



University of
BRISTOL



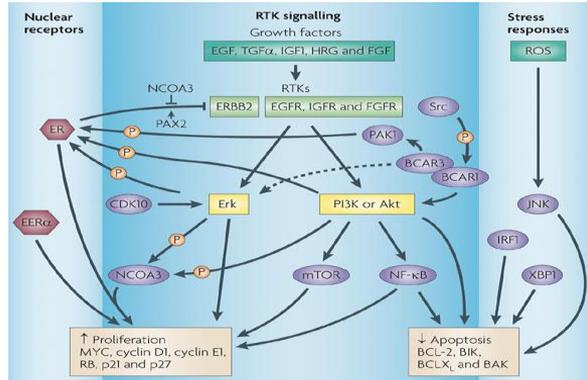
World
Cancer
Research
Fund International

Linking diet, nutrition and physical activity to cancer risk: a systematic review framework for integrating evidence from human, animal and other mechanistic studies

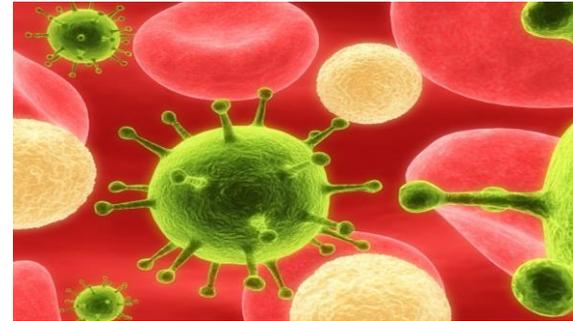


Aim

To develop and publish a framework for carrying out rigorous systematic reviews of mechanistic studies.



Nature Reviews | Cancer



Why is this important?

- ▶ Wealth of data on potential mechanisms often not taken into account.
- ▶ Methods for combining information from human, animal and cell studies are lacking.
- ▶ Need to identify gaps in the research.



Hypothesis to be explored:

High milk consumption is a risk factor for prostate cancer



Analytical approach

- ▶ Large multi-disciplinary group
- ▶ 5 workshops -mixture of presentations with discussion, small group exercises, round table discussions
- ▶ On going searches, and development of methods, feedback to members of the team
- ▶ Regular meetings between PIs and research associates



Stage 1- **Search for mechanisms**



Searching for studies

Incorporate an exhaustive list of mechanistic targets
(**intermediate phenotypes**-eg hallmarks of cancer,
hormones etc)

Three sets of searches:

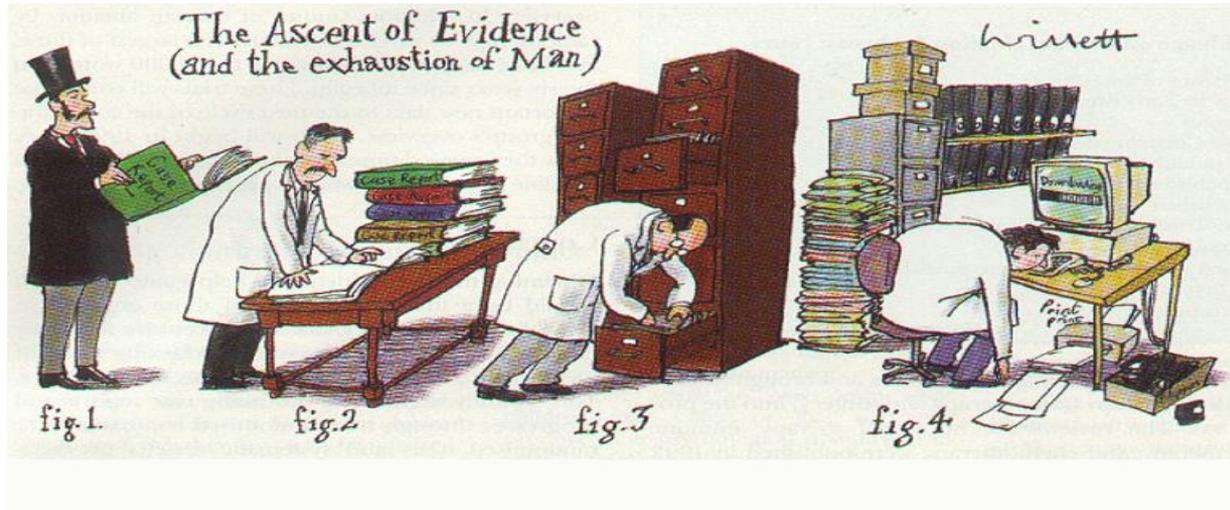
Exposure-Outcome ($E \rightarrow O$)

Exposure-Intermediate phenotype ($E \rightarrow IP$)

Intermediate phenotype and Outcome ($IP \rightarrow O$)



Why automate the search for mechanisms?

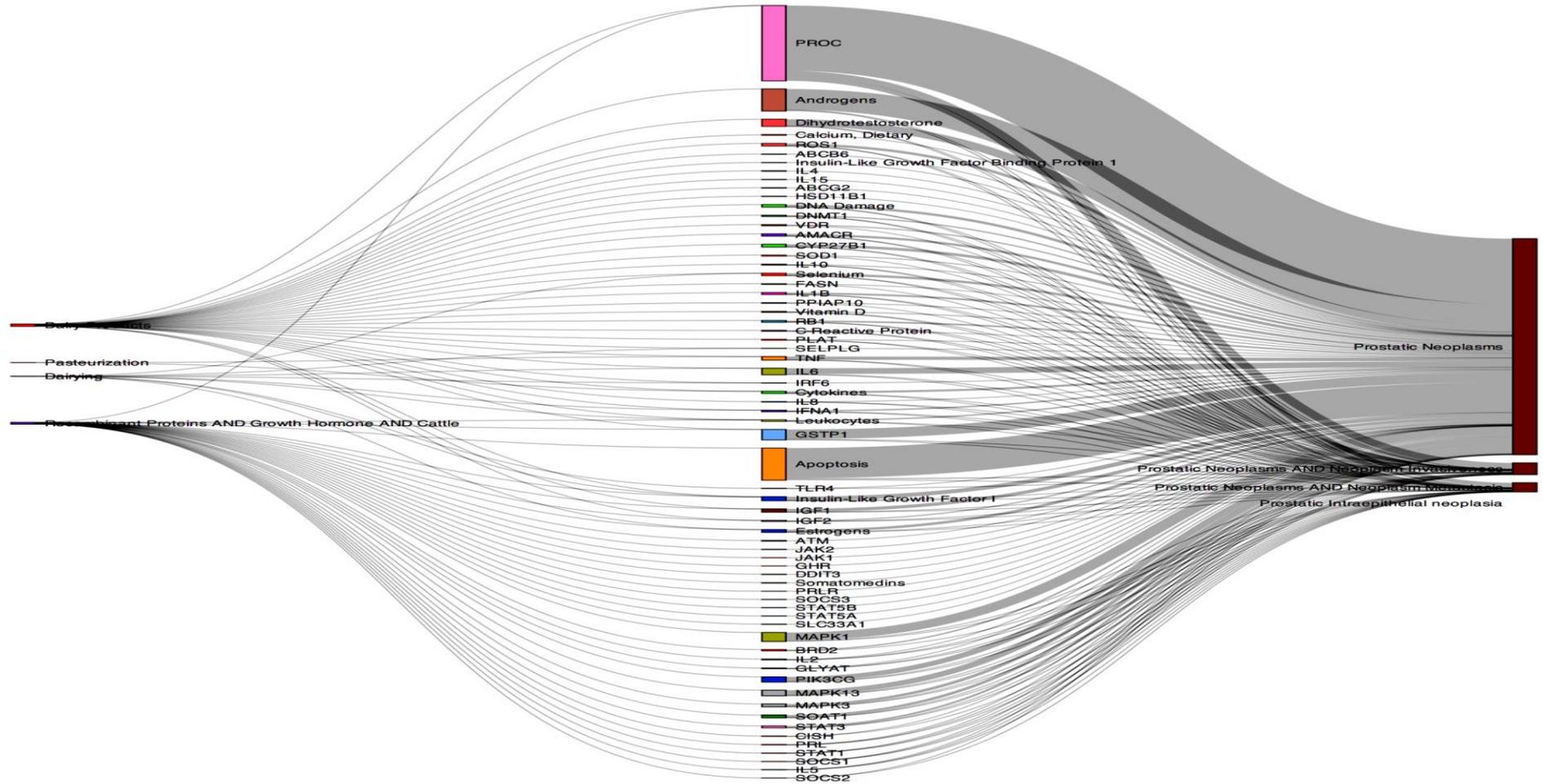


Introducing **TeMMPo: Text Mining for Mechanism Prioritisation** -Tom Gaunt

- ▶ Identifies co-occurrence of MESH headings in scientific publications to indicate papers that link an intermediate mechanism to either an exposure or an outcome.
- ▶ <https://www.temmpo.org.uk/>

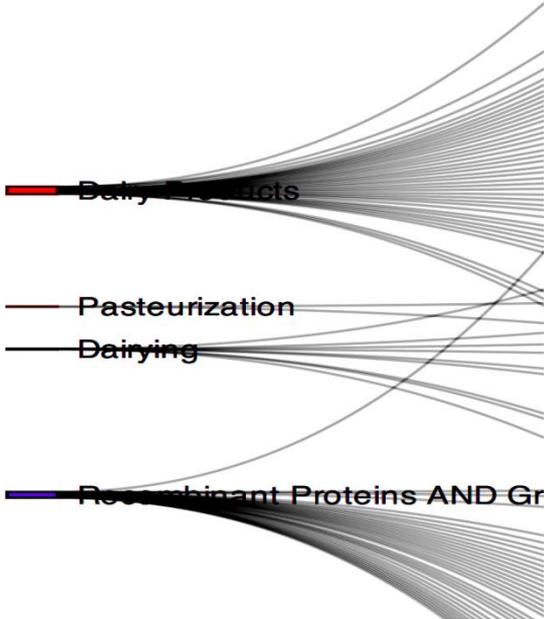


Sankey plot

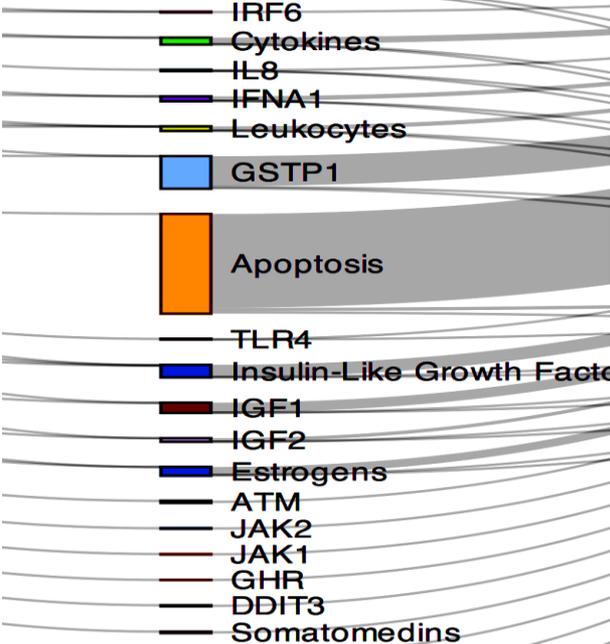


Automated mechanism quantification and display

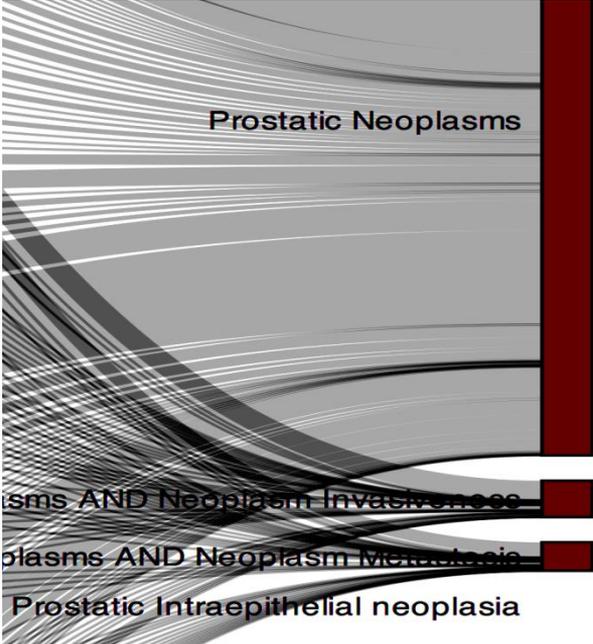
EXPOSURES



INTERMEDIATE MECHANISMS



OUTCOMES



Stage 2-Systematic review of a specific mechanism



Step 1: Specify research objectives

Step 2: Search for studies

Step 3: Apply inclusion/exclusion criteria, including an assessment of relevance

Step 4: Extract data

Step 5: Assess the quality of individual studies

Step 6: Synthesis of data from individual studies

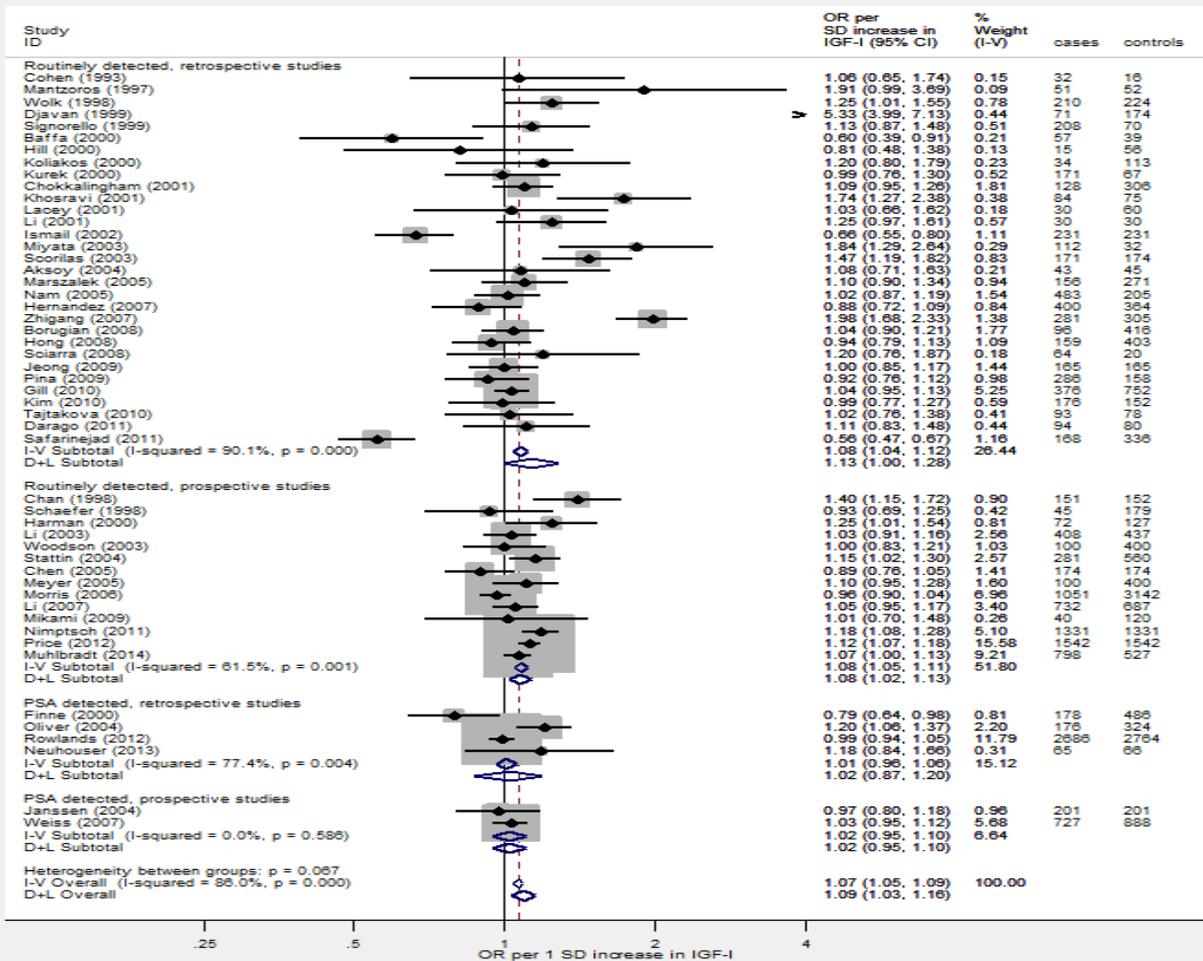
Step 7: Assess strength of overall body of evidence for human and animal studies separately

Step 8: Integrate human and animal studies to develop an evidence based conclusion

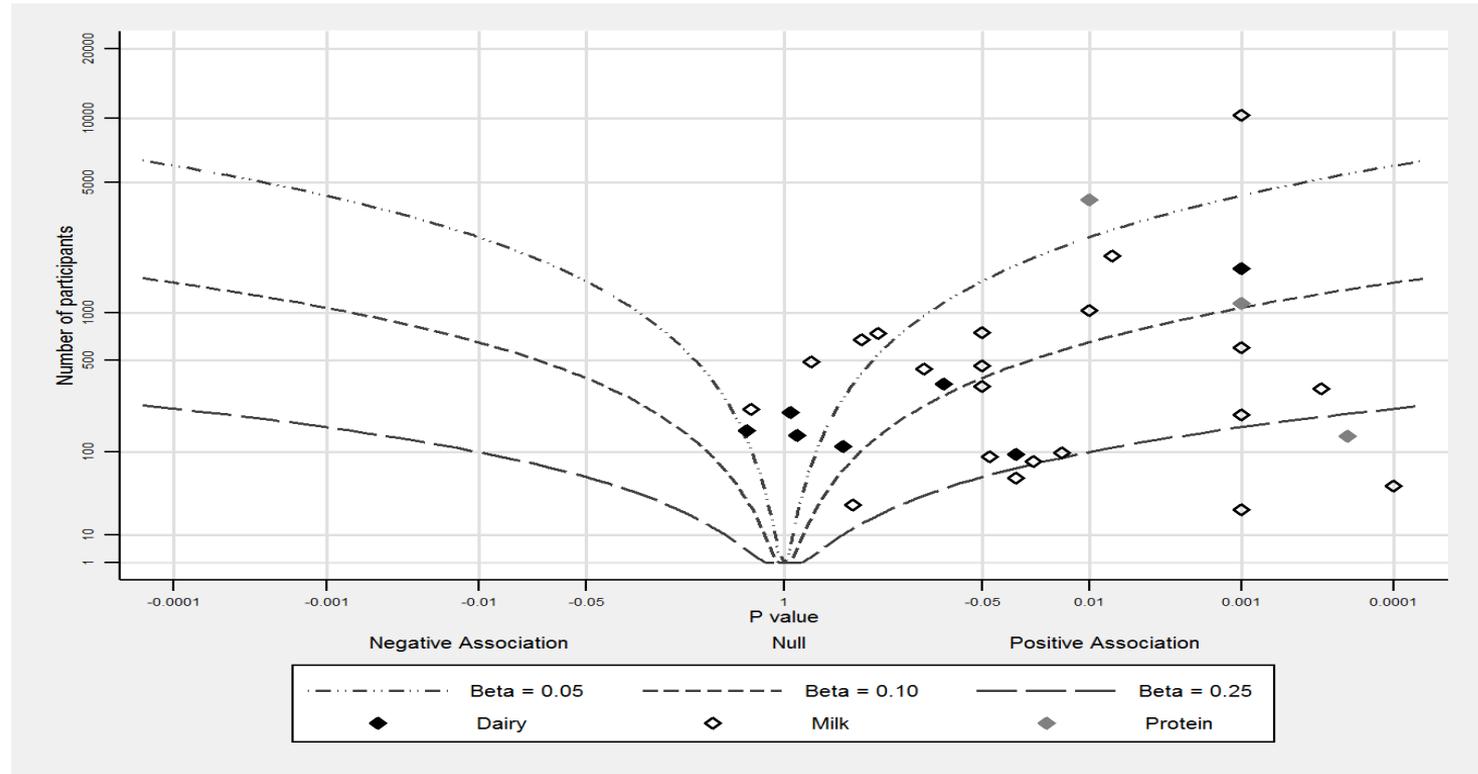
Step 9: Synthesis of supporting evidence from *in vitro* and xenograft models underpinning biological plausibility

Synthesis of disparate data





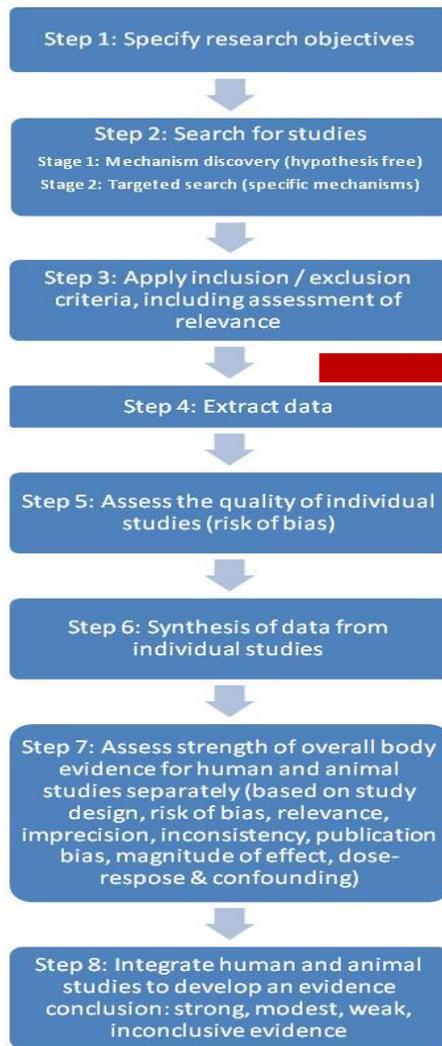
Albatross plot- milk, dairy products and dairy proteins (exposures) and IGF-I (outcome)- Sean Harrison and Julian Higgins



Assessing the relevance of animal and cell studies to human disease



Question 1 - Has the cancer arisen in the animal model rather than being transplanted into the animal?.



Cell line and animal studies where a tumour is transplanted into the animal model

Supportive evidence from *in vitro* and xenograft models underpinning biological plausibility

Step 7- GRADE -Assessment of the relevance of individual animal studies to the research question being addressed (b)

Exposure

- Comparable route?
- Comparable level and frequency?
- Chemically induced tumour model?

Outcome

- Appropriate follow-up time?
- Does the outcome assessed mimic outcomes in humans?

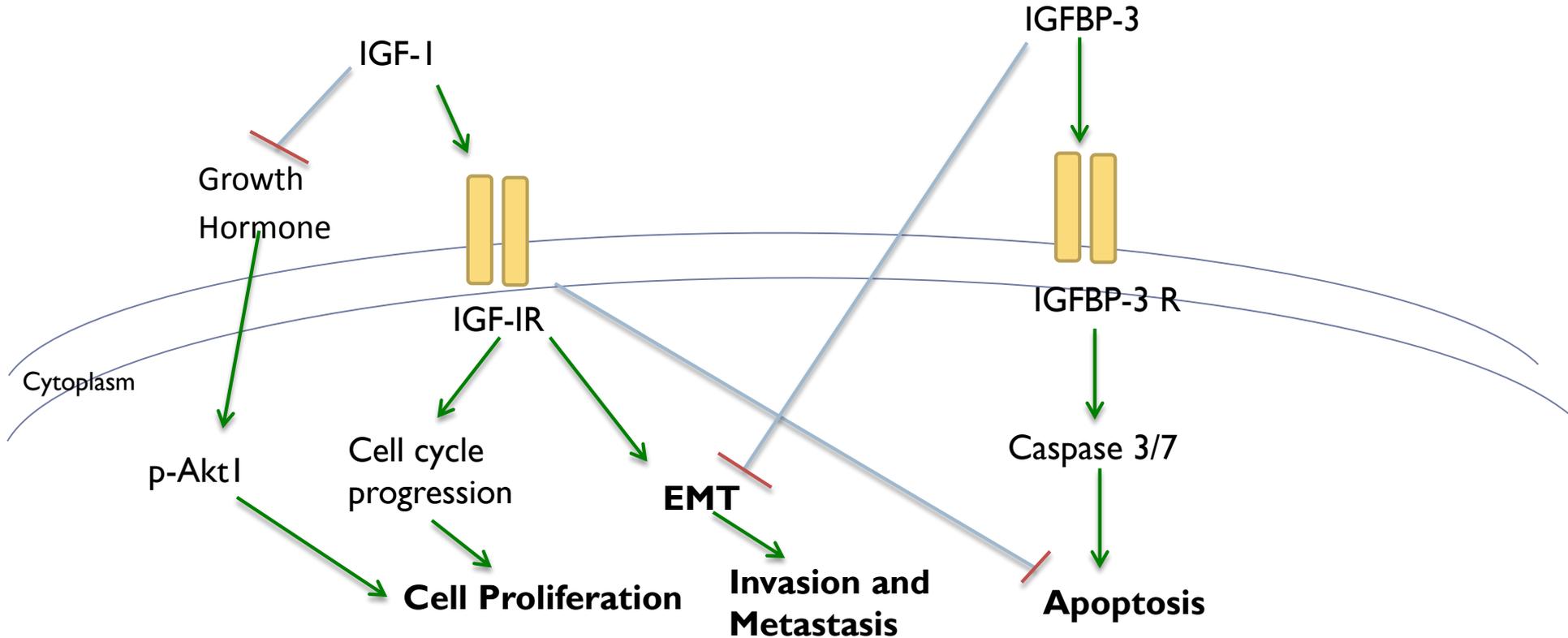


Stage 2, Step 8- Assessing the strength of evidence across all studies

Integrating evidence

Level of evidence in human studies	High	Strong		
	Moderate	Weak	Modest	
	Low	Inconclusive	Weak	Modest
		Low	Moderate	High
		Level of evidence in animal studies		

Potential mechanisms by which IGF system regulates hallmarks of cancer



Future work

- ▶ Incorporate changes recommended by validation studies
 - Marty Weijenberg -Gökhan Ertaylan and Eline van Roekel
 - Rudolf Kaaks- Renée T. Fortner, Audrey Jung, Charlotte Le Cornet
 - ▶ WCRF funded project -Diet and prostate cancer – mechanistic reviews of BMI and Vit D and PC
 - ▶ Integrative Cancer Epidemiology – ICEP funded by CRUK – ongoing mechanistic reviews and work on methodology – Julian Higgins
-



Senior Research Associate Position

Mendelian Randomization and Evidence Synthesis

University of Bristol

3 year post

Immediate start

Closing date- 8th June

Job Ref: ACAD101904



The Team

PI- **Dr Sarah Lewis** –Genetic epidemiology

Co-PI- **Prof Richard Martin** –Epidemiology

Dr Mona Jeffreys- Cancer Epidemiology

Dr Mike Gardner – Animal biology/systematic reviews

Prof Jeff Holly- Molecular biology – IGF and cancer

Dr Claire Perks – Molecular biology

Dr Tom Gaunt – Bioinformatics

Prof Jonathan Sterne- Systematic review methodology

Professor Julian Higgins –Evidence synthesis

Prof Steve Thomas –Head and neck cancer surgeon

Dr Pauline Emmett - Nutritional epidemiology

Dr Kate Northstone – Nutritional Epidemiology

Cath Borwick – Librarian/ Search strategies

Sean Harrison- PhD student

Rosie Lennon-PhD student

Vanessa Tan- PhD student

University of Cambridge

Dr Suzanne Turner-

Animal models

WCRF

Prof Martin Wiseman

Dr Pangiota Mitrou

Dr Rachel Thompson

IARC

Dr Sabina Rinaldi-

Hormones and cancer



Summary of evidence for IGF-I

- ▶ There was moderate evidence that circulating IGF-I increases with milk (and dairy protein) intake
- ▶ We found a positive association between IGF-I and prostate cancer risk
- ▶ IGF-I is a potential mechanism underlying the observed associations between milk intake and prostate cancer risk.



SYRCLE (Systematic Review Centre for Laboratory animal Experimentation) tool

Risk of Bias

- ▶ Bias due to confounding
- ▶ Bias due to departures from intended intervention (e.g. due to lack of random housing of animals)
- ▶ Bias due to missing data
- ▶ Bias in measurement of outcomes
- ▶ Bias in selection of reported results



Assessing the quality of cell studies

- ▶ Validation – authentication of cell lines
- ▶ Replication- repeat experiments
- ▶ Comparison- experiments carried-out in >1 cell line
- ▶ Free from selective reporting

