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### 6960\_PR Nivolumab + cabozantinib vs sunitinib in first-line treatment for advanced renal cell carcinoma: First results from the randomized phase III CheckMate 9ER trial

T.K. Choueiri<sup>1</sup>, T. Powles<sup>2</sup>, M. Burotto<sup>3</sup>, M.T. Bourlon<sup>4</sup>, B. Zurawski<sup>5</sup>, V.M. Oyervides Juárez<sup>6</sup>, J.J. Hsieh<sup>7</sup>, U. Basso<sup>8</sup>, A.Y. Shah<sup>9</sup>, C. Suarez<sup>10</sup>, A. Hamzaj<sup>11</sup>, C.H. Barrios<sup>12</sup>, M. Richardet<sup>13</sup>, D. Pook<sup>14</sup>, Y. Tomita<sup>15</sup>, B. Escudier<sup>16</sup>, J. Zhang<sup>17</sup>, B. Simek<sup>18</sup>, A.B. Apolo<sup>19</sup>, R.J. Motzer<sup>20</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Medical Oncology, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, The Lank Center for Genitourinary Oncology, Boston, MA, USA; <sup>2</sup>Department of Genitourinary Oncology, Barts Cancer Institute, Cancer Research UK Experimental Cancer Medicine Centre, Queen Mary University of London, Royal Free National Health Service Trust, London, UK; <sup>3</sup>Department of Medical Oncology, Bradford Hill Clinical Research Center, Santiago, Chile; <sup>4</sup>Department of Hemato-Oncology, Urologic Oncology Clinic, Instituto Nacional de Ciencias Médicas y Nutrición Salvador Zubirán, Mexico City, Mexico; <sup>5</sup>Department of Outpatient Chemotherapy, Professor Franciszek Łukaszyk Oncology Centre, Bydgoszcz, Poland; <sup>6</sup>Department of Medical Oncology, Centro Universitario contra el Cáncer Hospital Universitario "Dr. José Eleuterio González" Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León, Nuevo León, Mexico; <sup>7</sup>Molecular Oncology, Department of Medicine, Siteman Cancer Center, Washington University School of Medicine, St. Louis, MO, USA; <sup>8</sup>Department of Oncology, Istituto Oncologico Veneto IOV IRCCS, Padua, Italy; <sup>9</sup>Department of Genitourinary Medical Oncology, M. D. Anderson Cancer Center, Houston, TX, USA; <sup>10</sup>Vall d'Hebron Institute of Oncology, Vall d'Hebron University Hospital, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain; <sup>11</sup>Department of Medical Oncology, Ospedale San Donato, Istituto Toscano Tumori, Arezzo, Italy; <sup>12</sup>Oncology Research Center, Hospital Sao Lucas, PUCRS, Porto Alegre, Brazil; <sup>13</sup>Fundacion Richardet Longo, Instituto Oncologico de Cordoba, Cordoba, Argentina; <sup>14</sup>Cabrini Monash University Department of Medical Oncology, Cabrini Health, Malvern, Australia; <sup>15</sup>Departments of Urology and Molecular Oncology, Graduate School of Medical and Dental Sciences, Niigata University, Niigata, Japan; <sup>16</sup>Department of Medical Oncology, Gustave Roussy, Villejuif, France; <sup>17</sup>Department of Clinical Research, Bristol Myers Squibb, Princeton, NJ, USA; <sup>18</sup>Department of Biostatistics, Bristol Myers Squibb, Princeton, NJ, USA; <sup>19</sup>Genitourinary Malignancies Branch, Center for Cancer Research, National Cancer Institute, National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, MD, USA; <sup>20</sup>Department of Medicine, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, New York, NY, USA

**Background:** Results from the phase 3 CheckMate 9ER trial evaluating the checkpoint inhibitor (CPI) nivolumab (N) plus the tyrosine kinase inhibitor (TKI) cabozantinib (C) v sunitinib (S) for first-line (1L) treatment of advanced clear cell renal cell carcinoma (aRCC) are reported. As monotherapies, N and C have demonstrated efficacy and a manageable safety profile in aRCC. C has immunomodulatory properties that may counteract tumor-induced immunosuppression, providing a rationale for combining N+C.

**Methods:** Patients (pts) were randomized 1:1 (stratified by IMDC risk score, tumor PD-L1 expression, region) to N 240 mg flat dose IV Q2W + C 40 mg PO QD v S 50 mg PO for 4 wk (6-wk cycles) until disease progression or unacceptable toxicity (max N treatment, 2 y). Primary endpoint: progression-free survival (PFS; a ¼ 0.05 final) by blinded independent central review (BICR). Secondary endpoints (hierarchical testing): overall survival (OS; a ¼ 0.011 first interim analysis), objective response rate (ORR; a ¼ 0.05 final) by BICR, and safety.

**Results:** A total of 651 pts (22.6% favorable risk, 57.6% intermediate risk, 19.7% poor risk; 24.9% PD-L1 <sub>1</sub>) were randomized to N+C (n ¼ 323) v S (n ¼ 328). With 18.1 mo median (10.6 mo minimum) study follow-up, all 3 efficacy endpoints were met. N+C significantly improved PFS (HR 0.51 [95% CI 0.41e0.64], P < 0.0001; median, 16.6 v 8.3 mo) and OS (HR 0.60 [98.89% CI 0.40e0.89]; P ¼ 0.0010; medians not reached) v S, and results were consistent across prespecified IMDC risk and PD-L1 subgroups. ORR (95% CI) was significantly higher with N+C v S (55.7% [50.1e61.2] v 27.1% [22.4e32.3]; P < 0.0001), and 8.0% v 4.6% of pts achieved complete response. Median duration of response was 20.2 v 11.5 mo for N+C v S. Any-grade TRAEs occurred in 96.6% v 93.1% of pts treated with N+C v S (60.6% v 50.9% grade <sub>3</sub>). One treatment-related death occurred with N+C v 2 with S. TRAEs led to discontinuation of S in 8.8%, N or C in 15.3%, N+C in 3.1%, N only in 5.6%, and C only in 6.6% of pts.

**Conclusions:** N+C demonstrated superior PFS, OS, and ORR v S in 1L aRCC. The safety profile of this combination was manageable and consistent with the known single-agent AE profiles of N and C. These results support N+C as a new CPI+TKI option for aRCC pts.

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Barrios: Honoraria (self), Advisory/Consultancy, Travel/Accommodation/Expenses: Boehringer-Ingelheim; Honoraria (self), Advisory/Consultancy, Travel/Accommodation/Expenses: GSK; Honoraria (self), Advisory/Consultancy, Travel/Accommodation/Expenses: Novartis; Honoraria (self), Advisory/Consultancy, Travel/Accommodation/Expenses: Pfizer; Honoraria (self), Advisory/Consultancy, Travel/Accommodation/Expenses: Lilly; Honoraria (self), Advisory/Consultancy, Travel/Accommodation/Expenses: Roche/Genentech; Honoraria (self), Advisory/Consultancy, Travel/Accommodation/Expenses: Eisai; Honoraria (self), Advisory/Consultancy, Travel/Accommodation/Expenses: MSD; Honoraria (self), Advisory/Consultancy: AstraZeneca; Advisory/Consultancy, Travel/Accommodation/Expenses: Bayer; Research grant/Funding (institution): AbbVie; Research grant/Funding (institution): Amgen; Research grant/Funding (institution): AstellasPharma; Research grant/Funding (institution): Celgene; Research grant/Funding (institution): Covance; Research grant/Funding (institution): Medivation; Research grant/Funding (institution): Merck Serono; Research grant/Funding (institution): PharmaMar. 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