

Foreword



Axel Merseburger

Prof. Dr. med. Axel Stuart Merseburger is a highly experienced urologist with over 21 years of practice. He works at the Department of Urology at the University Hospital Schleswig-Holstein in Lubeck, Germany and specializes in urology and robotic surgery. Dr Merseburger is considered an expert in his field with a wide range of qualifications and achievements. Having studied medicine at top institutions such as the Hannover Medical School and the Harvard Medical School, Dr Merseburger has gained extensive knowledge and expertise. He has completed various fellowships and training, including a scholarship at the Uniformed Services University in Washington and a fellowship at the Henry M Jackson Foundation Center for Prostate Disease Research. Dr Merseburger has published 442 scientific publications, demonstrating his dedication to research and innovation. He has received numerous awards and prizes, including the Werner Staehler Memorial and Urologia Internationalis prizes. With his wealth of experience and expertise, Dr Merseburger is known for his contributions to the field of urology. He is highly regarded for his skills in robotic surgery and his focus on prostate cancer. His dedication to improving patient outcomes and advancing the field of urology makes him a highly respected and trusted doctor. Overall, Prof. Dr. med. Axel Stuart Merseburger is an accomplished uro-urologist who brings knowledge and expertise to his practice. His dedication to research, innovative treatments and patient care makes him a valuable asset to the medical community.

It is with great pleasure that we present the latest edition of *touchREVIEWS in Oncology & Haematology*. This issue reflects the growing momentum of precision oncology, from liquid biopsy and response-adapted strategies to antibody–drug conjugates (ADCs) and immune-based therapies, alongside the challenges of translating these advances into routine, equitable care.

We open with an editorial from Dr Saumya Easaw et al. on circulating tumour DNA (ctDNA) in breast cancer, from detecting minimal residual disease in early-stage disease to guiding targeted therapy in the metastatic setting, and the hurdles that remain before its routine use.

Dr Gabriela Franco Katz et al. then consider how to select adjuvant therapy for patients with melanoma after neoadjuvant treatment, reviewing pivotal trials, pathological response as a surrogate endpoint and emerging biomarkers, particularly for patients with residual disease.

Turning to our review articles, Dr Amena Ahmad et al. examine the perioperative management of urothelial carcinoma, including the shift towards perioperative enfortumab vedotin plus pembrolizumab in muscle-invasive bladder cancer, the distinct challenges of upper tract disease and the move towards individualized, biomarker-driven care.

Dr Hidenobu Nakagama and Dr Toshinari Yamashita summarize phase III evidence for trophoblast cell-surface antigen 2 (TROP2)-targeting ADCs in metastatic triple-negative breast cancer, and the questions of agent selection, sequencing and toxicity management as these agents move into earlier lines.

Dr Ahmed Maklad and Dr Rafea Ismael Hakki review the contemporary management of gastrointestinal cancers, describing the shift to biomarker-driven precision oncology while highlighting persistent disparities in diagnosis, testing and outcomes, and the need for equitable implementation.

Dr Margaret Comer et al. explore the microbiome and mycobiome in oesophageal cancer, examining how bacterial and fungal dysbiosis may influence carcinogenesis, progression and response to immunotherapy, and the potential of microbiome-directed approaches.

Finally, Dr Tycel Phillips reflects on frontline treatment for diffuse large B-cell lymphoma in 2026, from the success of polatuzumab in POLARIX to emerging immune-based and chemotherapy-free approaches, including for older and less fit patients.

The editors of *touchREVIEWS in Oncology & Haematology* and myself would like to thank all contributing authors for their expertise, our reviewers for their insights, and our Editorial Board and society partners for their continued dedication. We hope this issue offers inspiration and practical guidance in the rapidly evolving fields of oncology and hematology. □