Photomedical approaches for the diagnosis and treatment of gynecologic cancers

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Malignant tumors of the female reproductive organs have a high incidence and mortality. Despite modern technology, diagnostics and therapeutics have substantial limitations. Detection of autofluorescence, photosensitizer mediated fluorescence, and near-infrared-spectra are new approaches to diagnose gynecologic malignancies and premalignant lesions. Photodynamic therapy (PDT) is currently being evaluated for the treatment of gynecologic cancers and precancers. New porphyrin based photosensitizers promise a selective tumor targeting and consequently a selective treatment of surgically not removable cancers. The present article summarizes the role of photomedicine in diagnostics and treatments of malignant disease of the female genital tract. Interactions between PDT and the immune system are discussed.

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