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ASPEN-03: A randomized phase II study of evorpacept in combination with pembrolizumab in patients with recurrent, unresectable or metastatic (R/M) PD-L1 positive head and neck squamous cell carcinoma (HNSCC)

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Background

Evorpacept (evo) is a high affinity, CD47-blocking, myeloid checkpoint inhibitor (CPI) with an inactive Fc region designed to safely combine with and enhance standard anticancer regimens by activating both innate and adaptive immune responses. Evo is being evaluated in patients with advanced malignancies including PD-L1-positive R/M HNSCC.

Methods

ASPEN-03 is a randomized, open-label Phase 2 study evaluating evo in combination with P in patients with previously untreated, PD-L1-positive R/M HNSCC. An initial safety lead-in preceded the randomized part of the study. 181 patients were randomized 2:1 to evo (45 mg/kg Q3W) in combination with P or P alone. PD-L1 positivity was defined as combined positive score (CPS) ≥1 by an FDA-approved test. Minimization factors included: geographic region, CPS, HPV (p16) status, tobacco habits, and ECOG performance status. The primary endpoint was objective response rate (ORR) by blinded independent central review (BICR) compared to historical control ORR of 20% (Burtness et al., 2019).

Results

In the intention-to-treat (ITT) population, confirmed ORR for evo + P (N=121) was 26.4% (95% confidence interval (CI) 18.8 - 35.2%) compared to 20% for historical control and 18.3% (95% CI 9.5 - 30.4%) for P (N=60). The difference between ORRs for evo + P and historical P was not statistically significant (p=0.038). Evo + P showed a favorable safety profile consistent with previous clinical experience. DOR, PFS, OS, and the results of exploratory analyses will be presented at the meeting.

Conclusions

The addition of evo to P was well-tolerated, but did not meet the primary endpoint of improving ORR in PD-L1-positive R/M HNSCC as compared to historical control.

Clinical trial identification

NCT04675294.

Legal entity responsible for the study

ALX Oncology Inc.

Funding

ALX Oncology Inc.

Disclosure

B. Keam: Financial Interests, Personal, Invited Speaker: Merck, Lily, MSD, LG chem, Norvatis; Financial Interests, Personal, Advisory Board: Handok, TrialInformatics, ImmunOncia, Beigen, TiumBio; Financial Interests, Personal, Coordinating PI: MSD Oncology, AstraZeneca, Ono

Pharmaceutical, Bayer. J. Machiels: Financial Interests, Institutional, Advisory Board: novartis, MSD, Pfizer, Roche, Debio, AstraZeneca, Innate, Nanobiotix, Bayer, Boerhinger-Ingelheim, BMS, Pfizer, Cue Pharma, Incyte, Janssen, Johnson & Johnson, ALX Oncology, F-star, nektar, F-star, Seagen, astellas, genmab, Merus, gsk, CureVac, IPSEN, ANAVEON; Financial Interests, Institutional, Advisory Board, Education: Merck-Serono; Financial Interests, Institutional, Other, Travel expense: gilead, MSD, sanofi; Financial Interests, Institutional, Steering Committee Member: AstraZeneca, MSD; Financial Interests, Institutional, Coordinating PI: MSD, iTeos, eTheRNA; Financial Interests, Institutional, Local PI: Pfizer, Ceylad, MSD, Novartis, KURA, Roche, Lilly, Boehringer, Sanofi-Aventis, Incyte, Bayer, Merck - Serono, Janssen, Johnson & Johnson, Amgen, AbbVie, GalxoSmithKline; Non-Financial Interests, Leadership Role, Past Chair: EORTC head and neck group. S.F. Oosting: Financial Interests, Institutional, Advisory Board: Bristol Myers Squibb, Genmab; Financial Interests, Institutional, Invited Speaker: Merck, Travel Congress Management B.V.; Financial Interests, Institutional, Research Grant, Investigator initiated research: Celldex; Financial Interests, Institutional, Research Grant, Investigator initiated study: Pfizer, Novartis; Financial Interests, Institutional, Research Grant, I am the principle investigator of EORTC 2120 for which EORTC has received funding from Merck.: Merck; Non-Financial Interests, Institutional, Product Samples: Celldex, Pfizer, Novartis; Other, Other, Member of steering and safety monitoring committee, unpaid.: ALX Oncology. J.C. Park: Financial Interests, Personal, Other, Invited panel discussant at the company event: Coherus; Financial Interests, Institutional, Local PI: Inhibrx, Ankyra, ALX, A2 Bio, CUE Bio, Alentis; Non-Financial Interests, Principal Investigator: Hanmi. A.J. Forgie: Financial Interests, Institutional, Full or part-time Employment: ALX Oncology; Financial Interests, Institutional, Stocks or ownership: ALX Oncology. D. Brickman: Financial Interests, Institutional, Full or part-time Employment: ALX Oncology. A.C. Tsiatis: Financial Interests, Institutional, Full or part-time Employment: ALX Oncology Inc.; Financial Interests, Personal, Stocks/Shares: ALX Oncology Inc. A.B. Sandler: Financial Interests, Institutional, Full or part-time Employment: ALX Oncology; Financial Interests, Institutional, Stocks or ownership: ALX Oncology. K.J. Harrington: Financial Interests, Institutional, Advisory Board: Amgen, AstraZeneca, BMS, Boehringer Ingelheim, Merck, MSD, Pfizer, Replimune, Oncolys, Vyriad, Idera, Onchilles, Beigene, GSK, Johnson and Johnson, QBiotics; Financial Interests, Institutional, Other, Honoraria for lectures: Amgen, AstraZeneca, BMS, Boehringer Ingelheim; Financial Interests, Institutional, Advisory Board, Advisory board for CD47 assets: Arch Oncology; Financial Interests, Institutional, Advisory Board, Development of DDR assets: ARTIOS; Financial Interests, Institutional, Advisory Board, Development of exosomal STING agonist: Codiak; Financial Interests, Institutional, Advisory Board, Development of oncolytic adenovirus: PsiVac; Financial Interests, Institutional, Advisory Board, Steering committee: ALX Oncology; Financial Interests, Institutional, Funding, Research: AstraZeneca, Boehringer Ingelheim, MSD; Financial Interests, Institutional, Funding, Development of oncolytic HSV platform.: Replimune; Non-Financial Interests, Leadership Role, Chair of Steering Committee: ART NET; Non-Financial Interests, Other, Member of Global Steering Committee: MR - Linac. All other authors have declared no conflicts of interest.