

1416P Immunosenescence (iSenescence) correlates with disease progression in advanced non-small cell lung cancer (aNSCLC) patients treated with PD-(L)1 inhibitors (IO)

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Background: iSenescence is a progressive remodeling of immune functions with a multifactorial etiology (i.e. aging, chronic inflammation, cancer). Although the absence of CD28 and the expression of CD57 and Killer-cell lectin-like receptor G1 (KLRG1) on peripheral T-lymphocytes are potential hallmarks of iSenescence, the characterization of such phenotype in IO-treated aNSCLC patients and the correlation with clinical characteristics and benefit from immunotherapy are currently unknown.

Methods: A senescent immune phenotype (SIP) defined as a percentage of circulating CD8⁺CD28⁻CD57⁺KLRG1⁺ T-lymphocytes was assessed by flow cytometry (FC) on fresh blood from aNSCLC patients treated with IO in a single institution (03/2017–04/2018). A log-rank maximization method was used to identify a SIP cut-off level and dichotomize patients accordingly. The objective was to correlate SIP with clinical characteristics and RECIST response by univariate logistic regression analysis.

Results: 39 aNSCLC patients were evaluable for SIP before IO: 38% ≥ 65 years, 87% non-squamous, 38% KRAS mutated, 54% with PD-L1 expression ≥ 1%, 13% chemotherapy naïve. Among 30 patients evaluable for IO response, 53% had progression (PD), 27% stability (SD), 20% partial response (PR). Median PFS was 1.9 months (95% CI 1.5; 2.5). OS was not calculated due to the short follow-up [6 months (95% CI 4–11)]. SIP (% CD28⁻CD57⁺KLRG1⁺) median value on circulating CD8⁺ lymphocytes was 15.26% (min 1.87%, max 56.28%). Overall, 13 (33%) of 39 patients had >22.25% CD8⁺ lymphocytes with a CD28⁻CD57⁺KLRG1⁺ phenotype, being classified as SIP⁺. SIP status did not significantly correlate with age, IO-baseline patients' characteristics or previous chemotherapy exposure. Among patients evaluable for IO response, only 1 (10%) of 10 SIP⁺ experienced disease control (PR/SD), compared to 13 (65%) of 20 SIP⁻ patients; similarly, PD rate was significantly higher in SIP⁺ compared to SIP⁻ patients (90% vs 35%, $p = 0.007$).

Conclusions: iSenescence, monitored by FC measurement of 3 surface molecules on circulating CD8⁺ lymphocytes, is observed in 33% of aNSCLC patients, is independent of age and correlates with lower disease control rate upon IO.

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