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978-0-521-88645-1 - Translational Medicine and Drug Discovery

Edited by Bruce H. Littman and Rajesh Krishna

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Translational Medicine and Drug Discovery

This book, edited by two leaders known for driving innovation in the field, focuses on the new discipline of translational medicine as it pertains to drug discovery and development within the pharmaceutical and biotechnology industries. Translational medicine seeks to translate biological and molecular knowledge of disease and how drugs work into innovative strategies that reduce the cost and increase the speed of delivering new medicines for patients. This book describes these general strategies, biomarker development, imaging tools, translational human models, and examples of their application to real-life drug discovery and development. The latest thinking is presented by researchers from many of the world's leading pharmaceutical companies, including Pfizer, Merck, Eli Lilly, Abbott, and Novartis, as well as from academic institutions and public-private partnerships that support translational research. This book is essential for anyone interested in translational medicine from a variety of backgrounds (university institutes, medical schools, and pharmaceutical companies) in addition to drug development researchers and decision makers.

Bruce H. Littman, MD, is the founder of Translational Medicine Associates, LLC, and was the Vice President and Global Head of Translation Medicine at Pfizer, Inc., where he worked for 19 years, first in Experimental Medicine and then in Translational Medicine before starting his own company. He has published and presented extensively in the areas of early drug development, biomarker qualification, and personalized medicine. He was former cochair and is a current member of the Inflammation and Immunity Steering Committee of the Biomarker Consortium. Prior to his pharmaceutical career, Dr. Littman was a faculty member of Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine for 13 years. He is a Founding Fellow of the American College of Rheumatology, former President of the Virginia Society of Rheumatologists, and a Fellow of the American College of Physicians.

Rajesh Krishna, PhD, FCP, FAAPS, is an area lead director in product value enhancement at Merck Research Laboratories. Dr. Krishna is the editor of three books on new drug development. In addition to authoring some 120 articles and oral/poster presentations, Dr. Krishna has served as a section editor for the *Journal of Clinical Pharmacology*, associate editor for *BMC Clinical Pharmacology*, and an editorial board member for *BMC Medicine*. He is a Fellow of the American College of Clinical Pharmacology and the American Association of Pharmaceutical Scientists, where he was the 2010 Chair of the Clinical Pharmacology and Translational Research section. He is an affiliate member of the Institute of Translational Medicine and Therapeutics at the University of Pennsylvania and an adjunct assistant professor in clinical pharmacology at Thomas Jefferson University.

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EDITED BY

BRUCE H. LITTMAN

Translational Medicine Associates, LLC

RAJESH KRISHNA

Merck Research Laboratories



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Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town,
Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi, Tokyo, Mexico City

Cambridge University Press

32 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10013-2473, USA

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521886451

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First published 2011

Printed in the United States of America

A catalog record for this publication is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication data

Translational medicine and drug discovery / [edited by] Bruce H. Littman, Rajesh Krishna.
p. ; cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-521-88645-1 (hardback)

1. Drug development. 2. Molecular pharmacology. I. Littman, Bruce H., 1944–
II. Krishna, Rajesh. III. Title.

[DNLM: 1. Drug Discovery. 2. Translational Research – methods. QV 744]

RM301.25.T73 2011

615'.19–dc22 2010037116

ISBN 978-0-521-88645-1 Hardback

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Contributors

Ole J. Bjerrum

Department of Pharmacology and Pharmacotherapy
Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences
University of Copenhagen
Denmark

Roberto A. Calle

Cardiovascular, Metabolic, and Endocrine Diseases Research Unit
Pfizer Pharmatherapeutics Research and Development
Groton, CT

Jill Fiedler-Kelly

Cognigen Corporation
Williamsville, NY

Gregory Gaich

Division of Endocrinology and Cardiovascular Discovery Research
and Clinical Investigation
Eli Lilly & Co.
Indianapolis, IN

Thaddeus H. Grasela

Cognigen Corporation
Williamsville, NY

David B. Lee

Deputy Director
The Biomarkers Consortium
Foundation for the National Institutes of Health
Bethesda, MD

-
- Hans H. Linden
European Federation of Pharmaceutical Sciences
EUFEPS Central Office
Stockholm
Sweden
- Bruce H. Littman
President
Translational Medicine Associates, LLC
Stonington, CT
- Gerard J. Marek
Abbott Laboratories
Neuroscience Development
Abbott Park, IL
- John S. Millar
Institute for Translational Medicine and Therapeutics
Institute for Diabetes, Obesity, and Metabolism
University of Pennsylvania
Philadelphia, PA
- David E. Moller
Division of Endocrinology and Cardiovascular Discovery
Research and Clinical Investigation
Eli Lilly & Co.
Indianapolis, IN
- Adam J. Schwarz
Lilly Research Laboratories
Indianapolis, IN
- Robert Slusser
Rancho Palos Verdes, CA
- Dominic G. Spinella
Executive Director, Translational Medicine
Pfizer, Inc.
San Diego, CA
- S. Aubrey Stoch
Department of Clinical Pharmacology
Merck Research Laboratories
Rahway, NJ

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Johannes T. Tauscher

Lilly Research Laboratories
Indianapolis, IN

Ann E. Taylor

Translational Medicine Diabetes and Metabolism
Novartis
Cambridge, MA

Mervyn Turner

Chief Strategy Officer
Merck & Co., Inc.
and
Senior Vice President of Emerging Markets
Merck Research Laboratories
Rahway, NJ

Elizabeth Gribble Walker

Director
Predictive Safety Testing Consortium Critical Path Institute
Tucson, AZ

David Wholley

Director
The Biomarkers Consortium
Foundation for the National Institutes of Health
Bethesda, MD

Preface

Drug discovery and development has evolved in an accelerated fashion during the latter half of the 20th century and the first decade of the 21st century from the serendipity of folk medicine and herbal remedies to a more refined observational and hypothesis-driven biological approach and finally to the present-day translational approach that relies on an understanding of disease and human biology at a molecular level. Advances in information, molecular and biomarker technologies, and quantitative systems pharmacology have further enabled this rapid evolution. Along with these important advances and changes, however, has come an unsustainable attrition rate that has increased the cost of discovering and developing new drugs and threatens the future of the pharmaceutical industry as we have known it. The combination of modern, science-driven translational drug discovery and development and unsustainable attrition rates has created a new reality that has had its greatest impact on the earliest stages of drug development. This reality is mandating changes in strategies, technologies, and disciplines in an effort to improve confidence and the success rate of new drug targets, mechanisms, and molecules. Ultimately, these changes are designed to affect the endgame: improved productivity in terms of new drug approvals for unmet medical needs at a sustainable cost from the modern drug discovery engine.

One of the most significant changes embraced by the pharmaceutical and biotech industry is the creation and evolution of the discipline of translational medicine. We hypothesize that the successful implementation of translational medicine strategies will herald an era in which, from the initial decision to pursue a specific drug target forward, the line of sight is on proof of concept and not just the nomination of a drug development candidate. The effective use of biomarkers will enable development decisions regarding early drug candidates based on human drug target validation for the disease, pharmacodynamics, proof of mechanism, and proof of concept for the drug target and molecule. Specifically, biomarkers can be leveraged to define what constitutes adequate target engagement and as decision-making tools to confirm three hypotheses regarding the

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target: (1) The relationship of target modulation to the biological changes that will result in a desirable effect in a disease population; (2) the ability of the compound to hit and modulate the target hard enough and long enough at a well-tolerated dose to test the concept; and (3) the level of efficacy and safety resulting from target modulation that is likely to be medically and commercially acceptable.

This book describes how the discipline of translational medicine has evolved to meet these drug development challenges and highlights current translational strategies and drug development paradigms across a diverse spectrum of therapeutic areas. Within Section I, experts define biomarkers and discuss the principles of the translational medicine discipline, describe the challenges and opportunities in translational paradigms unique to each disease area, and propose thoughtful solutions. Section II describes how biomarkers should be qualified to support the drug development process and how government and industry have responded to the needs and high costs of developing the tools and technologies required to develop new drugs efficiently and speed their delivery to patients. Finally, in Section III, we take a glimpse into the trends and changes needed for further success in the 21st century. An effort has been made in this volume to be transparent regarding cultural and management circumstances that must be dealt with and how companies should balance risk and drug development investments to be able to maximize the value from these translational medicine paradigms.

We expect that this volume will benefit drug discoverers and developers alike. Scientists in academia, regulatory institutions, and pharmaceutical industry laboratories, as well as those working on all aspects (chemistry, biology, physiology, pathophysiology, pharmacology, therapeutics) of translational discovery and clinical research, will find the book useful. Ultimately, we feel that it can serve as a useful training and educational tool for anyone interested in early drug development.

Bruce H. Littman, Stonington, CT
Rajesh Krishna, Rahway, NJ

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