

# Nivolumab combo treats advanced esophageal squamous-cell carcinoma

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(HealthDay)—For patients with previously untreated, advanced

esophageal squamous cell carcinoma, treatment with nivolumab plus chemotherapy or nivolumab plus ipilimumab results in significantly longer overall survival than chemotherapy alone, according to a study published in the Feb. 3 issue of the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

Yuichiro Doki, M.D., from the Osaka University Graduate School of Medicine in Japan, and colleagues conducted an open-label, phase 3 trial involving 970 adults with previously untreated, unresectable advanced, recurrent, or metastatic esophageal squamous cell carcinoma who were randomly assigned to receive [nivolumab](#) plus chemotherapy, nivolumab plus the monoclonal antibody ipilimumab, or chemotherapy alone in a 1:1:1 ratio.

The researchers found that at a minimum follow-up of 13 months, overall [survival](#) was significantly longer with nivolumab plus chemotherapy than chemotherapy alone among patients with tumor-cell programmed death ligand 1 (PD-L1) expression of 1 percent or greater (median 15.4 versus 9.1 months; hazard ratio, 0.54) and in the overall population (median, 13.2 versus 10.7 months; hazard ratio, 0.74). Significantly longer overall survival was also seen with nivolumab plus ipilimumab than with chemotherapy alone among patients with tumor-cell PD-L1 expression of 1 percent or more (median, 13.7 versus 9.1 percent; hazard ratio, 0.64) and in the overall population (median, 12.7 versus 10.7 months; hazard ratio, 0.78). Among patients with tumor-cell PD-L1 expression of 1 percent or greater, nivolumab plus chemotherapy, but not nivolumab plus [ipilimumab](#), was associated with a significant progression-free survival benefit over [chemotherapy](#) alone.

"Overall survival favored the nivolumab-containing regimens across most of the prespecified subgroups," the authors write.

The study was funded by Bristol Myers Squibb and Ono Pharmaceutical. Bristol Myers Squibb is the manufacturer of nivolumab.

**More information:** [Abstract/Full Text \(subscription or payment may be required\)](#)

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