Biomarcatori e Tecniche di Diagnostica per Immagini nella Valutazione dell'Infiammazione in Oncologia

2° Edizione

RUOLO DELL'IMAGING PET PER L'IDENTIFICAZIONE DELL'IPOSSIA TUMORALE

Maria Picchio

Università Vita-Salute San Raffaele

U.O. Medicina Nucleare, IRCCS Ospedale San Raffaele

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Aula Multimediale Campus

Centro di Riferimento Oncologico di Aviano,

Via Franco Gallini, 2– Aviano (PN)

Tumour Hypoxia: needs and priorities

The presence of hypoxia is a **characteristic feature** of solid tumors and has been identified in many neoplasms, related to changes in gene expression/genetic instability as a result of its resistance to apoptosis and decreased DNA repair.

It favors the survival of malignant cells in a hostile environment and the expression of an **aggressive phenotype** that can increase the risk of tumor metastasis

Hypoxia is the cause of **resistance to radiotherapy**. The reduced presence of oxygen decreases the free formation of radicals which radiotherapy relies on to cause DNA damage to tumor cells

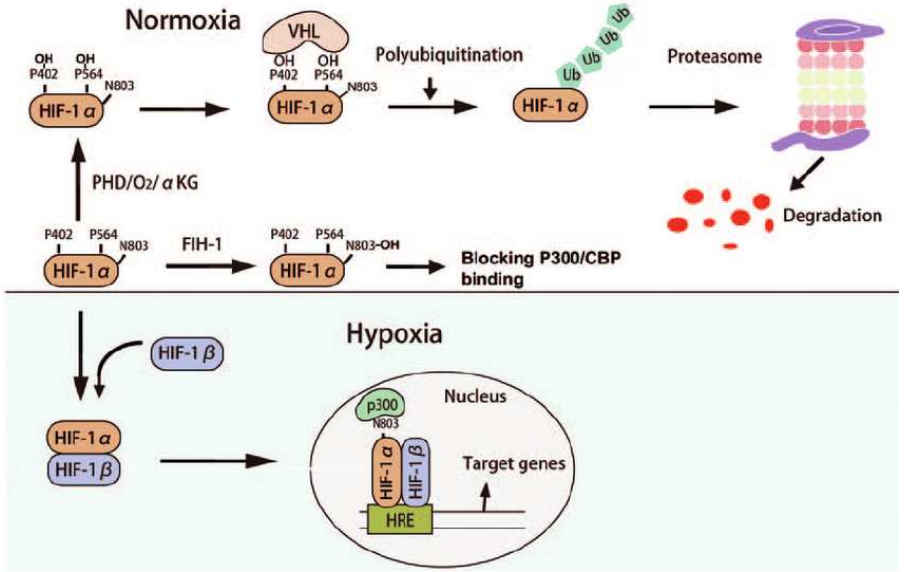
Hypoxic tumors present **chemotherapeutic resistance** due to reduced drug penetration (caused by the irregular vascularization), extracellular acidification, and genomic instability and resistance to apoptosis.

HIF: Hypoxia Inducible Factor

HIF is a transcription factor that plays a key role in the response of cells to oxygen levels. HIF is a heterodimer of α- and β-subunits where the α-subunit is translated constitutively but has a very short half-life under normal oxygen concentrations.

During hypoxic condition the HIF α-subunit is activated, binds the β-subunits leading to composition of the heterodimeric HIF-1

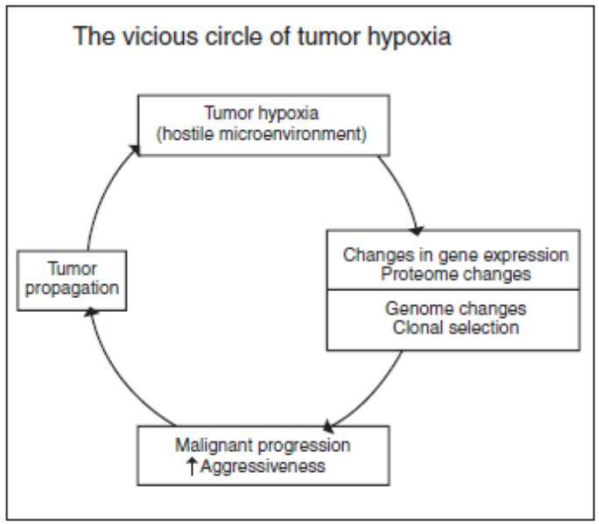
HIF-1 regulates the transcription of several genes including vascular epithelial growth factor (VEGF), glycolytic enzymes, glucose transporters (Glut-1), pH regulators (carbonic anidrase IX, CA IX).

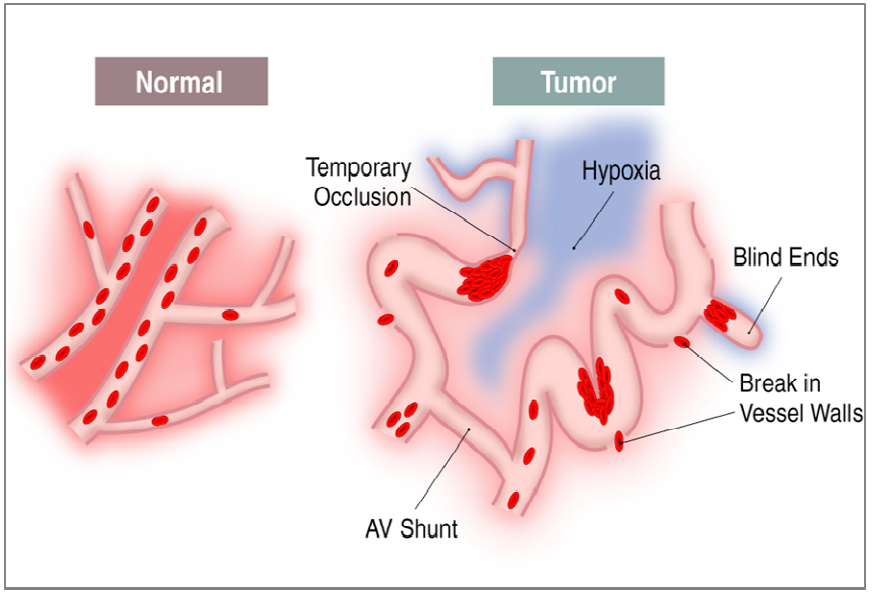


Tumour Hypoxia: needs and priorities

Negative prognostic factor

- Aggressive tumour phenotype
- Resistance to therapy





(Brown J.M. et al. Nature Reviews Cancer 2004)

The heterogeneity of cancer and the lack of a universal hypoxia detection tracer/technique presents a challenge for the correlation of hypoxia with treatment planning and prognosis.

Why investigating tumour hypoxia?

- To characterize **tumor heterogeneity**
- To evaluate **tumor prognosis**
- To predict **treatment response**
- To **select patients** who might benefit from "hypoxia-directed therapies" or intensive treatment approach (i.e RT with boost on hypoxic areas; hypoxia as therapeutic target)

How to investigate tumor hypoxia?

Direct oxygenation measurement

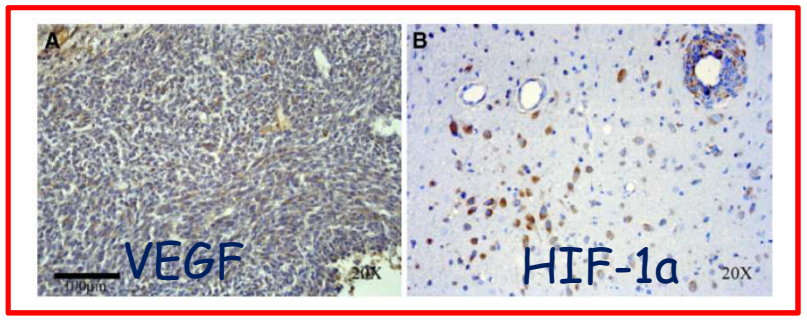
Polarographic oxygen (Eppendorf) electrodes

Limits of direct oxygenation measurements:

- Invasiveness
- Feasibility to only superficially assessable tumors
- Oxygenation status solely in a particular region
- Cannot reliably monitor hypoxia levels over time

How to investigate tumor hypoxia?

Hypoxia biomarkers: exogenous (pimonidazole) and endogenous (HIF 1a, CA-IX, VEGF and GLUT-1)



Equivocal results regarding the correlation between expression of hypoxia biomarkers and patient outcome (differential expression of these biomarkers in specific tumor microenvironment)

In vivo Imaging

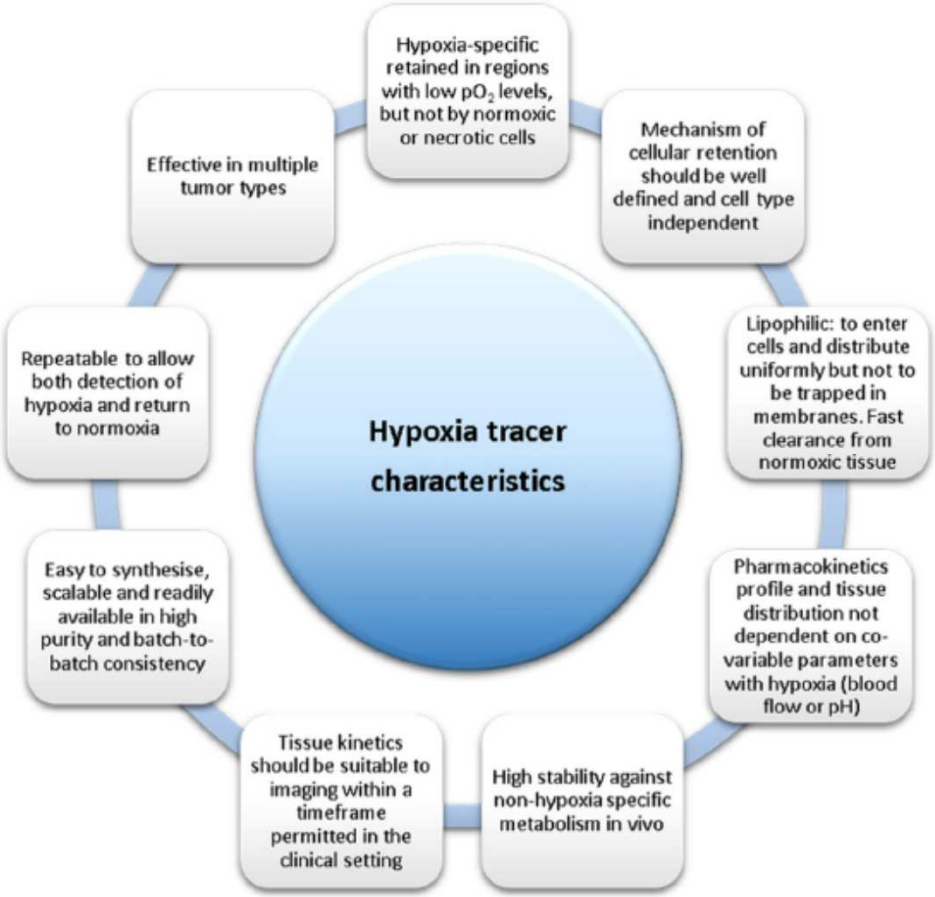
Available bioimaging modalities: principal properties and applications

Technique / Feature	Optical	MRI	PET	SPECT	X-ray CT
EM radiation	Visible / NIR	Radiowaves	High energy γ rays	Lower energy γ rays	X-ray
Spatial resolution	15-1000 mm	4-100 µm 1 mm fMRI	1-2 mm	1-2 mm	12-50 µm 50-200 µm
Depth	< 1cm	No limit	No limit	No limit	No limit
Sensitivity to probe	µg / mg	µg / mg	ng	ng	-
Key use	Visualization of cells	Anatomical / functional brain imaging	Metabolic imaging		Lung and bone tumor imaging

Mirabello et al. Frontiers in Chemistry, 2018

In vivo Imaging

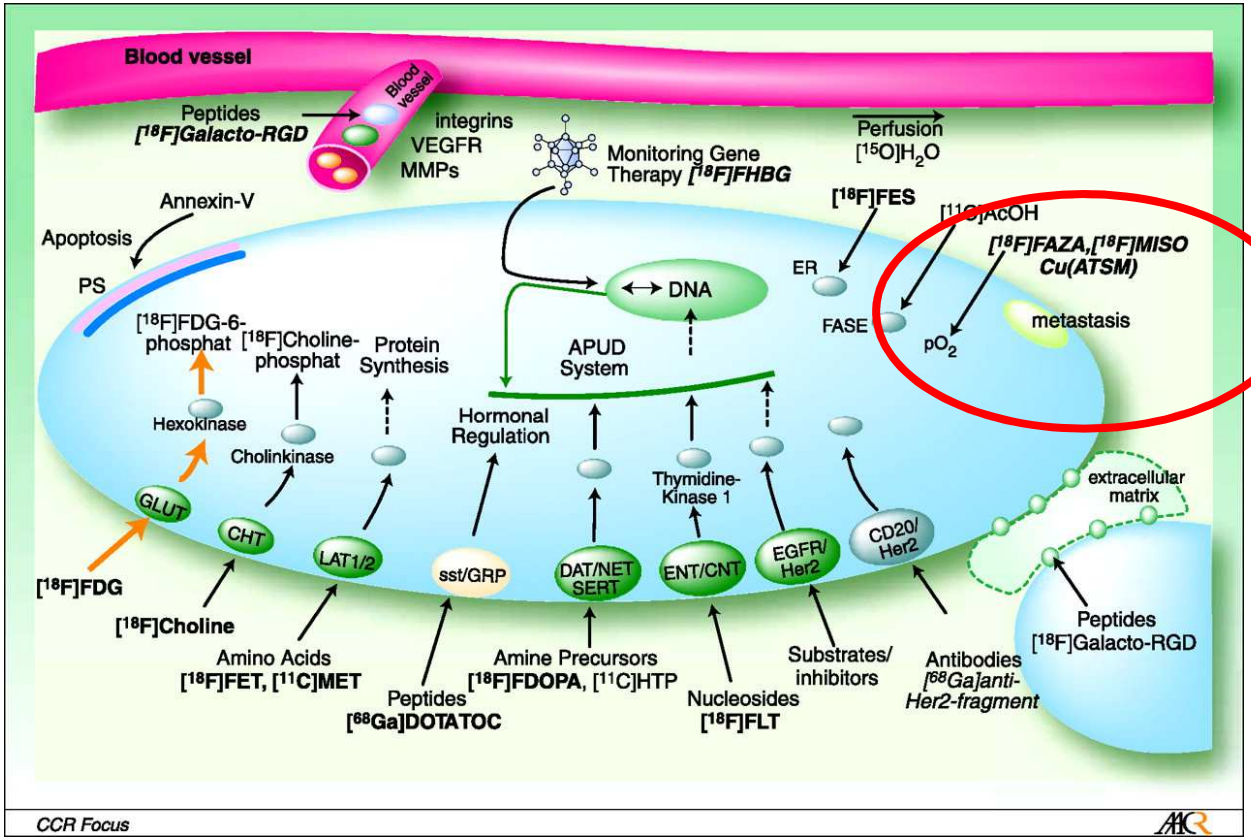
Necessary criteria to be considered in the development of a hypoxia tracer. Ideal hypoxia tracer characteristics



Mirabello et al. Frontiers in Chemistry, 2018

Molecular Imaging (PET)

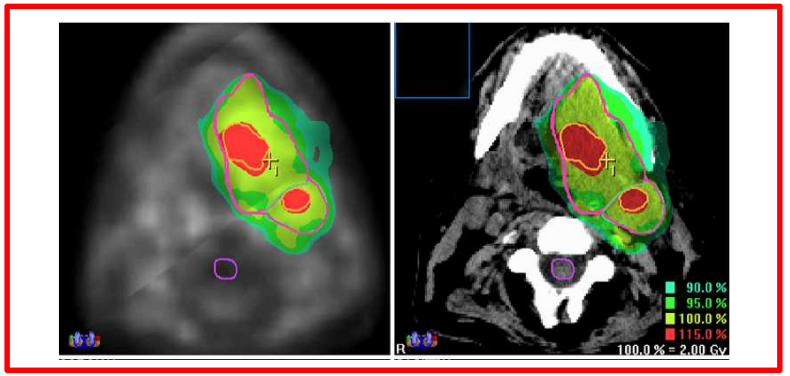
PET tracers



Clinical Cancer Research

PET to investigate tumor hypoxia

PET Imaging



- Non invasive (Clinically feasible)
- Identification and quantification of regional tumor tissue hypoxia in superficial and deep tumors
- Representative of global tumor heterogeneity

PET to investigate tumor hypoxia

TABLE 1 | Summary of clinical imaging findings and recommendations for the use of most common hypoxia tracers.

Tumor / Tracer	[^{18}F]FMISO	[^{18}F]F-HX4	[^{18}F]FAZA	[^{18}F]FETNIM	[^{18}F]F-EF5	[^{18}F]F-RP170	^{64}CuCu(ATSM)
Brain							
Head and neck							
Breast							
Sarcoma							
Lung							
Lymphoma							
Renal							
Liver							
Colorectal							
Bladder							
Cervical							
Prostate							

Adapted from Fleming et al. (2014).

Yes, good clinical data obtained.

Recommended favorable preclinical/metabolic data.

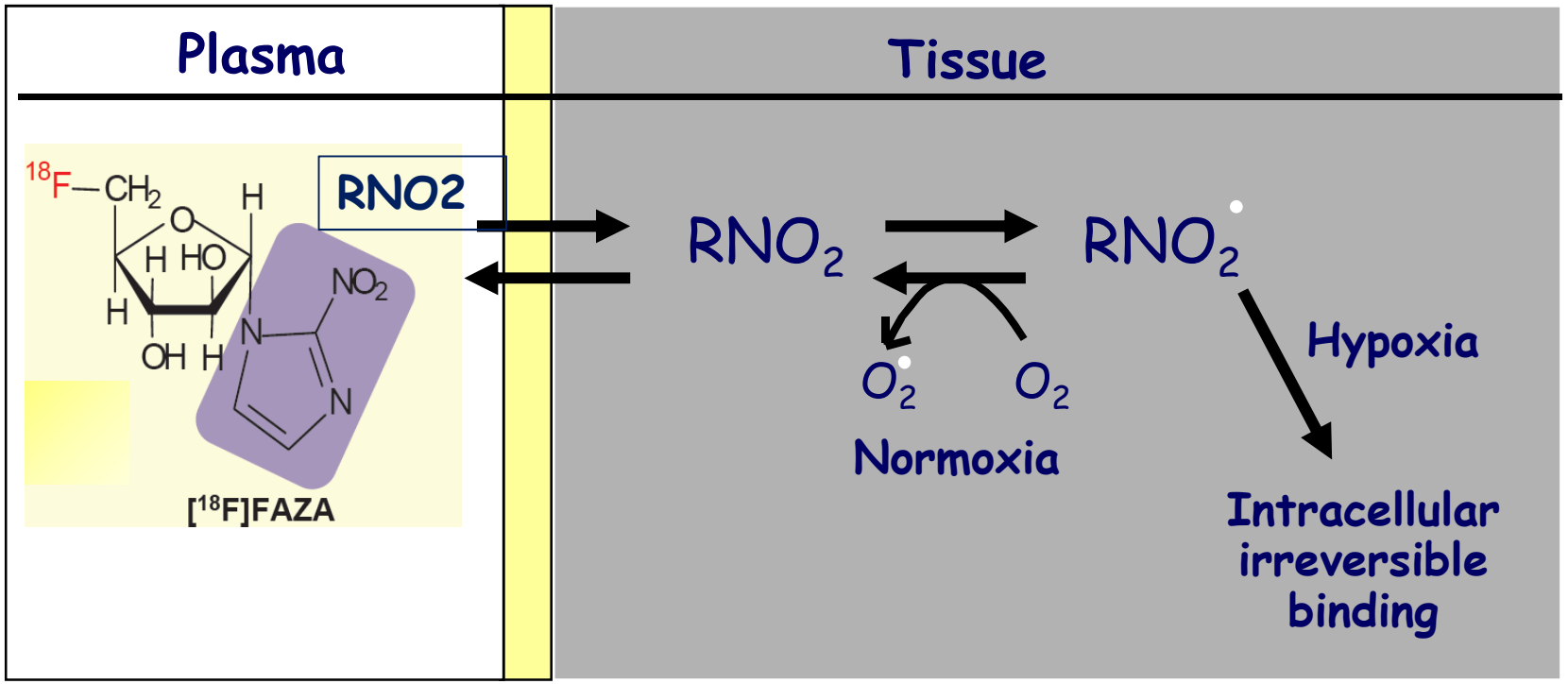
Not recommended, unfavorable preclinical/metabolic data.

No, poor clinical data.

Mirabello et al. Frontiers in Chemistry, 2018

Tumour hypoxia PET Imaging: 18F-FAZA

Nitroimidazoles (fluoroazomycin arabinoside)



RNO2: Nitro functional group

Bioreductive metabolism of nitroimidazoles: accumulation due to reduction

18F-FAZA hypoxia PET Imaging: Human Studies

Halmos et al. Clin Nuc Med 2014

Publication	No. Patients	Tumor Site (n)	Definition of Hypoxic Volume	Percentage of Patients With Increased ^{18}F-FAZA Uptake (ie, hypoxia)
Grosu et al[16] and Souvatzoglou et al[43]	18	Head and neck (18)	T/M ≥1.5*	83
Postema et al[44]	50	Head and neck (9)	Visual inspection and T/B ratio ≥1.2	66
		Lymphoma (21)		14
		High-grade glioma (7)		100
		Lung (13)		54
Schuetz et al[45]	15	Cervix (15)	T/M ≥1.2†	33
Shi et al[46]	5	Head and neck (5)	Different kinetic models	80
Garcia-Parra et al[47]	14	Prostate (14)	T/B ratio‡	0
Mortensen et al[48]	40	Head and neck (40)	T/M ≥1.4§	63
Bollineni et al[49]	11	Lung (11)	T/B ratio ≥1.2 and T/B ratio ≥1.4	100

- Savi A et al. First evaluation of PET based **human biodistribution** and dosimetry of 18F-FAZA, a tracer for imaging tumor hypoxia. J Nucl Med. **2017**;58:1224-1229.
- Mapelli P et al. Concomitant **Lung Cancer** and **Gastrointestinal Stromal Tumor**: First Report of Hypoxia Imaging With 18F-FAZA PET/CT. Clin Nucl Med. **2017**.
- Mapelli P et al. Hypoxia 18F-FAZA PET/CT imaging in **lung cancer** and **high-grade glioma**: open issues in clinical application. Clin Transl Imaging **2017**
- Mapelli P et al. 18F-FAZA PET/CT Hypoxia Imaging of **High-Grade Glioma** Before and After Radiotherapy. Clinical Nuclear Medicine **2017**
- Mapelli P et al. 18F-FAZA PET/CT in the preoperative evaluation of **NSCLC**: comparison with 18F-FDG and immunohistochemistry. Curr Radiopharm. **2018**
- Quartuccio et al. Hypoxia PET imaging beyond 18F-FMISO in patients with high-grade glioma: 18F-FAZA and other hypoxia radiotracers. Clin Transl Imaging **2020**
- Mapelli P and Picchio M. 18F-FAZA PET imaging in tumor hypoxia: A focus on high-grade glioma. **IJBM 2020**

Our rational

- Lack of studies matching hypoxia in specific hypoxic subvolumes of whole tumour specimen (heterogeneity of tumor hypoxia within the tumour mass)
- No consensus over the interpretation and analysis of hypoxia-positive areas

Personalized Image-guided treatment

OSR Funded Grants in Hypoxia PET Molecular Imaging (18F-FAZA)

Respiratory gated PET/CT technique
and FAZA for the evaluation of hypoxia
in **NSCLC (FAZA-lung)**
Ricerca Finalizzata GR-1575612 - PI: M. Picchio

Prognostic value of FAZA PET/CT in **glioma patients**
referred to chemo-radiation therapy: comparison with
MRI and correlation with molecular markers of hypoxia
(FAZA-glioma)
AIRC IG 2014 Id.1524 - PI: M. Picchio

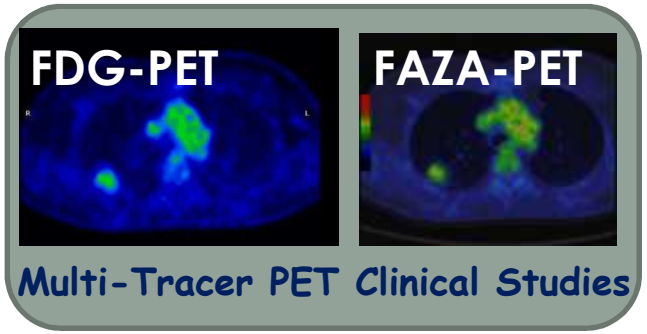
AIRC
Con la ricerca,
contro il cancro.

The role of 18F-FAZA PET Imaging technique
in detecting LN metastases in Renal cell
carcinoma pts **(FAZA RCC LNI)**
GR-2013-02357486 - Group Leader: M. Picchio

Decoding malignant glioma heterogeneity by fully hybrid
PET/MR for HYpoxia, PERfusion and Diffusion
Spatial habitat imaging: the **HYPERDIrect study**
Ricerca Finalizzata GR-2018-12365670 - PI: A. Castellano

Project FAZA-lung cancer

Phase 1 clinical Study



- Biodistribution and dosimetry evaluation
- Evaluation of tumor characterization and heterogeneity by comparing FDG and FAZA-PET/CT with immunoistochemical hypoxia markers of the surgical specimen
- Imaging Protocol optimisation

First Evaluation of PET-Based Human Biodistribution and Dosimetry of ^{18}F-FAZA, a Tracer for Imaging Tumor Hypoxia

Annarita Savi[1], Elena Incerti[1], Federico Fallanca[1], Valentino Bettinardi[1], Francesca Rossetti[2], Cristina Monterisi[3], Antonia Compierchio[1], Giampiero Negri[2], Piero Zannini[2], Luigi Gianolli[1], and Maria Picchio[1]

[1]Nuclear Medicine Department, IRCCS San Raffaele Scientific Institute, Milan, Italy; [2]Thoracic Surgery Department, IRCCS San Raffaele Scientific Institute, Milan, Italy; and [3]University of Milano–Bicocca, Milan, Italy

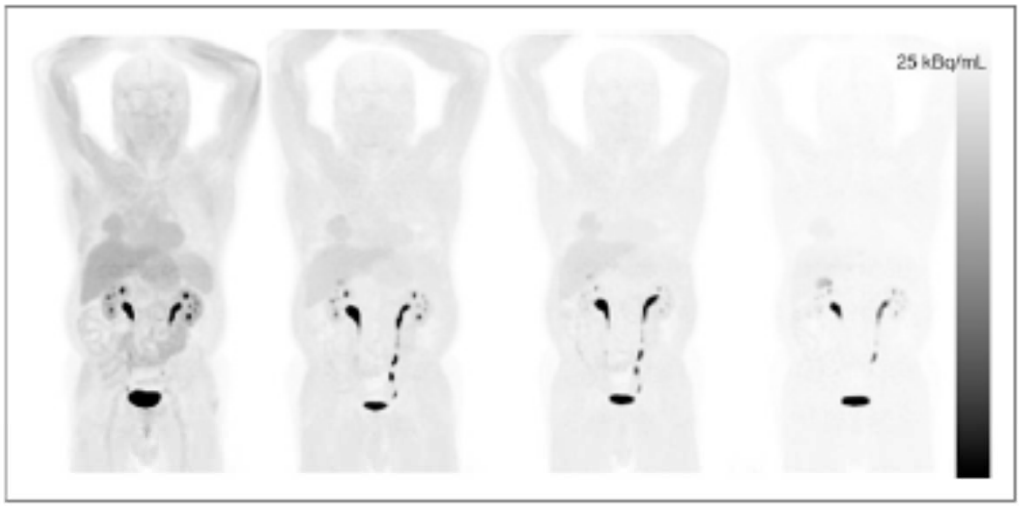


FIGURE 1. Coronal images of representative patient at 10, 60, 120, and 240 min (from left to right) after injection of ^{18}F-FAZA.

The biodistribution and internal dosimetry profiles for ^{18}F-FAZA in humans indicate a favorable radiation risk profile, thus making the use of whole-body ^{18}F-FAZA PET/CT feasible for evaluating clinical hypoxia and safe for consecutive studies when clinically required.

TABLE 2
Residence Times of ^{18}F-FAZA in Measured Source Organs

Source organ	Time
Brain	0.014 ± 0.002
Gallbladder content	0.019 ± 0.001
Intestine	0.013 ± 0.005
Heart content	0.018 ± 0.002
Kidneys	0.025 ± 0.003
Liver	0.110 ± 0.019
Lungs	0.036 ± 0.011
Muscle	1.090 ± 0.180
Red marrow	0.034 ± 0.005
Spleen	0.011 ± 0.003
Urinary bladder content at 2 h	0.055 ± 0.009
Urinary bladder content at 4 h	0.081 ± 0.008
Remainder of body at 2 h	1.130 ± 0.320
Remainder of body at 4 h	1.100 ± 0.310

Data are hours (mean ± SD; n = 5 patients).

Savi et al. J Nucl Med 2017

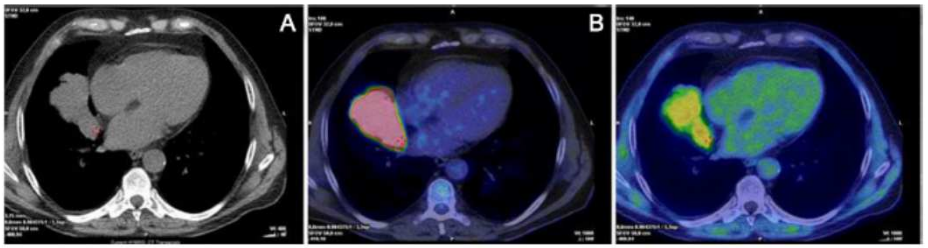
Current Radiopharmaceuticals, 2018, *11*, 50-57

RESEARCH ARTICLE

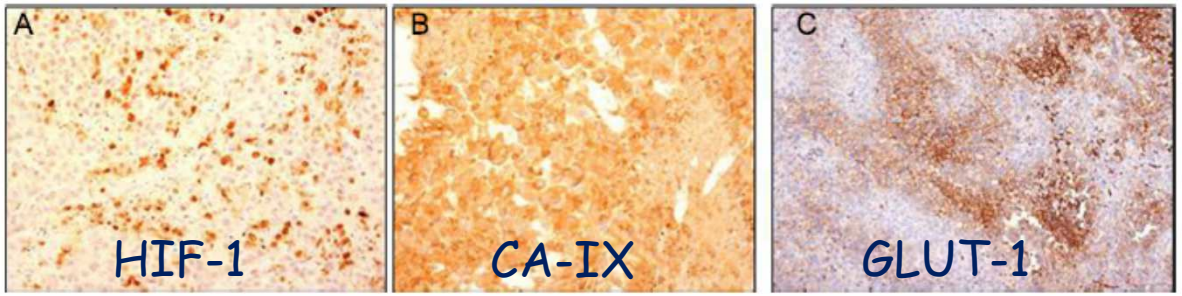
BENTHAM SCIENCE

18F-FAZA PET/CT in the Preoperative Evaluation of NSCLC: Comparison with 18F-FDG and Immunohistochemistry

Paola Mapelli[1,2], Valentino Bettinardi[1], Federico Fallanca[1], Elena Incerti[1], Antonia Compierchio[1], Francesca Rossetti[3], Angela Coliva[1], Annarita Savi[1], Claudio Doglioni[2,4], Giampiero Negri[2,3], Luigi Gianolli[1] and Maria Picchio[1,2,*]

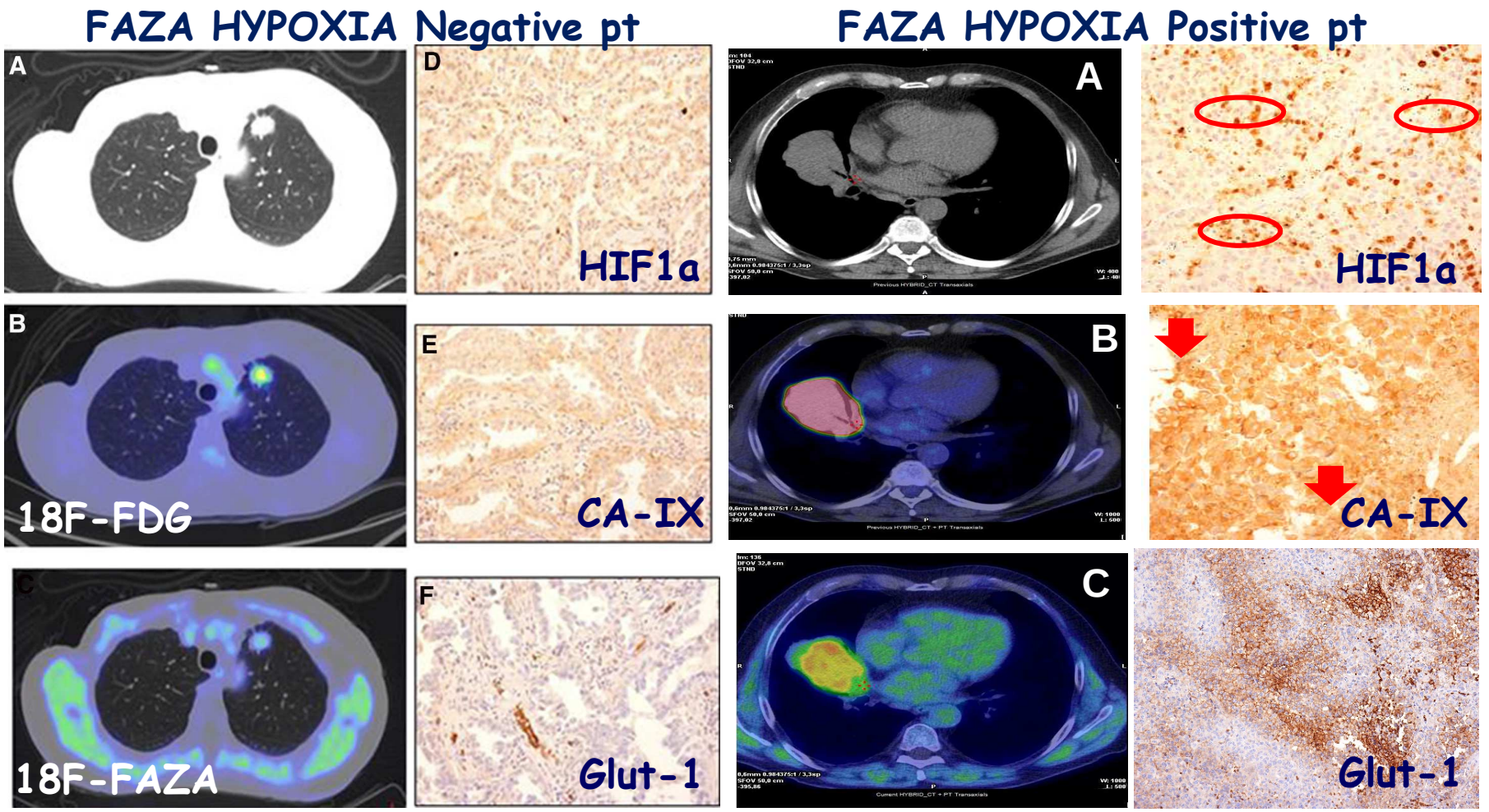


Immunohistochemical analysis supported the presence of hypoxia as seen on 18F-FAZA PET/CT images



Moderate nuclear reactivity in 20% of neoplastic cells for HIF-1 along with expression by numerous intratumoural, inflammatory cells, mainly macrophages (A); **CA-IX** stained 70% of neoplastic cells (B) with moderate intensity and **GLUT-1** showed intense staining in 30% of neoplastic cells (C).

Tumor characterization and heterogeneity
FDG-PET - FAZA-PET - ICH



Adapted from Mapelli P, et al. Clin and Transl Imaging, 2017

Hypoxia PET Imaging in lung cancer
Conclusion

- Safe dosimetry and adequate biodistribution for clinical studies
- Good correlation with immunohistochemistry
- Potential role to adopt hypoxia-directed trp approaches guided by non invasive PET Imaging methods

Project FAZA-glioma

- Guiding tumour sampling (comparison with standard MRI-guided sampling)
- Planning personalized radiation treatment (comparison with standard MRI-based treatment planning)
- Defining the spatial concordance between disease pseudoprogression/radionecrosis and hypoxia
- Predicting patient outcome

18F-FAZA Glioma

Clinical and Translational Imaging
https://doi.org/10.1007/s40336-020-00358-0

MINI - REVIEW

Hypoxia PET imaging beyond ^{18}F-FMISO in patients with high-grade glioma: ^{18}F-FAZA and other hypoxia radiotracers

Received: 11 December 2019 / Accepted: 18 January 2020

Natale Quartuccio[1] · Riccardo Laudicella[2] · Paola Mapelli[3,4] · Priscilla Guglielmo[5] · Daniele Antonio Pizzuto[6] · Michele Boero[5] · Gaspare Arnone[1] · Maria Picchio[3,4] on behalf of Young AIMN Working Group

First author	Study design	Grade of glioma	Image analysis	Semiquantitative parameters	MRI/other imaging modality parameters	Main findings
Postema et al. [24]	Prospective	IV	Visual, semi-quantitative	T/B ratio, SUVmax, relative uptake score (RUS)	N/A	Good imaging properties, acceptable T/B ratios; very promising for assessing the hypoxic fraction
Mapelli et al. [12]	Case report from clinical trial	IV	Visual	N/A	MRI: T1 with and without gadolinium contrast enhancement, T2 and FLAIR sequences, dynamic susceptibility contrast (DSC) and dynamic contrast-enhanced (DCE) perfusion	^{18}F-FAZA PET/CT can identify tumor areas with the highest grade thus accurately guiding stereotactic biopsy ^{18}F-FAZA PET/CT could be used for dose painting with dose escalation on the most hypoxic tumor regions
Mapelli et al. [22]	Case report from clinical trial	IV	Visual, semi-quantitative	T/M ratio	MRI: T1 with and without gadolinium contrast enhancement, T2 and FLAIR sequences	^{18}F-FAZA PET/CT can guide procedures such as stereotactic biopsy, by providing specific information on the most representative tumor areas to be sampled

18F-FAZA Glioma

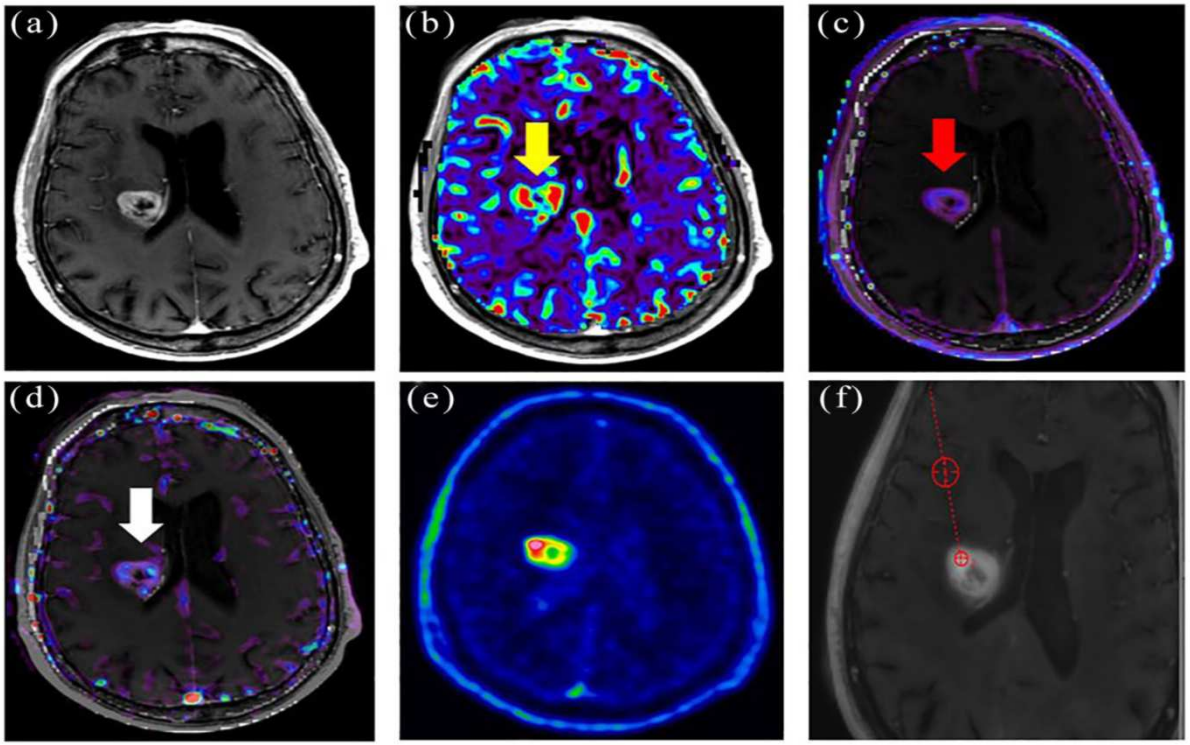
Review

IJBM The International Journal of Biological Markers

18F-FAZA PET imaging in tumor hypoxia: A focus on high-grade glioma

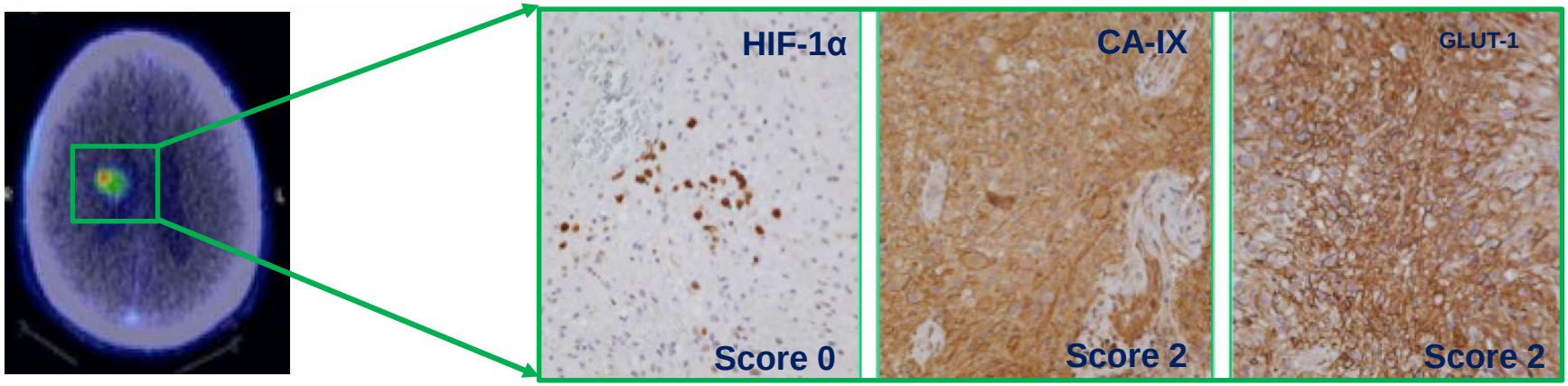
Paola Mapelli[1,2] and Maria Picchio[1,2]

Date received: 5 November 2019; revised: 13 January 2020; accepted: 17 January 2020



Mapelli P, et al. Clin and Transl Imaging, 2017

Project FAZA-glioma
FAZA-PET vs IHC



IHC score system:

0=0-25%
1=25-50%
2=50-75%
3=75-100%

Project FAZA-glioma
Correlation FAZA-Hystopathology

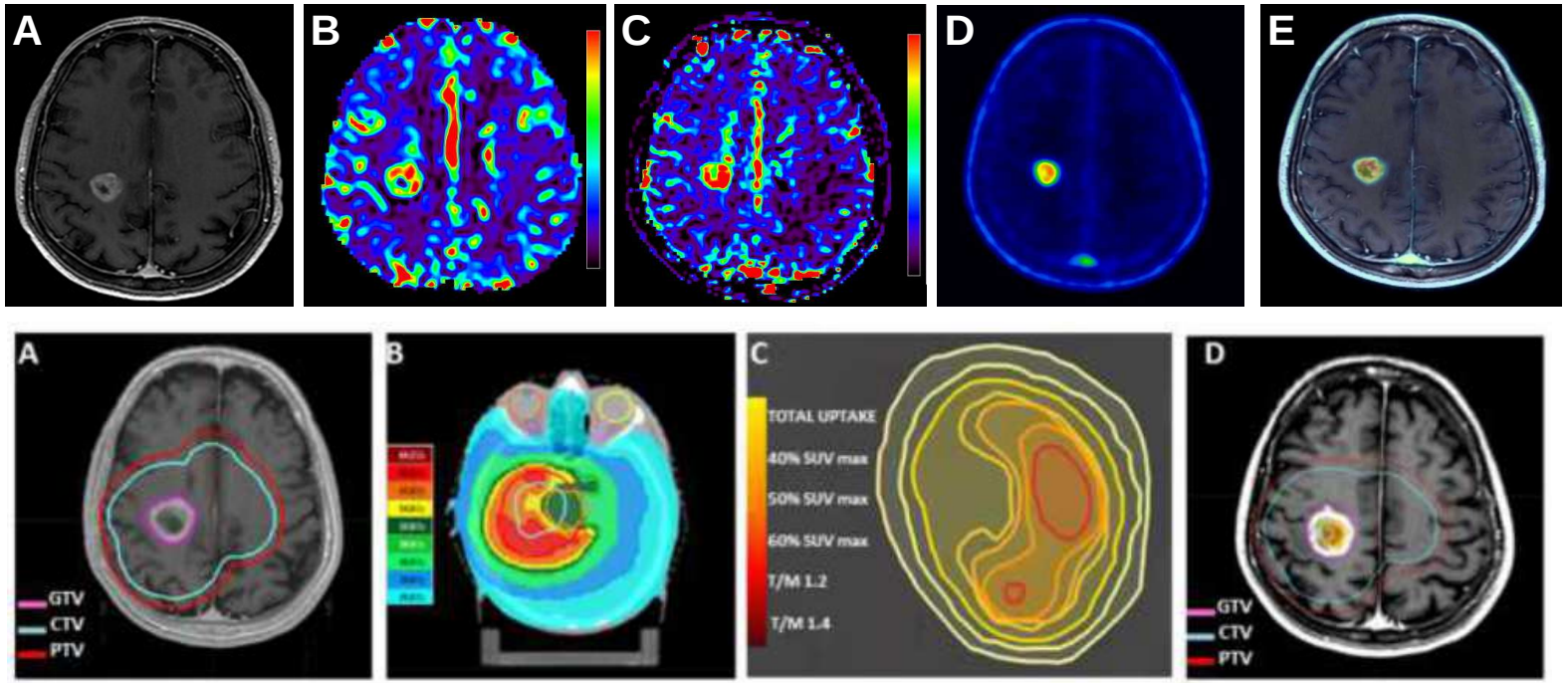
Surgical subgroup (n=7)

	Correlation with PET-derived parameters					
	SUVmax	SUVmean40	SUVmean50	SUVmean60	MTV40-50-60	HV 1.2-1.3-1.4
CA-IX	p=0.0002	p=0.0058	p=0.009	p=0.0153	P=0.0424	p=0.0058
HIF-1 a	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
GUT1	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Ki-67	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
CD31	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns

Biopsy subgroup (n=10)

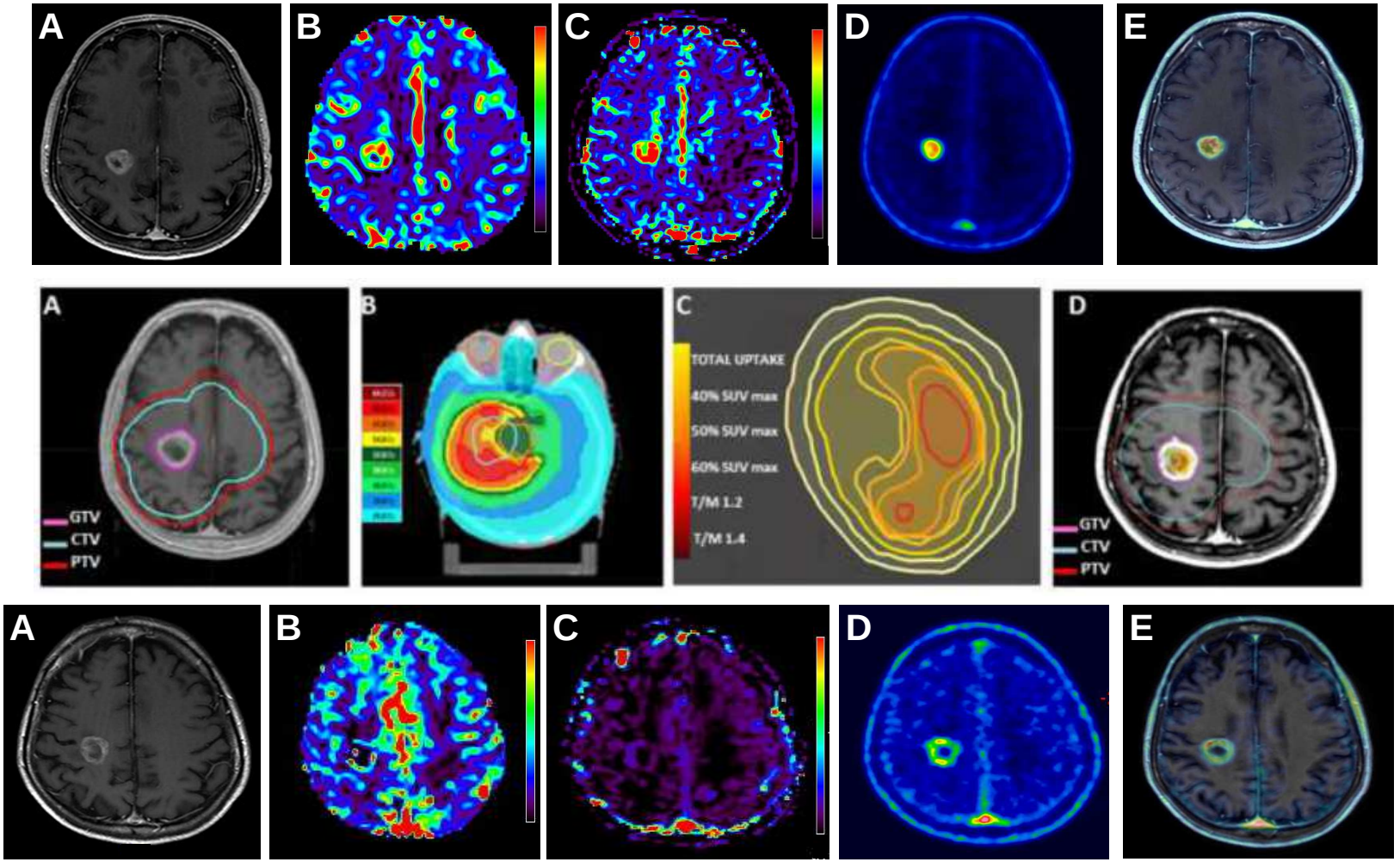
	Correlation with PET-derived parameters					
	SUVmax	SUVmean40	SUVmean50	SUVmean60	MTV40-50-60	HV 1.2-1.3-1.4
CA-IX	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
HIF-1 a	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
GUT1	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Ki-67	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
CD31	p=0.0094	p=0.0107	p=0.0094	p=0.0154	ns	ns

Project FAZA-glioma
FAZA-PET/MR for RT Planning



Mapelli P, et al. Clin Nucl Med. 2017

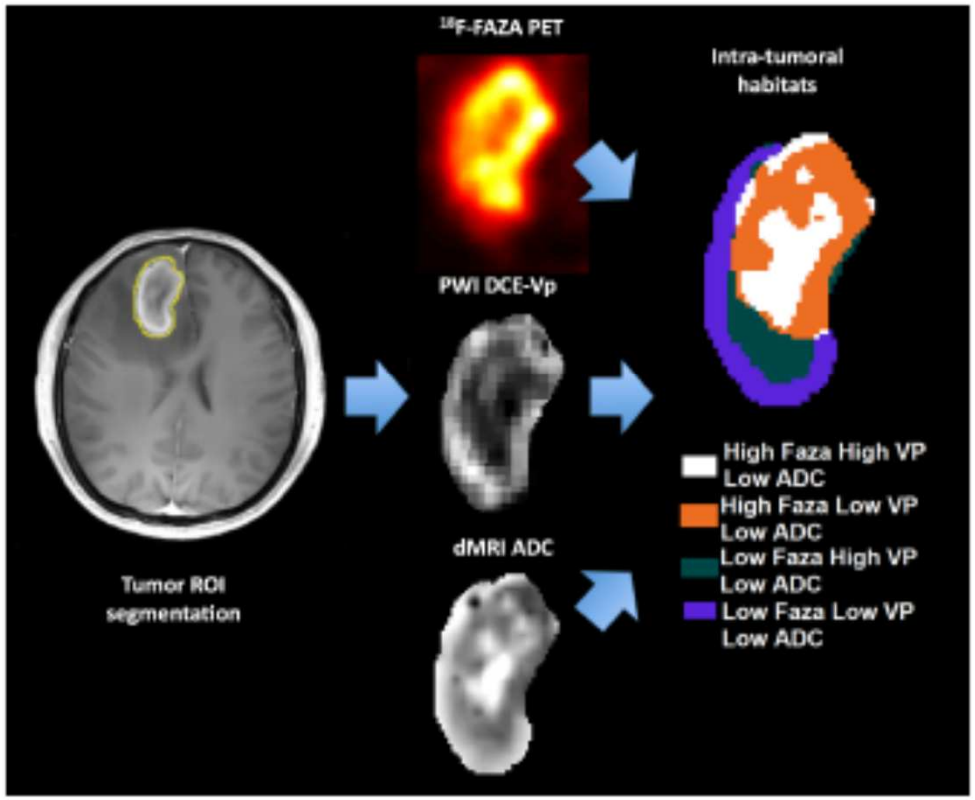
Project FAZA-glioma
FAZA-PET/MR for Treatment Response



Mapelli P, et al. Clin Nucl Med. 2017

Project FAZA-glioma
FAZA-PET/MR spatial concordance

Figure 1. *Distances between the centers of mass of ^{18}F-FAZA, PWI and dMRI for each slice in the tumor ROI.*



Thus, the feasibility of deriving a combined map was exploited, by using the clustering method described in Task 1.2 (see below). The result is showed in Figure 2, where using as input the dMRI ADC, DCE-Vp and ^{18}F-FAZA parametric maps, eight possible intra-tumoral habitats were obtained by thresholding each image using the Otsu algorithm. The enhancing tumor comprised only four of the possible eight clusters. The following spatial mapping was obtained by an

Figure 2 *- HYPERDIrect map, combining multimodality ^{18}F-FAZA PET, PWI and dMRI parametric maps*

Hypoxia PET Imaging in Glioma
Conclusion

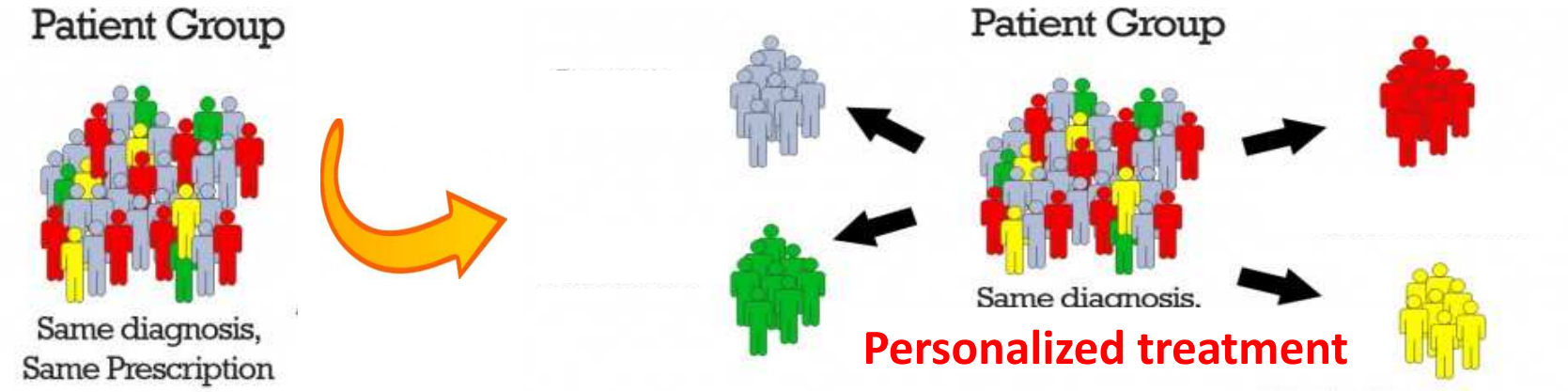
- Valuable tool for guiding stereotactic biopsy in high-grade glioma patients
- Potential role to plan RT tratement planning (radiation boost)
- Support discrimination between pseudoprogression and radionecrosis

Hypoxia PET Imaging
Conclusion and Perspectives

Imaging Biomarkers are essential for clinical development of Hypoxia-targeting treatment

- Although still necessary validation/standardisation of hypoxia Imaging to establish final clinical role

  - ❑ Knowledge on tumor heterogeneity
  - ❑ Evaluation of treatment response and tumour prognosis



Thank you