

Crizotinib reduces tumor size in patients with ALK positive lung cancer

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Crizotinib is effective in shrinking tumors in patients with anaplastic lymphoma receptor tyrosine kinase (ALK) positive non-small cell lung cancer, a cancer commonly found in people who never smoked, and should be the standard of care for advanced stages of this disease, according to research presented at the 2012 Chicago Multidisciplinary Symposium in Thoracic Oncology. This symposium is sponsored by the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO), the American Society for Radiation Oncology (ASTRO), the International Association for the Study of Lung Cancer (IASLC) and The University of Chicago.

ALK gene rearrangements are found in around 5 percent of lung [cancer tumors](#) and are more common in people with lung cancer who never smoked. Crizotinib is an oral drug that was found to inhibit the effects of the ALK gene and to stop or reverse tumor growth.

In this phase II trial, researchers followed 901 patients for safety and 261 patients for tumor response; all of the patients had at least one prior [chemotherapy treatment](#) for their lung cancer. The overall response rate to crizotinib treatment was 60 percent and the median progression free survival (PFS) was eight months, confirming prior findings that crizotinib shrinks ALK-positive lung cancers and demonstrates a high PFS rate.

"This trial demonstrates that we have a good opportunity to shrink cancers and improve symptoms for patients with this subtype of lung cancer," said Gregory Riely, MD, PhD, lead author of the study and a

medical oncologist at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York who specializes in treating lung cancer. "This confirms the results of prior studies and further shows that crizotinib can reduce the effects of symptoms, thereby improving the quality of life for thousands of patients who are diagnosed with this late-stage lung cancer. This study confirms that crizotinib is the standard of care for patients with ALK positive [lung cancer](#)."

More information: The abstract, "Results of a Global Phase II Study with Crizotinib in Advanced ALK-positive Non-small Cell Lung Cancer (NSCLC)," will be presented during the Plenary Session at 12:30 p.m., Central time on September 7, 2012.

Provided by American Society for Radiation Oncology

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