Atezolizumab May Not Work for Treatment of Breast Cancer

On September 8, 2020, the FDA alerted health care professionals, oncology clinical investigators and patients that a clinical trial studying the use of atezolizumab and paclitaxel did not work for untreated inoperable or locally advanced or metastatic triple negative breast cancer (MTNBC). Atezolizumab (Tecentriq) is a monoclonal antibody that binds to PD-L1 and blocks its interactions with both PD-1 and B7 receptors found on T cells and antigen presenting cells. This causes PD-L1/PD-1 mediated inhibition of the immune response, resulting in decreased tumor growth. Atezolizumab has been approved to be used in treatment of urothelial carcinoma, non-small cell lung cancer, locally advanced or metastatic triple negative breast cancer, small cell lung cancer, hepatocellular carcinoma, and melanoma.

The September 8, alert was based on early results of the IMpassion131 trial. The IMpassion131 trial was a phase 3, multicenter, randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial of atezolizumab in combination with paclitaxel compared with placebo with paclitaxel for the treatment of mTNBC. The trial found that the atezolizumab group did not significantly reduce the risk of cancer and death compared to the placebo group. The study also found that atezolizumab had less favorable overall survival results in both the PD-L1 positive and total population compared to placebo. The FDA has yet to make any changes in the prescribing information while still reviewing the findings of this study. The FDA will also make additional changes as they see appropriate to other trials for atezolizumab plus paclitaxel for the treatment of breast cancer. They recommend that patients who are currently taking paclitaxel plus atezolizumab ~~to~~ should continue taking their medications as prescribed by their health care professional.

References:

Center for Drug Evaluation and Research. (2020, September 8). FDA alerts healthcare professionals & oncology clinical investigators. Retrieved October 01, 2020, from https://www.fda.gov/drugs/resources-information-approved-drugs/fda-issues-alert-about-efficacy-and-potential-safety-concerns-atezolizumab-combination-paclitaxel

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Jacob Jones PharmD. Candidate