

ASCO 2023 Key Takeaways

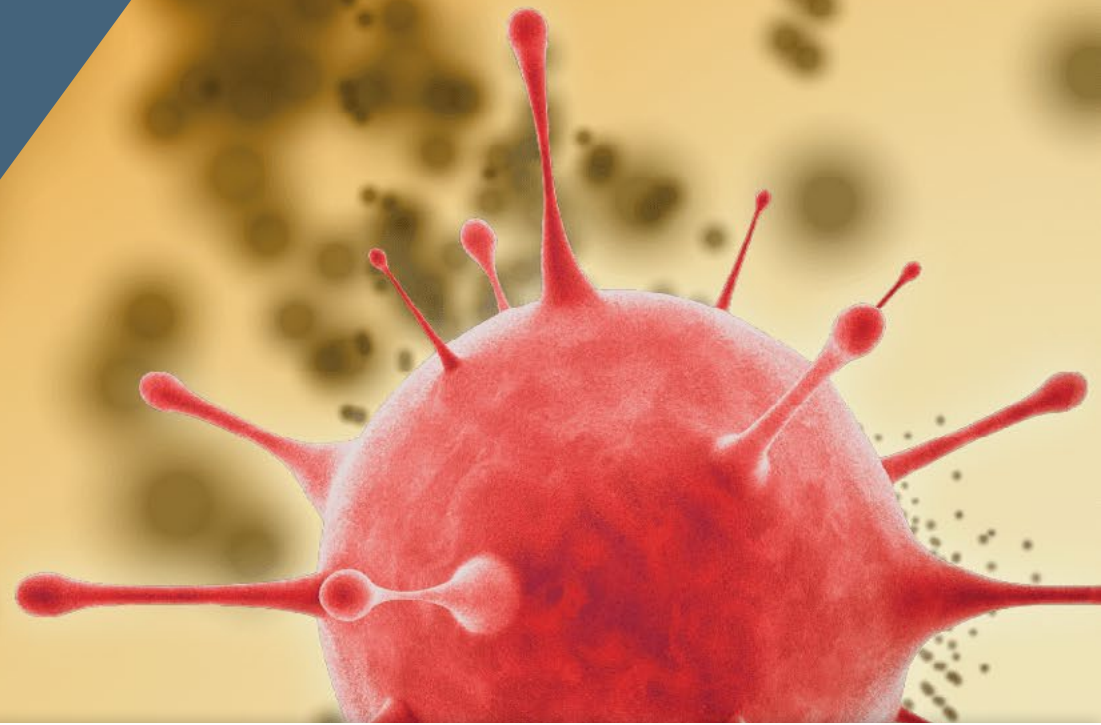
The ASCO 2023 annual meeting continues to be an inspiring and informative experience covering advances and challenges in oncology care. In alignment with this year's theme of Partnering With Patients: The Cornerstone of Cancer Care and Research, we focus on the key themes that place the patients at the center of care (with the understanding that other organizations are doing a great job in summarizing practice changing and transformational data).



Walter Moretto,
Vice President



Shirley Shadur,
Vice President



Overarching ASCO 2023 highlights include:

Shared decision making (SDM):

With the increase in treatment options, both HCPs and patients need improved quality and utilization of SDM as part of their disease management and treatment selection process. Several sessions directly discussed that for HCPs to offer patients the treatment options that best match their need, a structured conversation must occur at key moments in the patient journey. A productive SDM process is when the HCP applies active listening and deliberates with the patient and later recommends treatment options (in plural). Thus, highlighting what is the best, worst, and most likely case for the patient with each option, based on the patients' clinical condition, needs, and preference.

Personalized medicine:

The development of targeted therapies and tailoring treatment continues to be the path forward in oncology. The use of biomarkers is catalyzing significant progress in identifying the right patient for each treatment and guiding key treatment decisions, all to ensure outcomes are optimized and balanced with QoL and treatment burden.

- The NATALEE trial exhibited that ribociclib (Kisqali), a CDK4/6 inhibitor plus endocrine therapy (ET) lowered the risk of recurrence in HR+/HER2- early breast cancer, potentially expanding benefit beyond metastatic breast cancer.
- In the ADAURA trial, targeted therapy osimertinib (Tagrisso) significantly reduced the risk of death in certain adjuvant EGFR NCSCL patients, demonstrating survival, but also indicating the need for biomarker testing to identify the appropriate patients that can benefit the most based on their specific mutations (Exon 19del vs L858R), and the ones that may benefit from treatment de-intensification.
- The Phase II DESTINY-Pan Tumor02 study is investigating trastuzumab deruxtecan (Enhertu), an antibody drug conjugate (ADC), in a broad set of HER2-expressing solid tumors, providing a novel, tumor-agnostic approach for an ADC.

Overarching ASCO 2023 highlights include:

Immunotherapy evolves:

Checkpoint inhibitors, CAR T-cell therapy, and bispecific antibodies persist as promising treatments by advancing to new indications, being incorporated in earlier stages of disease, and potentially offering cure to more patients, both for solid tumors and hematologic malignancies.

- Interim results from the DUO-O study show that durvalumab (Imfinzi) plus Olaparib (Lynparza) added to standard care improves progression-free survival (PFS) in newly diagnosed advanced ovarian cancer without a BRCA mutation.
- The ENGOT-EN6-NSGO/GOG-3031/RUBY study of dostarlimab (Jemperli) plus chemotherapy followed by dostarlimab maintenance in primary advanced or recurrent endometrial has potential to change the standard of care.
- KEYNOTE-671 studied pembrolizumab (Keytruda) with chemotherapy in the perioperative NSCLC setting, possibly helping to shift immunotherapy to early NSCLC.
- CheckMate 9LA evaluating nivolumab (Opdivo) and ipilimumab (Yervoy) plus chemotherapy versus chemotherapy alone in mNSCLC without EGFR or ALK mutations, showed durable four-year overall survival benefit.
- The SWOG S1816 study showed that nivolumab (Opdivo) plus chemotherapy reduced the risk of cancer-related death compared to brentuximab (Adcetris) plus chemotherapy in frontline Hodgkin lymphoma in adults and children. With nivolumab's concurrent improved PFS, practice change is imminent.
- Among hematological malignancies, CAR T-cell therapy and bispecific antibodies continue to demonstrate benefits and moving to earlier lines of therapy, offering patients new treatment options, and reshaping the disease paradigm.
 - ZUMA-7 axi-cel (Yescarta) dementated 5-years OS in 2L LBCL and was positioned as the new 2L SOC. While NHL-1 epcoritamab (Epkiny) offered a new subcutaneous treatment option for 3L+ patients that may not be illegible or may not have access to a CAR T center.
 - In CARTITUDE-4, cilta-cel (Carvykti) presented data as compared to an active SOC (DPd or PVd) as early as 2L of therapy with lenalidomide-refractory multiple myeloma patients.
 - Bispecific antibodies teclistamab (Tecvayli), talquetamab, and elranatamab are all being investigated within multiple myeloma, indicating how complex the treatment landscape could become.
 - While not immunotherapies, luspatercept (Reblozyl) and imetelstat, represented in the COMMANDS and IMerge trials, respectively, showcases competitive advances in a subset of MDS patients for whom erythropoiesis-stimulating agents (ESAs) are standard of care.

Overarching ASCO 2023 highlights include:

Precision oncology:

Targeted therapies and tumor profiling continue to revolutionize the way cancer is treated.

- In the INDIGO trial, vorasidenib exhibited significant improvements in progression-free survival (PFS) in IDH-mutated glioma, an indication with high unmet need.
- The combination of encorafenib (Braftovi) and binimetinib (Mektovi) demonstrated activity in previously untreated and previously treated patients with BRAFV600E-mutant NSCLC and offer a new treatment option for BRAF mutations patient population.

De-escalation of treatment:

Aims to find opportunities to reduce intervention when added benefit is not demonstrated (“when less is more”).

- PROSPECT trial in locally advanced rectal cancer demonstrated that neoadjuvant FOLFOX with selective use of 5-FU chemoradiotherapy (5-FU CRT) was noninferior to 5-FU CRT. This highlighted the options patient have to de-escalate the treatment approach when they don't view the benefit as clinically significant or aligned with their goal of care.
- PHERGain trial in HER2+ early breast cancer trials may allow some patients to avoid additional radiation or chemotherapy treatment and the associated side effects (short and long-term) by adapted-response approach.

The future of cancer prevention and vaccines:

Including novel drug and vaccine development, designing, and implementing robust clinical trials and re-purposing existing treatments for the purposes of cancer prevention.

- After years of disappointment in developing cancer vaccines in areas as brain, lung, and kidney, Moderna and partner Merck shared new promising data in melanoma by adding mRNA-4157 to pembrolizumab (Keytruda).

Eric P. Winer, MD, FASCO, during the President's Address in the Opening Session:

“The discoveries of the past several decades have been monumental in cancer—basic, translational, clinical, and population-based research have led to life-altering progress and will ultimately allow us to eliminate death and suffering from cancer, assuming we can deliver the best care to everyone. Now, more than ever before, we need to reach out to our own patients, to the patient community at large, and to the general public to understand what we need to prioritize to make their lives better and we need to listen to their guidance. We must embrace patients as our partners in research.”

At Branding Science, patient centricity is an integral pillar of who we are and what we do.
Do get in touch to discuss/brainstorm how we can support you!

Together, We Will End Cancer As We Know It.
Everyone Has a Role.

