

Role of the microenvironment

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The bone marrow is the natural niche of normal and malignant plasma cells and it is essential for the survival, proliferation and differentiation of malignant Multiple Myeloma (MM) cells. We and others have also shown that MM cell-stroma interactions can lead to secretion of strong immune suppressive factors. We and others have recently discovered that the stromal cells of bone marrow microenvironment can induce a cell-cell adhesion mediated **immune resistance mechanism in MM cells against cytotoxic machinery of T cells, NK cells and NK cell mediated ADCC**. The possible mechanisms and the potential therapeutic modulation of this specific immune resistance mechanism will be highlighted and discussed.