

# Ceritinib provides longer PFS than chemo in phase III trial of ALK rearranged lung cancer

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Ceritinib provides longer progression-free survival than chemotherapy in crizotinib-pre-treated patients with non-small-cell lung cancer harbouring an ALK rearrangement, according to results of the phase III ASCEND-5 study presented today at the ESMO 2016 Congress in Copenhagen.

"Patients with non-small cell [lung cancer](#) (NSCLC) should receive front line therapy with the anaplastic lymphoma kinase (ALK) inhibitor crizotinib," said lead author Professor Giorgio Scagliotti, head of the Department of Oncology, University of Turin, Italy. "Most patients develop resistance to crizotinib and currently second line treatment is represented by [chemotherapy](#) alone."

He continued: "This was the first phase III study to assess whether the second generation ALK inhibitor ceritinib was superior to chemotherapy upon progression on crizotinib therapy in NSCLC."

The open-label ASCEND-5 study included 231 patients with NSCLC who had received crizotinib. Patients were randomised 1:1 to receive therapy with ceritinib or chemotherapy (pemetrexed or docetaxel). Patients who discontinued chemotherapy due to disease progression could crossover to ceritinib. The primary endpoint was progression-free survival, assessed by a blinded independent review committee.

Median progression-free survival was significantly improved with ceritinib compared to chemotherapy (5.4 vs 1.6 months, hazard ratio [HR] 0.49, p

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