Elimination The elimination phase of the cancer immunoediting process is essentially the same as the immunosurveillance concept that we previously discussed. 17–10), some of the tumor cells may develop into genetic variants that are resistant to immune defenses, similar to the development of antibiotic resistance by bacteria. If the immunologic mechanisms involved in immunosurveillance, such as destruction of cancerous cells by the host's NK cells and cytotoxic T cells, are highly effective, they will likely result in complete elimination of the tumor. The dynamic interactions between the tumor and the immune system are thought to shape the phenotype of the tumor and its ultimate outcome, hence the term immunoediting. During the equilibrium phase, mutations can occur in the genetically unstable transformed cells.

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