Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer

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ASCO 2014 Concludes with Additional Promising Data for the Future of Cancer Immunotherapy

MILWAUKEE, WI – The final day of the 2014 American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) Annual Meeting ended the same way it started with more promising news coming out of the cancer immunotherapy field. Presentations today came from several SITC members covering clinical trial results from various tumor types including melanoma and cervical cancer.

Some of the cancer immunotherapy data presented centered on the PD-L1 immunotherapy, MEDI4736, including a phase I dose-escalation study. In this study, 27 patients with advanced solid tumors including non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC), melanoma, colorectal cancer and renal cell cancer saw reduction in tumor size in as little as six weeks. Patients were given multiple doses and then clinical activity was maintained for at least one year. Nineteen percent of patients achieved a partial response, and 39 percent achieved disease control. Data presented also showed that there was a very low frequency of drug-related serious adverse events, and no dose-limiting toxicities were observed.

SITC member, Julie R. Brahmer, MD, presented data on MEDI4736 in a poster session on Tuesday morning as well. Data presented here was specific to patients receiving MEDI4736 for NSCLC. In the study approximately 150 NSCLC patients found no treatment discontinuations for toxicity, drug-related colitis of any grade, or grade three or four pulmonary toxicities. An early signal of clinical activity was observed in patients with both squamous and non-squamous NSCLC.

Data was also presented from the dose expansion phase in which 350 patients provided further information on the clinical activity and tolerability profile of MEDI4736. The results are showing early evidence of clinical activity in multiple tumor types, including NSCLC, squamous cell carcinoma of the head and neck, pancreatic cancer, gastroesophageal cancer, and cutaneous melanoma.

"The results presented at ASCO continue to generate great excitement as it appears immunotherapy has significant clinical benefit in many different types if cancer," Howard L. Kaufman, MD, FACS and SITC vice president, said. "Given the durability of responses seen with these agents, there is real optimism for patients with common and difficult to treat tumors, such as lung cancer. The future is bright for our patients and these results support the need for new and urgent funding of research in tumor immunology and immunotherapy."

Additional data presented on Tuesday once again came from studies involving the anti-PD-1 monoclonal antibody, MK-3475. In one presentation, SITC member Omid Hamid, MD presented results from a randomized comparison of two doses of the MK-3475 for

ipilimumab-refractory and ipilimumab-naive melanoma. The study presented involved a total of 276 patients who were randomized to receive MK-3475 two or 10 mg/kg every three weeks. Results presented showed that both doses of MK-3475 provided similar efficacy and safety in both ipilimumab-refractory and ipilimumab-naive melanoma patients.

Tuesday's Immunotherapy session concluded with more promising information for cancer immunotherapies in the treatment of cervical cancer. The late-breaking abstract, HPV-targeted tumor-infiltrating lymphocytes for cervical cancer, was presented and included data from a 9 patient trial testing to see if Adoptive T-cell therapy can mediate regression of an epithelial malignancy. Results showed HPV-TIL can mediate durable, complete regression of metastatic cervical cancer. Continued investigation of HPV-TIL for cervical cancer, and possibly other HPV+ malignancies, is warranted.

About SITC
Founded in 1984, Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer (SITC) is a non-profit medical society dedicated to improving cancer patient outcomes by advancing the development, science and application of cancer immunotherapy through the core values of interaction, innovation and leadership. For more information on SITC, visit the Society website at: www.sitcancer.org.