



Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer

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Melanoma Patients Receive Promising News Regarding Cancer Immunotherapy Combination Treatment

CHICAGO (Saturday, June 1, 2013) – A promising, new cancer immunotherapy combination treatment showing long term survival for patients with metastatic melanoma was highlighted today at the American Society of Clinical Oncology Annual Meeting in Chicago. Results from a phase II study released showed two-thirds of patients were still alive one year after being treated with the white cell booster GM-CSF, combined with an increased dose of the already well known immunotherapy, ipilimumab (Yervoy). This compares to only about half of patients who were alive one year after being treated with just ipilimumab alone.

"The field of melanoma in terms of cancer immunotherapy is extremely exciting right now with new treatment options that are showing durable long term response and overall melanoma survivorship in patients," Howard Kaufman, MD, Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer (SITC) Vice President, said. "This is a critical time in the field as studies for the first time are revealing the potential combination therapies have in treating melanoma, which will give patients with the disease more treatment options and keep them alive longer."

In addition to the combination study of GM-CSF and ipilimumab, an expanded phase I study has indicated that the investigational anti-PD-1 antibody nivolumab produced a long-lasting response of at least 30 percent tumor shrinkage in more than 30 percent of patients involved in the study with stage IV melanoma. Although a very early phase I study, these results have been referred to as "striking" as they have never been seen before with other recently approved melanoma drugs.

The future of cancer treatment is seen in all this exciting data highlighted at ASCO, and emphasizes the need for continued research, information and education for clinical oncologists and patients.

"Getting patients into clinical trials is very important moving forward, as well as spreading education on the current advancements in cancer immunotherapy to the entire unit of care who are involved in treating patients with melanoma," Kaufman said. "SITC's mission is to advance the science and the application of cancer immunotherapy and continue to move the field forward. I think this is only the beginning for cancer immunotherapy and it will be very exciting as more unfolds."

Stay tuned to www.sitcancer.org throughout the 2013 ASCO Annual Meeting for the latest news and information on cancer immunotherapy.

Founded in 1984, the Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer (formerly the International Society for Biological Therapy of Cancer; iSBTc) is a non-profit organization of clinicians, researchers, students, post-doctoral fellows, and allied health professionals dedicated to improving cancer patient outcomes by advancing the development and application of cancer immunotherapy through interaction, innovation and leadership. For more information about SITC, please visit the Society website at www.sitcancer.org.

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