



Press release

October 22, 2018, PARIS

Results from two academic clinical trials presented at the ESMO congress may impact positively the daily living of lung cancer patients

The French Cooperative Thoracic Intergroup (IFCT) will present the results from IFCT-1201 MODEL, the first dedicated study to elderly patients (70 years old and more) evaluating a switch maintenance chemotherapy. The concept of maintenance is based on a continuous therapeutic pressure in order to preserve the therapeutic profit obtained by the treatment of 1st line (induction chemotherapy). A switch maintenance consists in introducing a new treatment immediately after the end of the induction chemotherapy.

This randomised phase III study aimed at comparing a maintenance therapy (with either pemetrexed in patients with non-squamous cell carcinoma or gemcitabine in squamous cell carcinoma) to a surveillance strategy in patients with an advanced non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC) not progressing after 4 cycles of induction therapy (with monthly carboplatin and weekly paclitaxel).

From May 2013 to Oct. 2016, 632 patients aged 70-89 years with non irradiable stage III or stage IV NSCLC were enrolled. After induction therapy, 329 patients were randomized. Among them, 119 received pemetrexed and 43 gemcitabine.

Switch maintenance therapy resulted in a longer progression-free survival (5.7 months in the maintenance group versus 2.7 months in the follow-up group) but not a survival benefit in patients aged 70-89 median (overall survival from randomization was 14.1 months in the follow-up group versus 14 months in the maintenance group). In the absence of a clear-cut survival advantage and given the associated costs and toxicities, switch maintenance chemotherapy should not be recommended in elderly patients with advanced NSCLC.

These data will be featured, October 22, during the Annual Meeting of the European Society for Medical Oncology (ESMO) (Abstract n° LBA56, oral session from 10:30-10:45 AM).

Another IFCT trial (IFCT-1603), also presented during the ESMO congress, looked at the activity of an anti PD-L1 immunotherapy, atezolizumab, as systemic therapy for patients with small cell lung cancer (SCLC) progressing after platinum – etoposide based chemotherapy. The primary endpoint of this study was the objective response rate in eligible patients at 6 weeks in the atezolizumab group. 73 patients participated in this study which did not show any efficacy or safety signals for single drug atezolizumab used as treatment for patients with relapsed SCLC. Single agent atezolizumab induced a 2.3% response rate (95% CI [0.0 ; 6.8]), and a 1.4 month median progression-free survival (95% CI [1.2 ; 1.5]).

These data were presented, October 21, during the ESMO congress (Abstract n° 1664O, oral session from 10:00-10:15 AM).

About the French Cooperative Thoracic intergroup (IFCT)

The IFCT is an independent, non-profit academic research intergroup specializing in thoracic oncology. Its objective is to improve survival and quality of life for thoracic cancer patients. Established in 1999, the IFCT has its own operational infrastructure and is equipped to design, promote, and carry out clinical studies in France and internationally, and to communicate the findings thus obtained. The IFCT's activity regularly results in the introduction of new drugs or strategies that improve the efficacy, safety, and/or economic impact of anti-cancer therapies. This, in turn, leads to better patient management. All IFCT projects are coordinated by a Clinical Research Unit accredited by the National Cancer Institute (INCa) and the National League Against Cancer.

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