

# Novel Immunotherapies in Bladder Cancer

**Mark T. Fleming, MD**

GU Disease Committee Chair, Sarah Cannon Research Institute  
GU Medical Oncologist, Virginia Oncology Associates, Norfolk, VA.

March 22, 2025

**SCRI**

Sarah Cannon  
Research Institute

# Objectives

- Historical Perspective
- Scientific basis of systemic therapy
- Novel Trials/Therapies in BCG Naïve NMIBC

# The History...

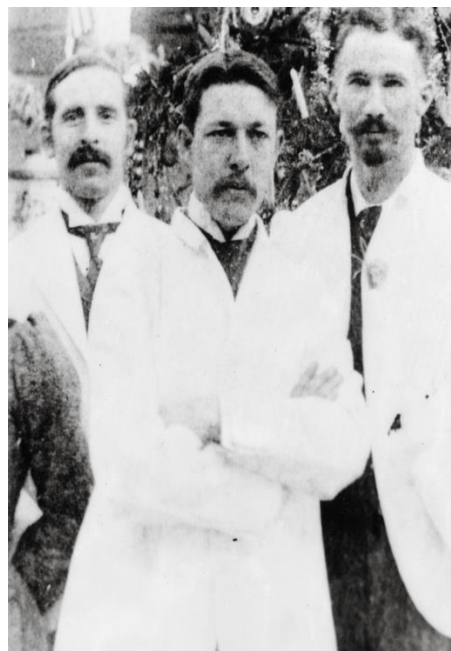
1893

1960s

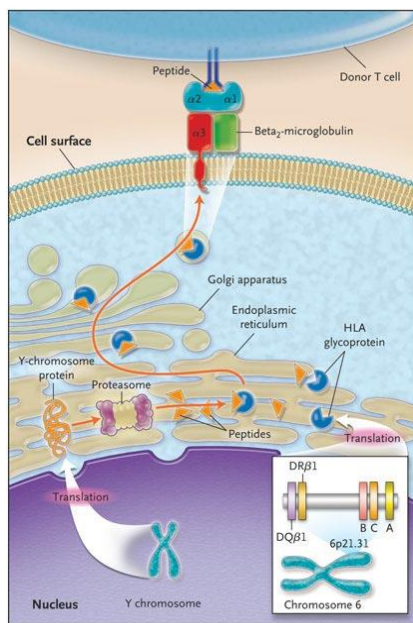
1980s

2000s

Now

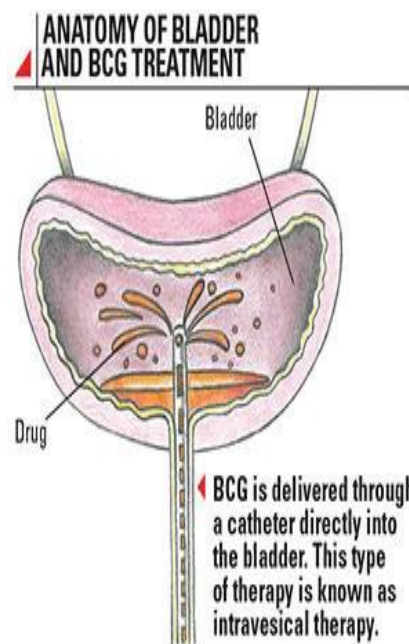


**Coley's toxin**

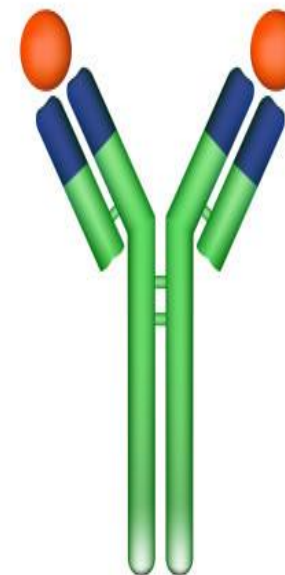


**Graft-versus-Leukemia Effect**

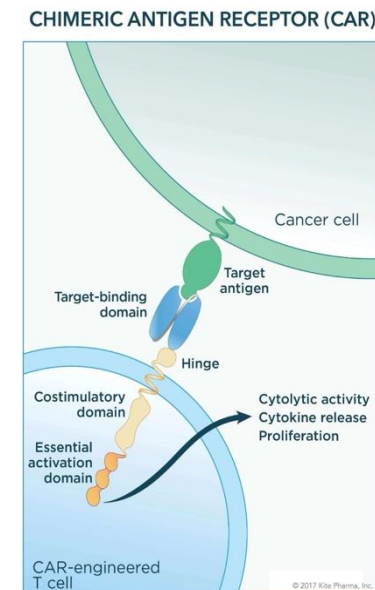
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**BCG in bladder cancer**

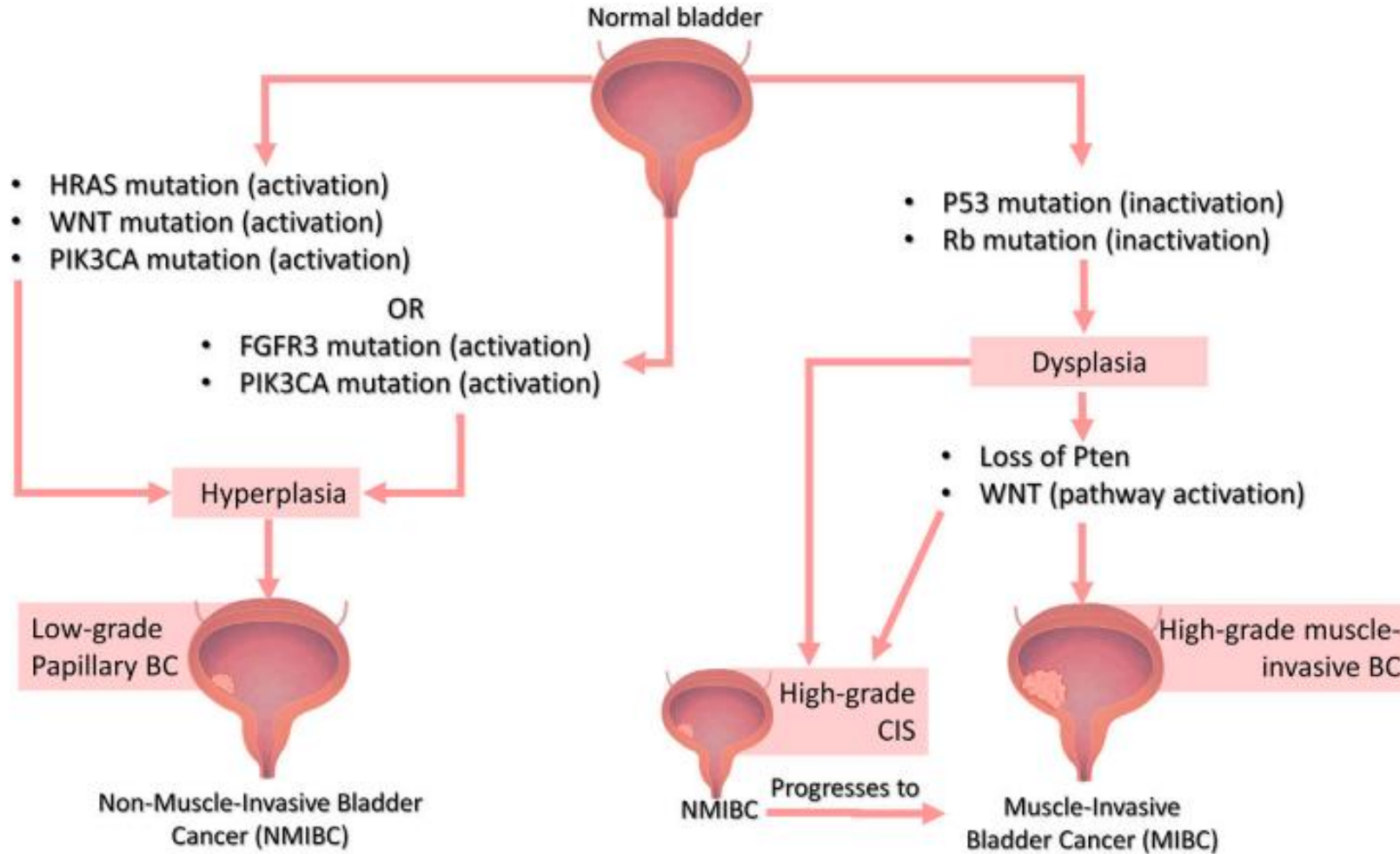


**Monoclonal antibodies and Checkpoint Inhibitors**



**ADC Combinations and Cellular Therapies**

# The Genetic Basis of Bladder Cancer



# FGFR Gene Alterations Present in Multiple Tumor Histologies

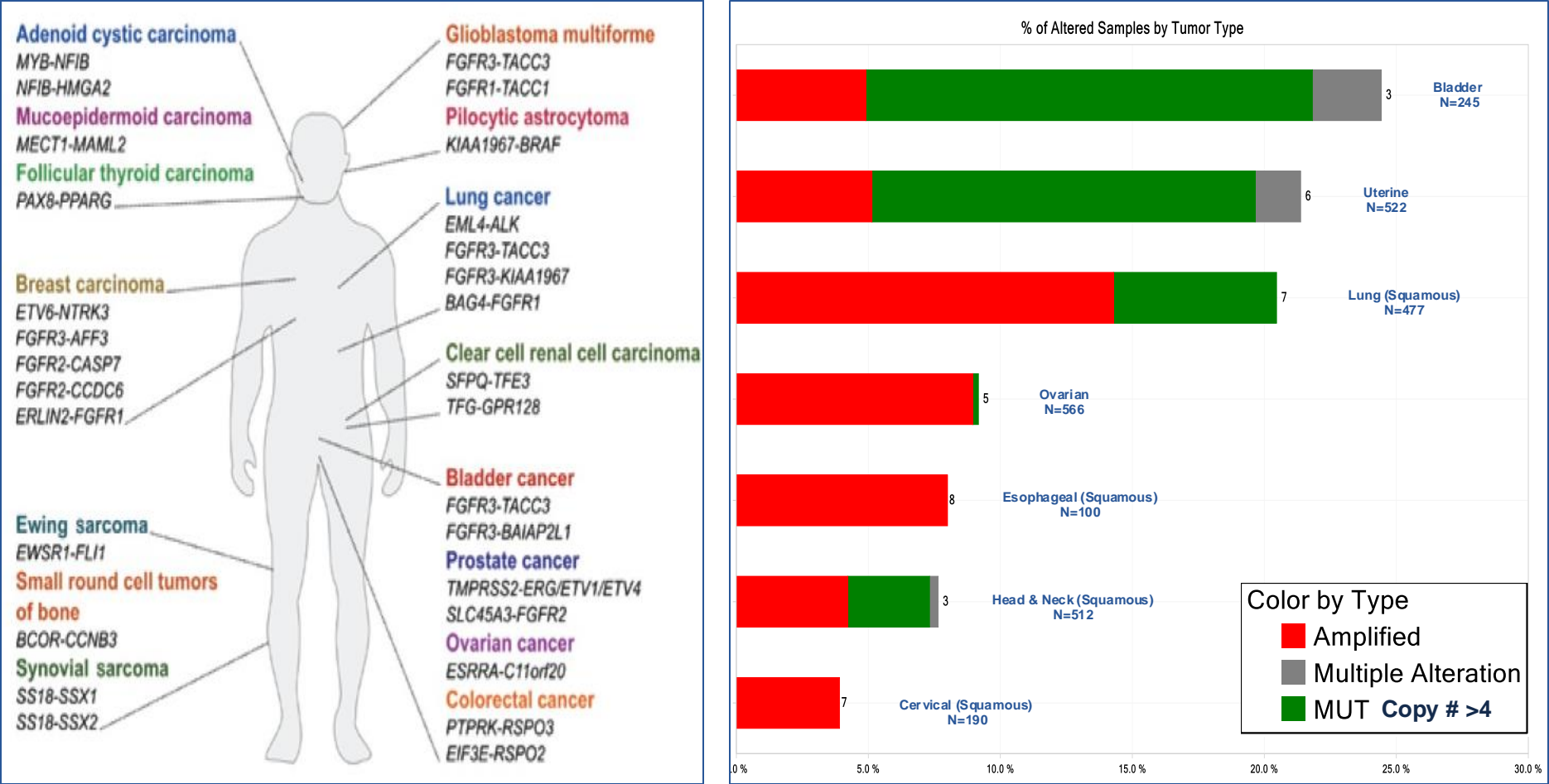
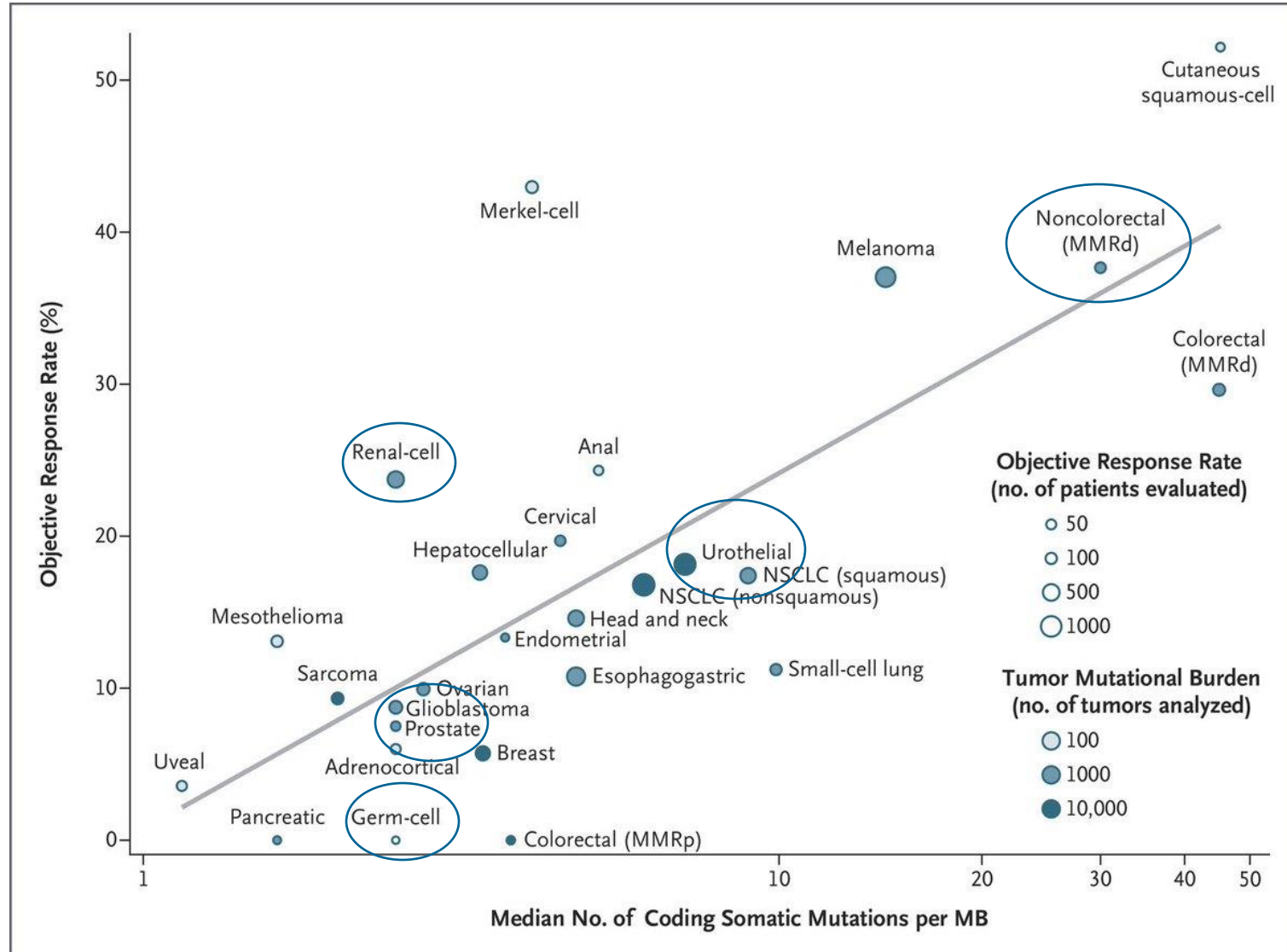


Figure at left, Parker BC and Wang W. *Chin J Cancer*. 2013;32(11):594-603.

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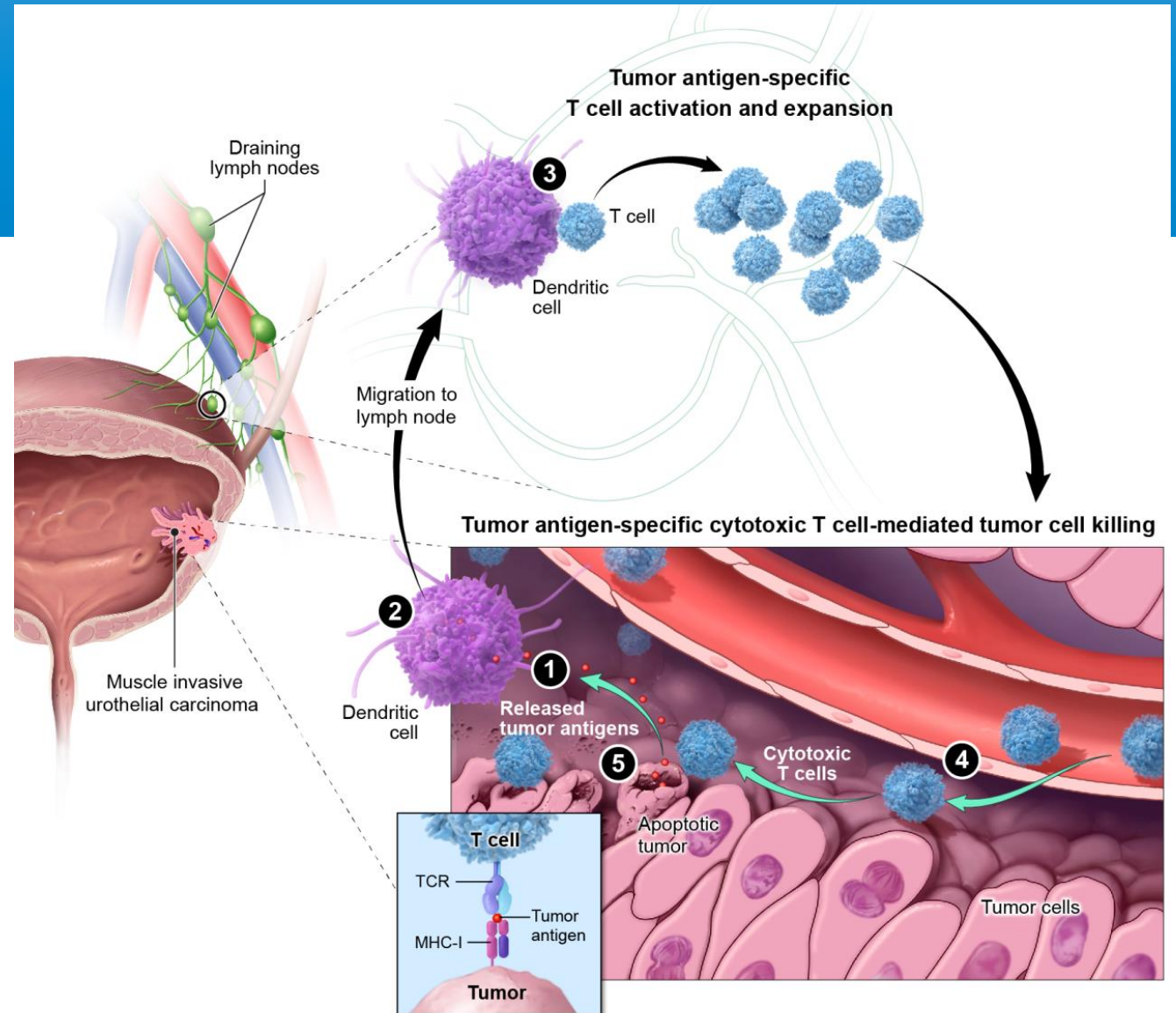
# Tumor Mutational Burden and Response Rate to PD-1 Inhibition





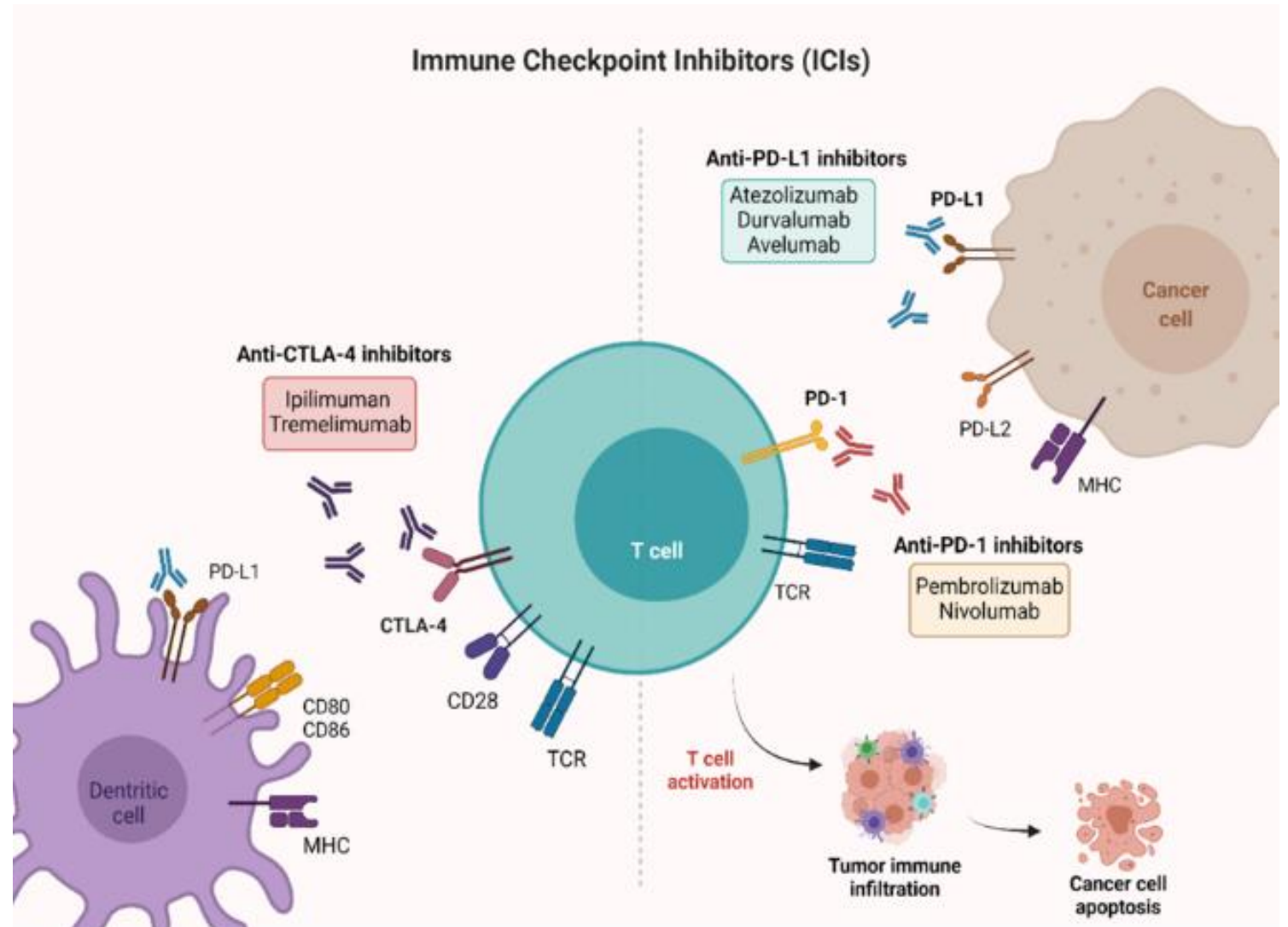
# Urothelial carcinoma-specific antitumor T-cell immunity cycle

- Tumors maintain an immunosuppressive
- via **PD-L1/PD-1** binding
- Inhibiting:
- T-cell migration, proliferation and secretion of cytotoxic mediators



# Mechanism of Action of Immune Checkpoint Inhibitors

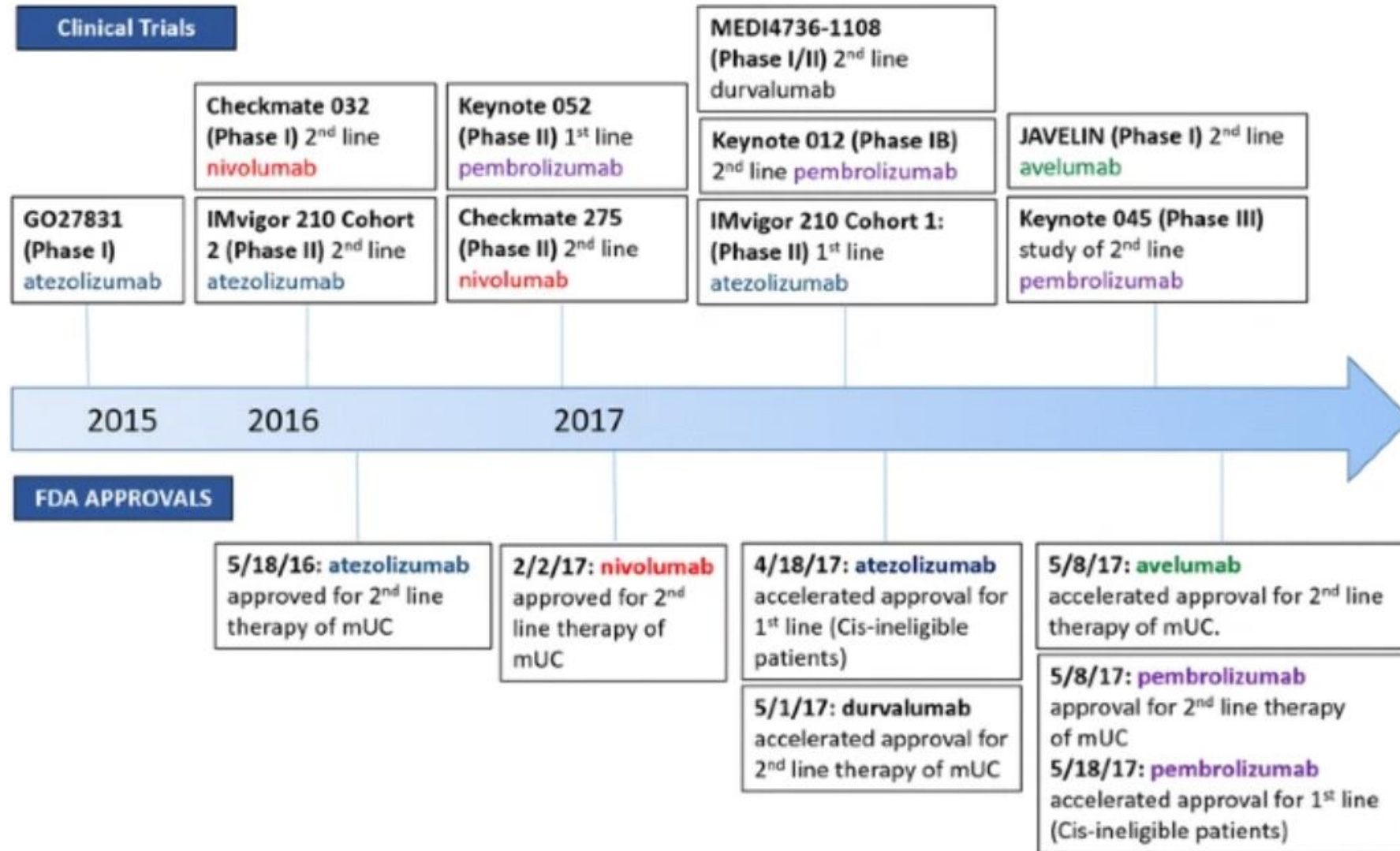
The immune checkpoint blockade ensures the activation of T cells and favors antitumor activity.



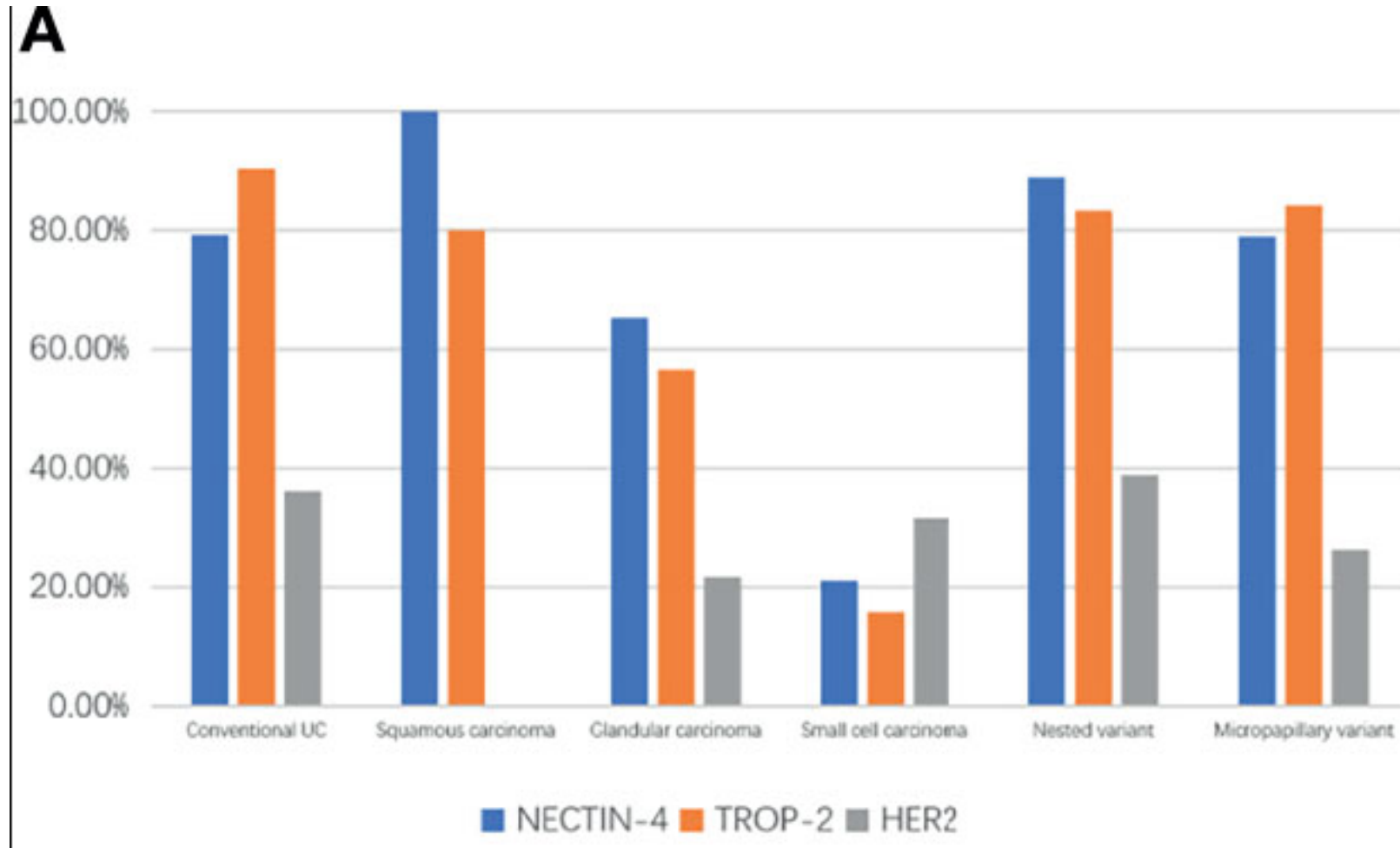


# Metastatic Urothelial Carcinoma

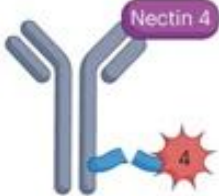

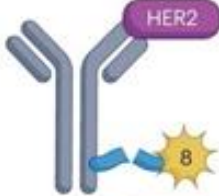
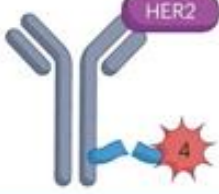
# Clinical Studies of PD-1/PD-L1 Inhibitors in UC



# “Established” Targets in Urothelial Carcinoma



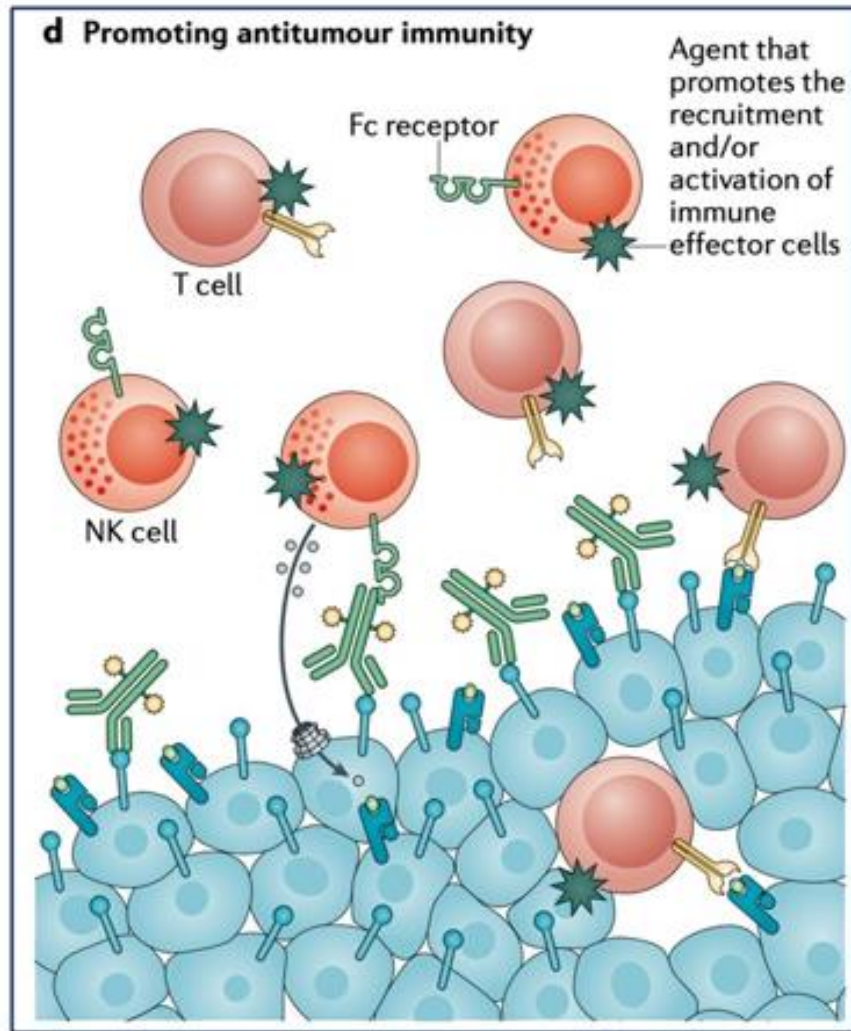
# Key ADCs in Metastatic Urothelial Cancer

ADC	Biomarker	Antibody	Linker	Payload	Regulatory Approval
<b>Enfortumab vedotin</b> 	No selection required, >90%	Humanized IgG1, anti-Nectin 4	Protease cleavable linker	MMAE (microtubule inhibitor)	FDA approval - EV 2019, EV + Pembro 2023; also EMA, Health Canada
<b>Sacituzumab govitecan</b> 	No selection required, >90%	Humanized IgG1, anti-Trop2	pH-sensitive cleavable linker	SN38 (topoisomerase I inhibitor)	Withdrawn from FDA 2024
<b>Trastuzumab deruxtecan</b> 	HER2 3+, 15%	Humanized IgG1, anti-HER2	Tetrapeptide-based cleavable linker	Deruxtecan (topoisomerase I inhibitor)	FDA approval - tumor agnostic HER2 IHC 3+ (gastric ca scoring) 2024
<b>Disitamab vedotin</b> 	HER2 2-3+, 50%	Humanized IgG1, anti-HER2	Protease cleavable linker	MMAE (microtubule inhibitor)	FDA breakthrough designation 2020; approved in China for HER2 2+/3+ platinum refractory mUC

HER2, human epidermal growth factor receptor 2; IgG1, immunoglobulin G1; MMAE, monomethyl auristatin E; Trop2, trophoblast cell surface antigen 2

Rosenberg, J Clin Oncol. 2020; Loriot, Clin Cancer Res. 2024; Aggen, ASCO 2024; Nally Eur Urol Focus. 2024; Dumontet, Nat Rev Drug Discov. 2023; Grant, Bladder Cancer 2024; Scherer, Front Oncol. 2022; Koshkin, 2023 GU ASCO

# Rationale for Combining ADC with ICI

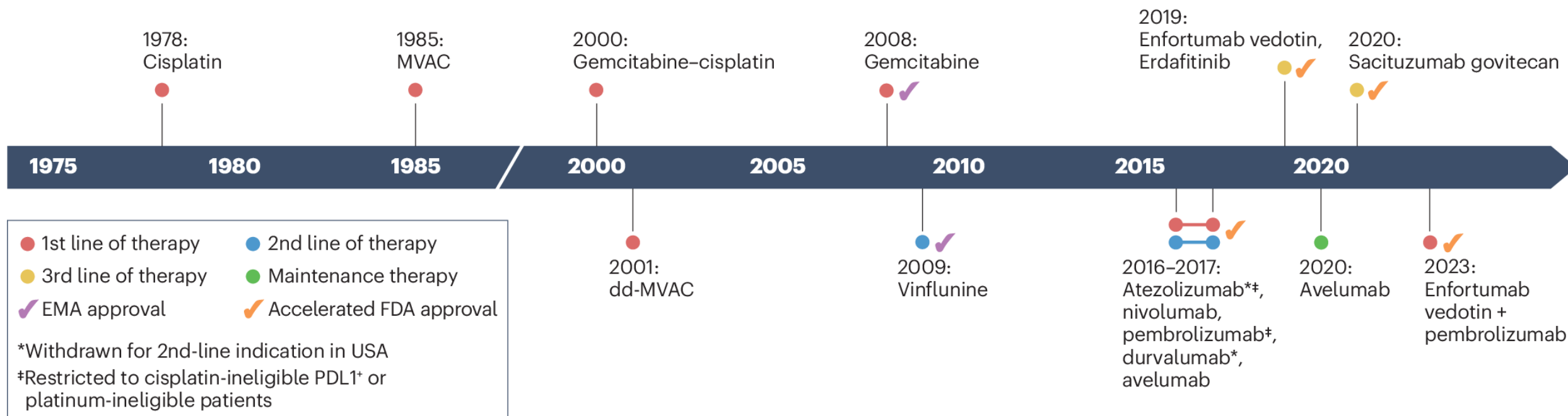


Drago, Nat Rev Clin Oncol. 2021, Nicolo, Cancer Treat Rev. 2022

- Pre-clinical evidence suggests ADCs have immunomodulatory activity.
  - Induce immunogenic cell death
  - Recruit T cells to the tumor microenvironment
  - Activate dendritic cells
- This provides a strong rationale for testing ADC combination strategies with immune checkpoint inhibitors.



# The Evolving Treatment Landscape of Metastatic Urothelial Cancer



# What is the Future of Bladder Cancer Trials?

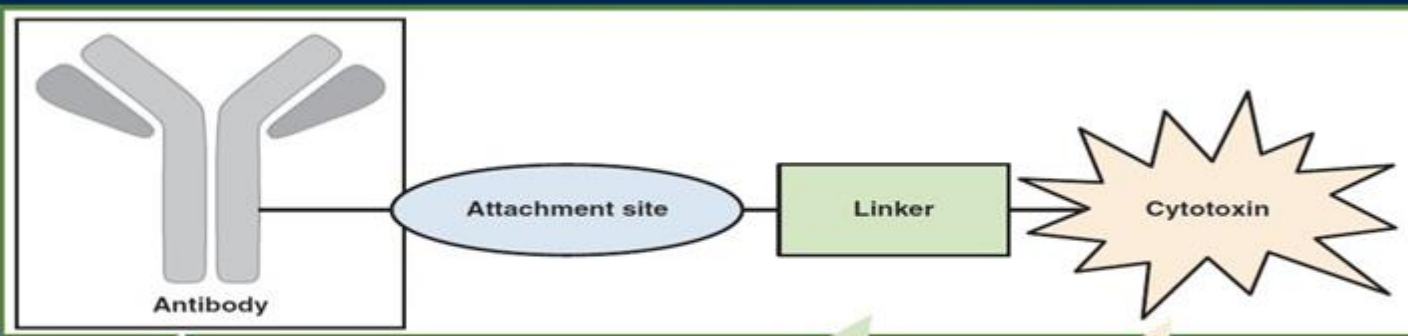
## On the Horizon:

- Novel ADCs (TROP2, HER2, NECTIN4, etc)
- Novel Immunotherapy post Pembrolizumab
- ADCs moving earlier into the perioperative and NMIBC space
- Trials dedicated to Variant Bladder Histology
- Subcutaneous Administration IO

## Further Away:

- Bispecifics and CART/NK cells
- Radioligands
- Trial collaboration incorporating real world “community” Bladder Cancer patients

# Disitamab Vedotin (RC48): HER2 MMAE ADC



## Antibody

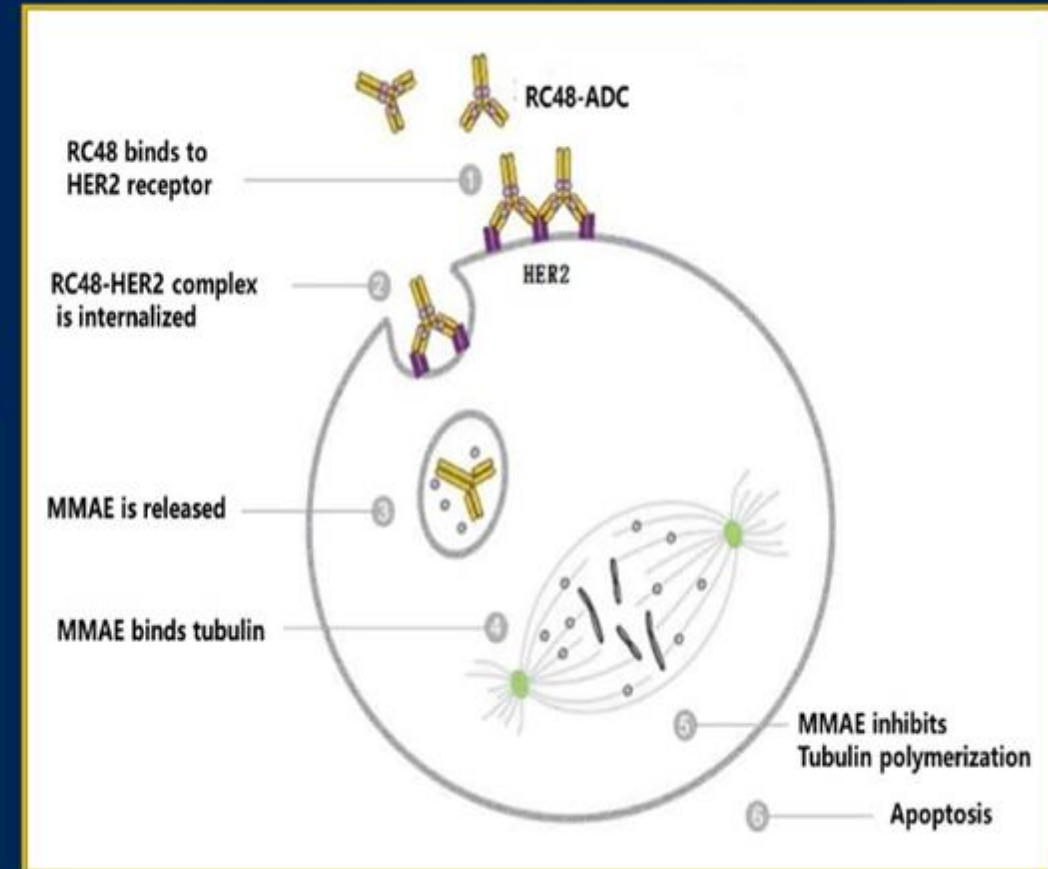
- Newly screened HER2 monoclonal antibody
- Different antigen recognition regions, and preferable affinity compared with trastuzumab

## Linker

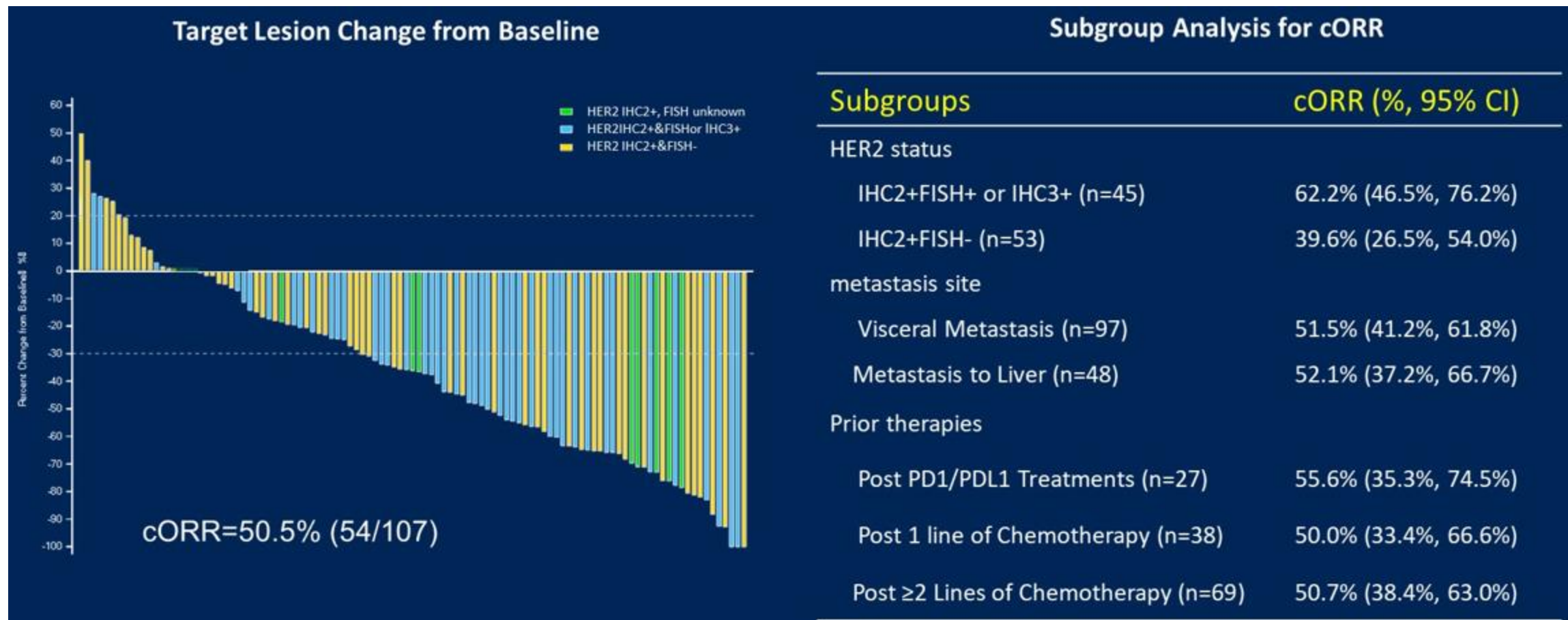
- Cleavable: A cathepsin cleavable valine–citrulline (VC) linker enables an easier release of payload post to the endocytosis
- Bystander Effect: Payload promotes potent cell killing upon initial release of the ADC and has the ability to kill surrounding tumor cells

## Payload

- MMAE: A potent antimitotic drug derived from peptides occurring in marine shell-less mollusc dolabella auricularia called dolastatins
- Inhibits cell division by blocking the polymerisation of tubulin

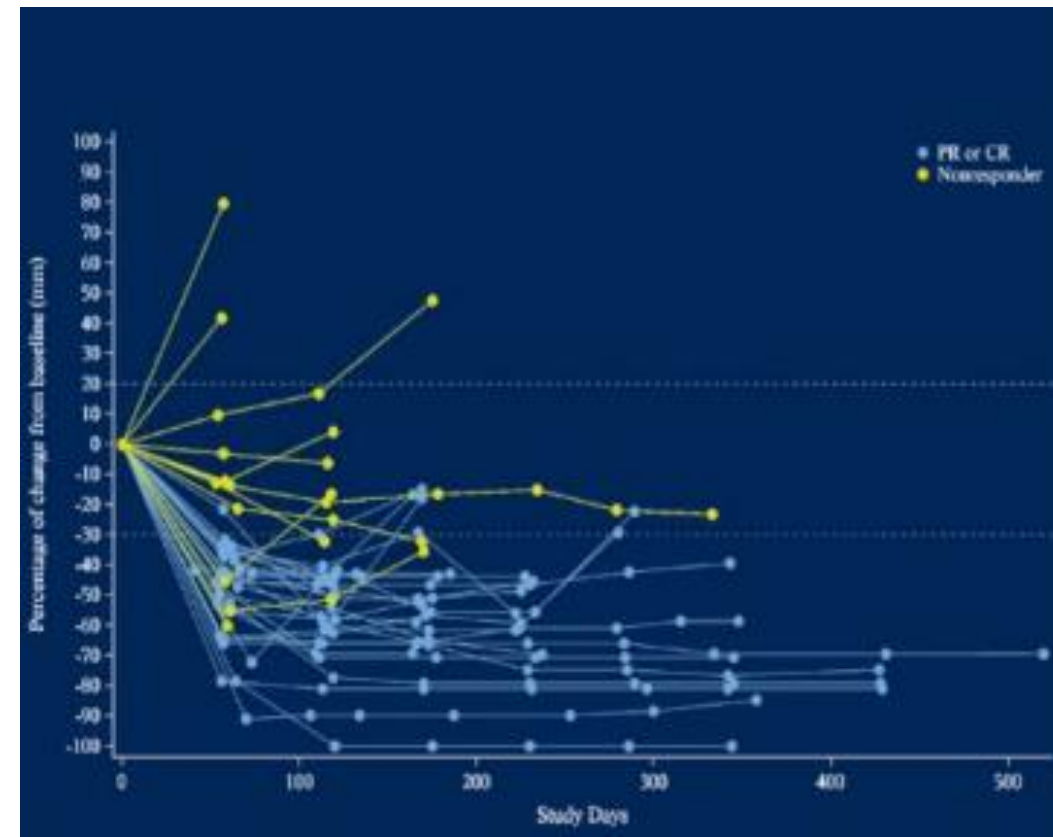
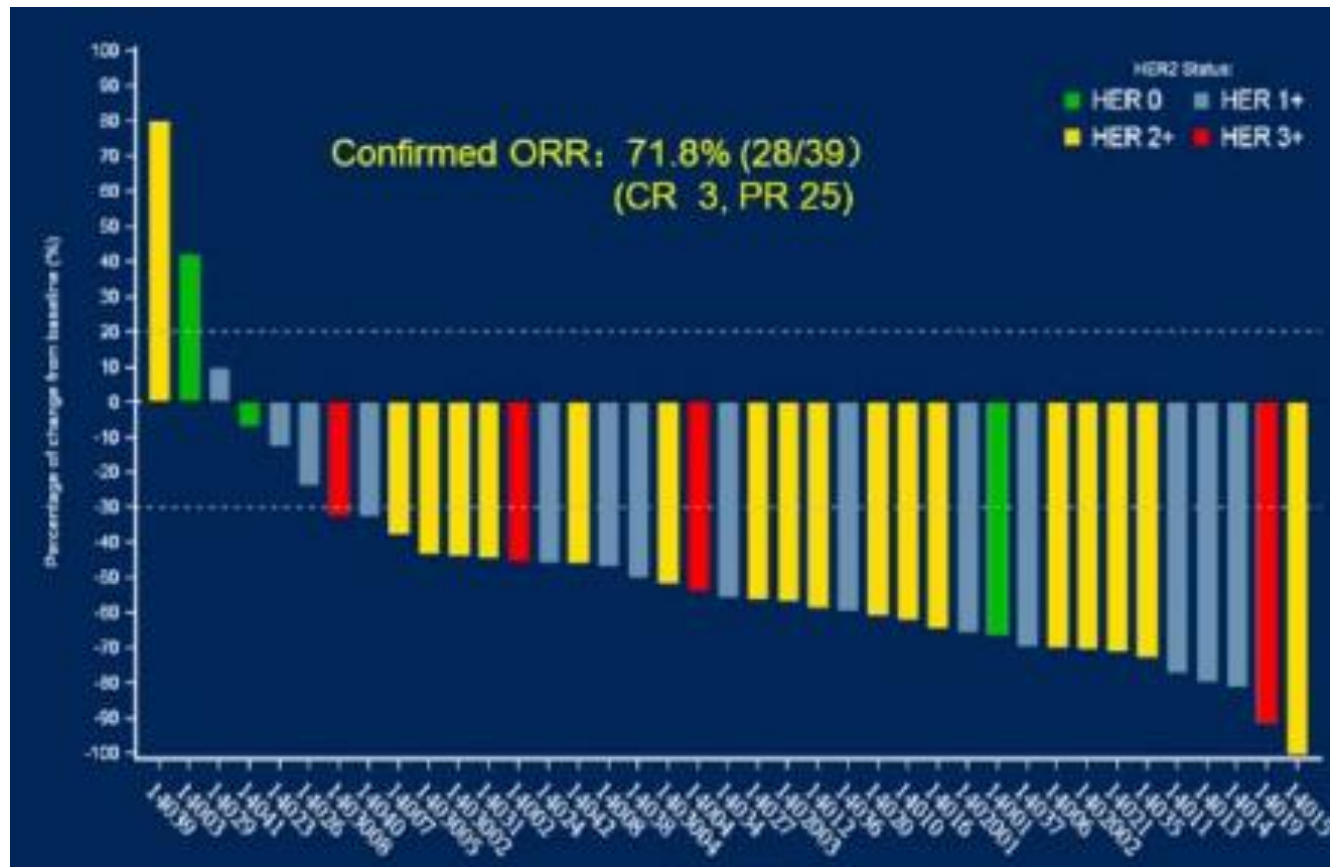


# Disitamab Vedotin (RC48): HER2 MMAE ADC



**mPFS 5.9m; mOS 14.2m**

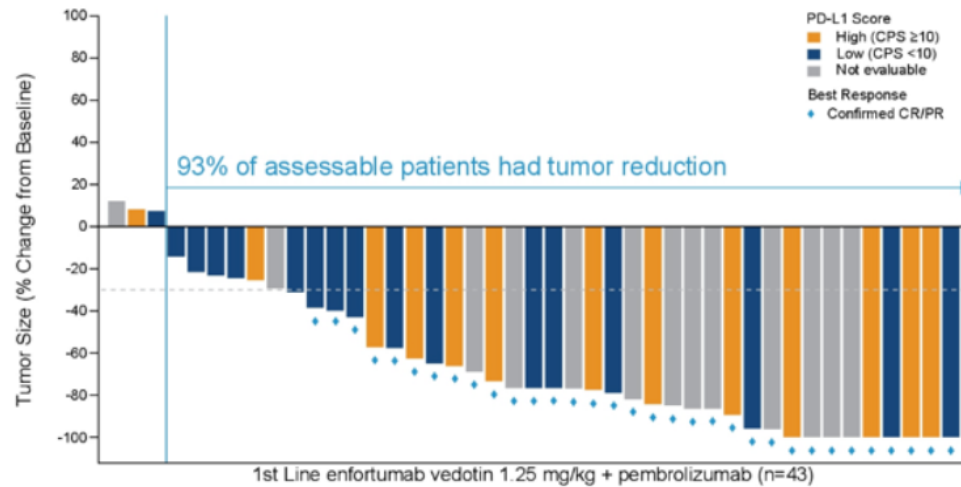
# Disitamab Vedotin + Torpalimab (anti-PD1)



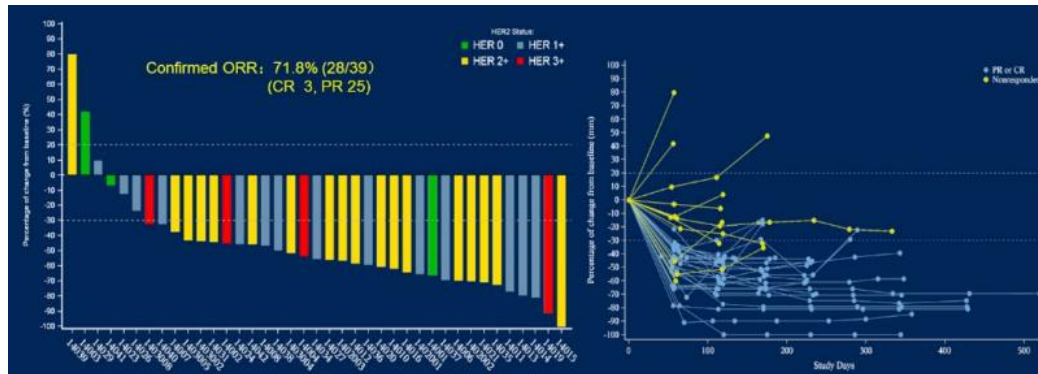
61% had not received prior systemic therapy



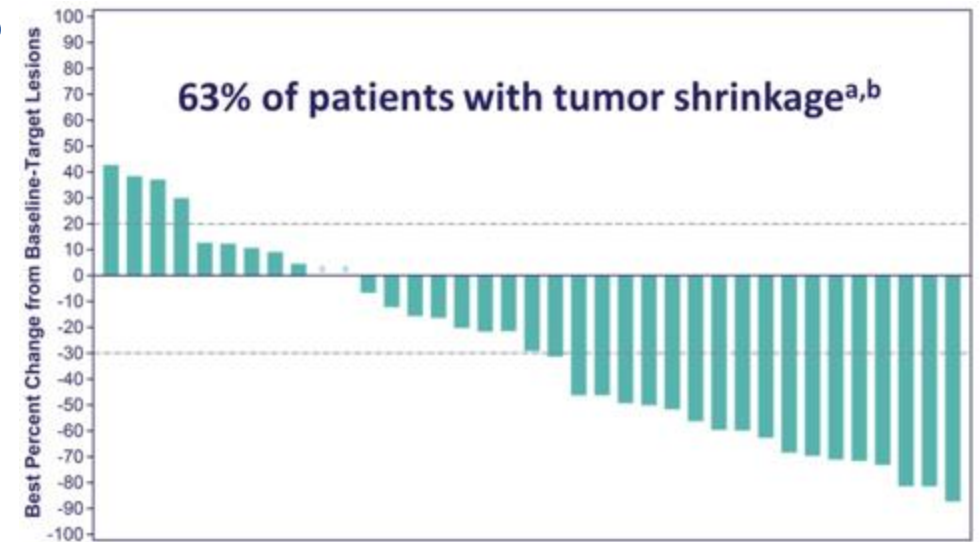
# IO Combos: Is MMAE Special?



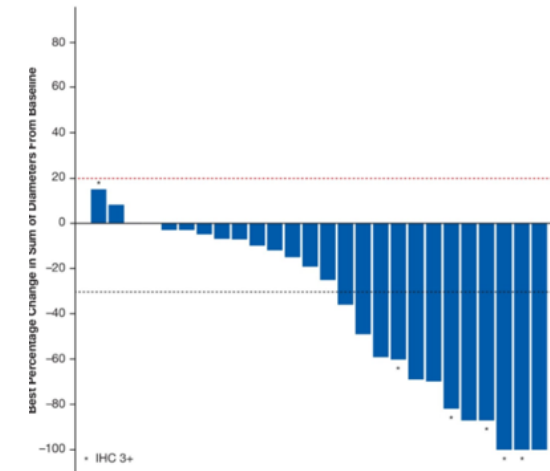
EV + PD1: ORR 67%



DV + PD1: ORR 72%



SG + PD1: ORR 34%



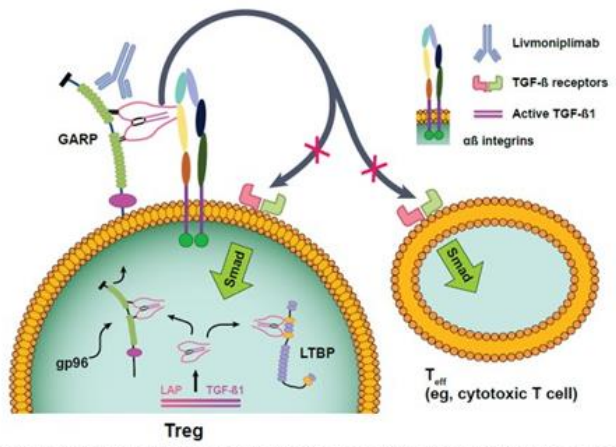
T-Dxd + PD1: ORR 37%

# LIVIGNO-3: Livmoniplimab (anti-GARP-TGF-β) in Combination with Budigalimab (anti-PD-1) versus Chemotherapy in Patients with mUC

*We are participating in the SCRI network!*

## Livmo Mechanism of Action

Livmo is a first-in-class antibody to target the GARP–TGF-β1 complex; binding of livmo locks TGF-β1 to GARP, preventing the release of TGF-β1 to effector T cells



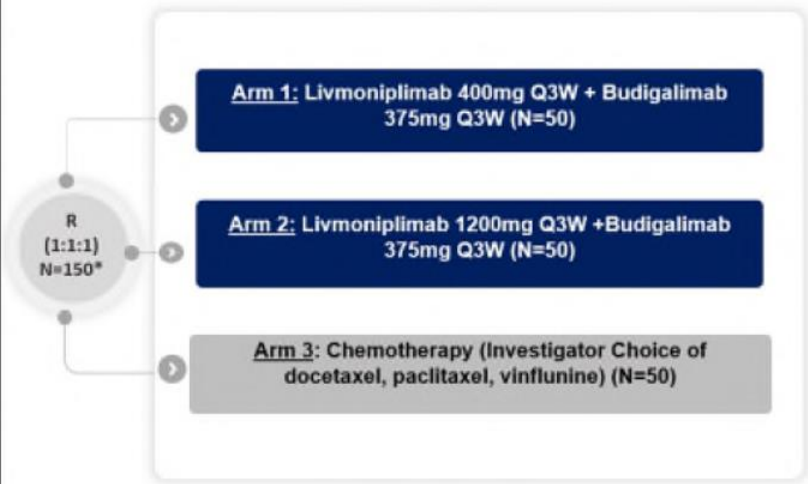
Reproduced with edits under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>) from Metelli A, et al. *J Hematol Oncol*. 2018;11:24.

## Key Eligibility Criteria

- Inclusion**
- Subjects with histologically or cytologically confirmed urothelial cancer
  - Progressed on a previous PD(L)1 in metastatic setting
  - Received platinum-based chemotherapy OR platinum ineligible
  - ECOG 0-1
- Exclusion**
- More than 1 prior chemotherapy regimen (platinum administered in neo/adjuvant will count as prior CT regimen if progression within 6 months)
  - >1 antibody-drug conjugate (ADC) in metastatic setting

## Stratification Factors

- ECOG (0 vs 1)
- 1L Therapy (Pembrolizumab +EV vs platinum-based CT)



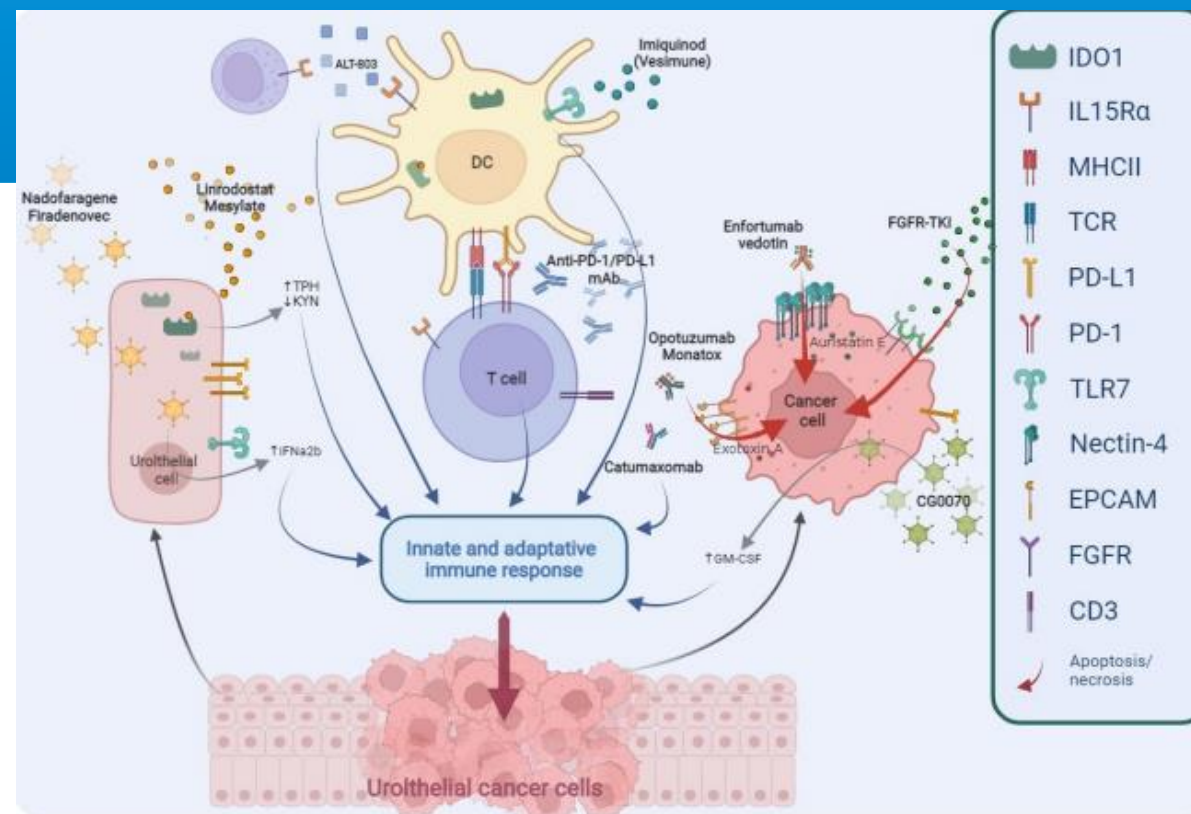
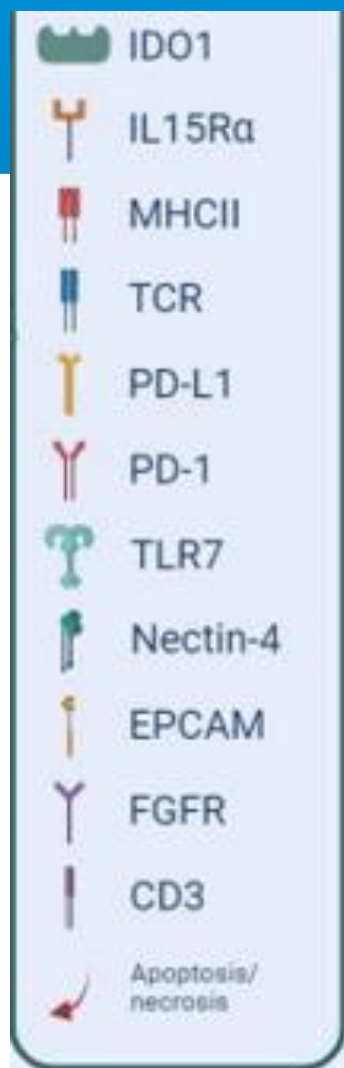
## Endpoints

- Primary**
- OS
- Secondary**
- PFS, ORR, DOR RECIST 1.1 per Investigator
  - PK and Safety
- Exploratory**
- PRO
  - Biomarker

Dandamudi, D.B. et al., ASCO 2024.

[clinicaltrials.gov NCT06632951](https://clinicaltrials.gov/NCT06632951)

# Scientific Targets in NMIBC



**Figure 2.** Main targets of novel drugs being investigated in BCG-unresponsive NMIBC. TPH, Tryptophan; KYN, Kynurenine; IFNα2b, Interferon α2b; DC, Dendritic Cell; PD1, Programmed cell Death protein 1; PD-L1, Programmed Death-Ligand 1; mAb, monoclonal Antibody; GM-CSF, Granulocyte-Macrophage Colony-Stimulating Factor; FGFR, Fibroblast Growth Factor Receptor; TKI, Tyrosine Kinase Inhibitors; IDO1, Indoleamine 2,3-Dioxygenase 1; IL-15Rα, Interleukin-15 receptor α; MHCII, Major Histocompatibility Complex Class II; TCR, T Cell Receptor; TLR7, Toll-like Receptor 7; EpCAM, Epithelial Cell Adhesion Molecule; CD3, Cluster of Differentiation 3.



# Expression of Nectin-4 and PD-L1 in Variant Histology

Nectin-4 and PD-L1 staining results among BCVH subtypes.

Histology	No. of specimens	% of total (N = 117)	Nectin-4 H-score		PD-L1
			Mean	Median (range)	CPS ≥ 10 n(%)
Squamous	31	26.5	207.7	219.5 (17-300)	15/30 (50)
Adenocarcinoma	24	20.5	166.9	140.0 (45-299)	4/24 (16.7)
Sarcomatoid	24	20.5	52.3	2.5 (0-300)	17/24 (70.8)
Plasmacytoid	20	17.1	253.5	257.5 (108-300)	1/20 (5)
Small cell	10	8.5	46.8	0 (0-233)	2/10 (20)
Mixed	8	6.8	122	105 (20-265)	2/8 (25)

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# Treatment Options for BCG Unresponsive NMIBC

	*Pembrolizumab <sup>1</sup>	*Nadofaragene firadenovec <sup>2</sup>	Gemcitabine/Docetaxel <sup>4</sup>	*N-803+BCG <sup>3</sup>	<b>TAR-200 monotherapy</b>
Mechanism	PD-1	Adenovirus mediated delivery of interferon alfa-2b gene	Direct cytotoxicity	IL-15 superagonist	Direct cytotoxicity
3 month CR CIS	41 %	53 %	-	71% (anytime)	<b>83.5%</b>
12 month CR CIS	19 %	24 %	60% (2yr 43%)	56 %	<b>57.4%</b>
Duration of CR-responders	24.1 mo	9.7 mo	13.1 mo	19.2 mo	82% at med f-up 9.2 mo
G3-5 AEs	13 %	3.8 %	3.3 % stop tx	11 % (no G5)	9.4% TRAE ≥G3

\* So far, no approval in Europe

CIS, carcinoma in situ; CR, complete response; AE, adverse event;

1. Balar AV, et al. *Lancet Oncol.* 2021;22:919-930. 2. ADSTILADRI<sup>®</sup> (nadofaragene firadenovec-vncg) [prescribing information]. Kastrup, Denmark: Ferring Pharmaceuticals; 2024. 3. Chamie K, et al. *NEJM Evid.* 2023;2(1):EVIDca2200167. 4. Pham T. *Urologic Oncology: Seminars and Original Investigations*, Volume 41, Issue 3, 2023, Pages 148.e1-148.e7, ISSN 1078-1439, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.urolonc.2022.10.030>; Mathieu Roumiguié, Peter C. Black. Sequential Gemcitabine plus Docetaxel is the Standard Second-line Intravesical Therapy for BCG-unresponsive Non-muscle-invasive bladder cancer: Pro, *European Urology Focus*, Volume 8, Issue 4, 2022, Pages 1117-1120, ISSN 2405-4569, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.euf.2021.07.018>.

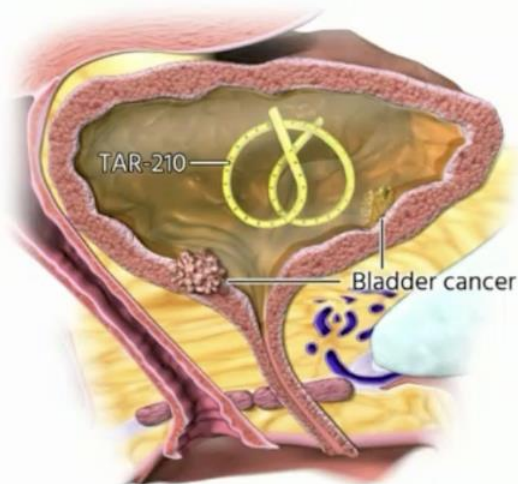


Maria De Santis



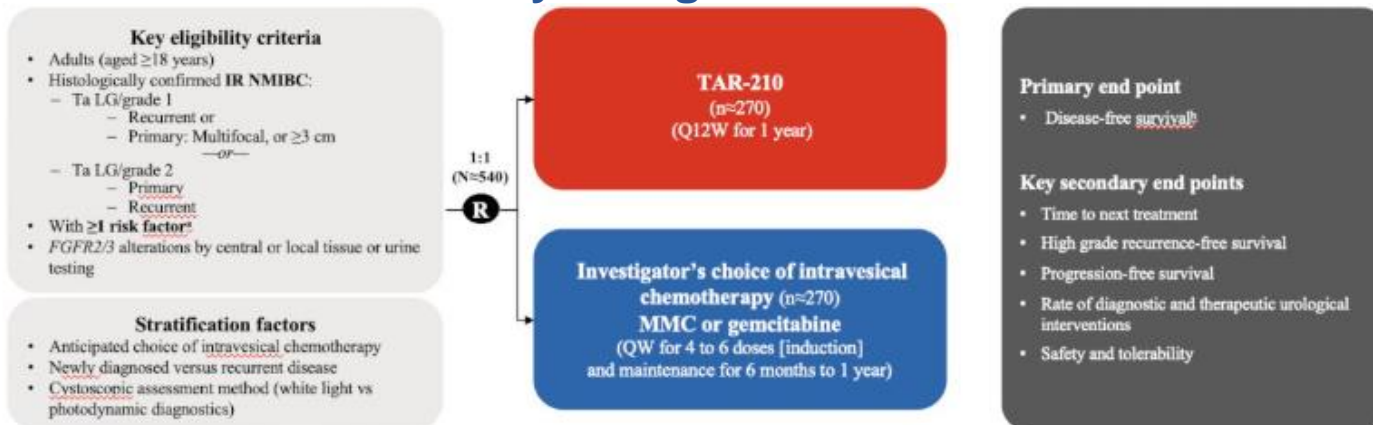
# Research Efforts in NMIBC

**TAR-210 is designed to provide local, sustained release of erdafitinib within the bladder for 3 months while limiting systemic toxicities**



Project	Description	Status	Data so far
TAR-210	Erdafitinib intravesical drug delivery system	Ph3 Moonrise-1 vs chemo in intermediate-risk pts with FGFR alterations	Ph1 data at ESMO 2023: 87% CR rate in 15 pts in cohort 3 (BCG-naive)
Balversa	Erdafitinib, oral FGFR kinase inhibitor	Ph2 Thor-2 vs chemo in high-risk BCG-experienced pts with FGFR mutations	Data at ESMO 2023: 72% reduction in risk of recurrence/death in 73 pts in cohort 1 (post-BCG)
TAR-200	Gemcitabine intravesical drug delivery system	Ph3 Sunrise-3 +/- cetrelimab vs BCG in BCG-naive high-risk pts; ph3 Sunrise-5 vs investigator's choice chemo in high-risk BCG-experienced pts	Ph2 Sunrise-1 in high-risk BCG-unresponsive pts, data at ESMO 2023: 77% CR rate in 30 pts

## Ph3 Moonrise-1 Study Design



Oncology/Pipeline & clinicaltrials.gov.

## Considerations include:

- There is a lack of data with neoadjuvant chemotherapy
- How to manage Erdafitinib toxicity early on
- Collaboration with urology groups
- Requirement for research biopsy could be problematic

# Subcutaneous Administration of IO

Although subcutaneous administration of immunotherapy gives patients more treatment options, there are concerns with patients not being seen as frequently by clinical staff during the duration of their therapy.

1

**Subcutaneous formulations of Nivolumab and Pembrolizumab are available.**

2

**Pfizer's Subcutaneous PD-1 Blocker, Sasanlimab in the Phase 3 CREST trial in HR NMIBC achieved significant efficacy.**

3

**Much to be seen with standard of care in the use of subcutaneous IO formulations.**

# SCRI: Can we Partner with You?

**250+** **IN** **24**  
Locations States



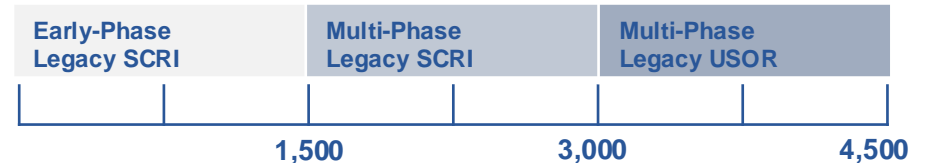
Our research network touches **1 in 5** patients with cancer through our affiliated sites

**1,300+**  
Research Physicians

**1,000+**  
Trials Actively Enrolling

**4,500+**  
Registered Patients Participating in Trials Yearly\*

Enrollments by Phase/Type



\*Based on combined annual data from 2019 to present

# Thank you!

**Mark.Fleming@USONCOLOGY.COM**