

## OVERVIEW

### Viruses

Presentations in this session dealt with two well-defined viral etiologic agents and their relationship to upper aerodigestive cancers.

Dr. Bettie M. Steinberg (Albert Einstein College of Medicine) presented her work incorporating the pathophysiology of human papillomaviruses (HPVs), their relationship to head and neck cancer, and their possible regulation by chemopreventive agents. Dr. Steinberg reviewed the evidence for a clear etiologic role for HPV in both benign and malignant tumors of the upper aerodigestive tract. The presentation by Dr. Steinberg also reviewed the importance of distinguishing between latent and active HPV infections, as well as the possible role of retinoids, anti-sense RNA, growth factors, and estrogen metabolism in the control of HPV replication and expression.

The second and final presentation in this session

was given by Dr. Gary R. Pearson (Georgetown University Medical Center), who discussed studies linking Epstein-Barr Virus (EBV) with nasopharyngeal carcinoma (NPC). Dr. Pearson's talk highlighted the use of IgA anti-EBV antibodies and their use in screening for NPC in high risk populations in Asia, where serological studies have identified clinically significant antibody response patterns. Use of this marker to screen high risk individuals should increase the probability of early detection and offer physicians an opportunity to intervene before the onset of clinical disease.

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