruses as *ex tempore*, point-of-care preparations

Oncolytic virotherapy uses viruses as anticancer agents capable of selectively infecting and destroying malignant cells. Despite promising clinical potential, the translation of oncolytic viruses into routine clinical use remains limited by complex regulatory and manufacturing requirements. As an alternative approach, based on experience from successful experimental self-treatment[1], we propose the development of *ex tempore* viral preparations manufactured at the point of care. The lecture will discuss the establishment of a detailed characterization framework to evaluate whether fresh viral preparations intended for immediate use can be reproducible, analytically well-defined, and clinically applicable. Emphasis will be placed on the potential of *ex tempore* oncolytic viruses as a novel medicinal product format and on their possible role in future personalized and precision-based cancer therapy approaches.

[1]Forčić et al. Vaccines 2024; 12:958

Prof. dr. sc. Tihana Lenac Roviš/ CV

Centre for Proteomics, Faculty of Medicine, University of Rijeka, Croatia

Lecture title: Development of novel nectin-based immunotherapies for cancer

Immune checkpoint inhibitors (ICIs) have demonstrated substantial clinical benefit in subsets of oncology patients; however, the majority of patients fail to respond due to diverse tumor immune evasion mechanisms. Among these, the poliovirus receptor (PVR, CD155) plays a role in suppressing anti-tumor immunity through multiple non-redundant pathways, including inhibitory signalling via TIGIT, CD96, and KIR2DL5A receptors. The lecture will present in vitro and in vivo studies dissecting the role of nectin family proteins and their receptors in tumor biology. We will discuss the development of novel antibody-based strategies, including anti-PVR monoclonal antibodies, and highlight their preclinical efficacy in restoring $CD8^+$ T cell and NK cell function. Emphasis will be placed on PVR-targeted approaches, with focus on the translational development of the clinical-stage candidate NTX1088, currently being evaluated in early-phase clinical trials in combination with PD-1 blockade.

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Registration

The symposium is free of charge; however, due to the limited number of participants, we kindly ask you to register via the following link: REGISTRATION LINK or QR code.

If you experience any difficulties with registration, please contact us at sravlic@unizg.hr.

Online participation

Participants who are unable to attend in person may join the symposium online via Zoom.

Join Zoom Meeting:

https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81836502901?pwd=9C8wX3ctZ4VqK1CFhCIvntNroEcZPW.1

Meeting ID: 818 3650 2901

Passcode: 236561

Professional accreditation

The symposium has been submitted to the Croatian Medical Chamber for professional accreditation.

Organizing Committee

Sanda Ravlić, Beata Halassy, Maja Lang Balija, Lucija Ivandić, Erika Gamulin, Anto Vrdoljak

Official language of the scientific/expert symposium

English

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SYMPOSIUM PROGRAM

THURSDAY 11TH JUNE 2026	
TIME	**TOPIC**
13^{30} – 14^{00} **Entrance hall**	**REGISTRATION**
14^{00} – 14^{30} **Large hall**	**OPENING CEREMONY**
14^{30} – 15^{30} **Large hall**	**PLENARY LECTURE** **PROF. DR. MED. DR. RER. NAT. GUY UNGERECHTS** *Immunovirotherapy – Clinical translation*
15^{30} – 16^{00} **Entrance hall**	**COFFEE BREAK**
16^{00}– 16^{30} **Large hall**	**DR. SC. BEATA HALASSY** *Oncolytic viruses as ex tempore, point-of-care preparations*
16^{30} – 17^{00} **Large hall**	**PROF. DR. SC. TIHANA LENAC ROVIŠ** *Development of novel nectin – based immunotherapies for cancer*
17^{00} – 17^{30} **Large hall**	**ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION**
17^{30} – 18^{30} **Entrance hall**	**RECEPTION**

*The Organizing Committee reserves the right to make changes to the symposium schedule.

Symposium Sponsor

KB Vertriebs GmbH, Podružnica Zagreb
Nova cesta 103
HR-10000 Zagreb, Croatia

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