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**Prostanoid Metabolic Enzymes in Endometrial Cancer**

Graham, J.¹; Cummings, M.¹; Mappa, G.¹; Cattrall, J.W.S.²; O'Donovan, C.²; Mukhtar, S.²; Sundara, S.V.²; Ashraf, S.²; Hutson, R.³; Wilkinson, N.⁴; Orsi, N.M.¹

1. Leeds Institute of Cancer and Pathology Leeds United Kingdom;
2. University of Leeds School of Medicine Leeds United Kingdom;
3. St James University Hospital Leeds United Kingdom;
4. Department of Histopathology, St James University Hospital Leeds United Kingdom

**Abstract Text**

**Purpose:** Endometrial cancer (EC) is the commonest gynaecological cancer in the UK. Type I ECs are oestrogen sensitive, develop from premalignant hyperplasia and are low-medium grade. Type II ECs arise de novo, are high grade and have a worse prognosis. Given the role of prostaglandin-endoperoxide synthase (PTGS; cyclooxygenase) products prostaglandin (PG)F2 alpha and PGE2 in cancer, this study profiled them and their synthetic/catabolic enzymes in EC carcinogenesis.

**Methods:** PTGS1 and PTGS2 expression profiles were assessed by genome-wide expression microarray of laser capture microdissected endometrial specimens (n=81 normal, 30 hyperplastic, 118 cancerous). Matched tissue samples were analysed by mass spectrometry for PGF2 alpha, PGE2 and its inactive metabolite dihydro-15-keto PGE2 and normalised to protein. Tissue microarrays (n=419 ECs) were immunohistochemically stained for PTGS1, PTGS2 and the PG catabolic enzyme hydroxyprostaglandin dehydrogenase (HPGD).

**Results:** PTGS1 and HPGD were significantly underexpressed in hyperplasia and both cancer types (p<0.05). PTGS2 was significantly underexpressed in hyperplasia and type II cancers only (p<0.05). Immunohistochemistry reveals that, using a cut-off of 2.5, HPGD showed significantly stronger positivity in type I cancers, PTGS1 in type II cancers. Only HPGD had prognostic significance, where HPGD<2.5 predicted worse overall (log rank p<0.01) and progression free survival (p<0.05). Although PGE2 and PGF2alpha concentrations were comparable across samples, dihydro 15-keto PGE2 levels were significantly lower in both cancer types.

**Conclusions:** Surprisingly, given their purported roles in carcinogenesis, levels of PGE2 and PGF2alpha; were not elevated in hyperplastic/neoplastic endometrium, which may reflect their function in endometrial physiology. However, the significantly decreased levels of dihydro 15-keto PGE2 in EC may reflect the decreased overall HPGD expression and, in turn, prostanoid turnover.