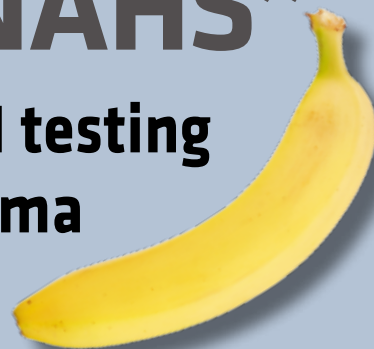


“I LIKE BANANAS, YOU LIKE BANAHNAHS”

A pathologists' debate on PD-L1 testing in muscle-invasive urothelial carcinoma and upper gastro-intestinal cancers

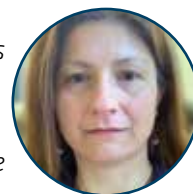


As patients with a high expression of PD-L1 are more likely to obtain a response to anti-PD-L1 therapy, the detection of PD-L1 can be used as a predictive biomarker. However, all anti-PD-L1 therapy companies used distinct immunohistochemistry (IHC) assays for PD-L1 expression, as well as different scoring schemes for the readout, in their pivotal clinical trials.¹ As such, there have been years of debate and confusion on how we should deal with all these PD-L1 assays in clinical practice. Although implementing all available assays in each laboratory is impossible due to limited tumour tissue, turnaround time and high costs, there is no firm consensus on the potential interchangeability of the various assays. During a BMS supported satellite symposium at the Belgian Week of Pathology meeting in October 2022, *Prof. Nicky D'Haene (ULB Erasme), Dr. Vasiliki Siozopoulou (UZA) and Dr. Roberto Salgado (GZA-ZNA)* tried to solve this dilemma in an interactive debate. Below, their expert opinions and recommendations are summarised.

To open the debate, *Dr. Roberto Salgado* shed some light over the current situation in PD-L1 testing. Over the past decade, programmed death-1 (PD-1) and programmed death-ligand 1 (PD-L1) inhibitors have gained momentum in a broad range of indications. In some indications, including non-small cell lung cancer, urothelial carcinoma, head and neck squamous cell carcinoma, triple-negative breast cancer, oesophageal squamous cell carcinoma, HER2-negative gastro-oesophageal junction cancer, HER2-negative gastric cancer and cervical cancer, the approval and reimbursement are restricted to PD-L1 expression thresholds. To determine if a patient is eligible for treatment with a PD-(L)1 inhibitor, pathology samples of the tumour need to be analysed by immunohistochemistry (IHC) to determine PD-L1 expression levels. However, pivotal clinical trials at the basis for approval of the PD-(L)1 inhibitors in the various cancer settings all use different PD-L1 scoring algorithms (tumour proportion score [TPS], combined positive score [CPS], expression on immune cells, etc.) and different cut-off values for readout. Furthermore, several commercially available kits and antibodies (28-8, 22C3, SP263 and SP142) are used as companion diagnostics throughout the clinical trials. As such, it is to no surprise to see that pathologists and oncologists are left behind with many questions and wonder whether a clinical trial validates an assay, or a biomarker.

What is the current situation in PD-L1 testing in MIUC and upper gastrointestinal cancers?

Dr. Siozopoulou: “Based on the results of the CheckMate 274 trial, nivolumab got approved and reimbursed for the adjuvant treatment of muscle-invasive urothelial cancer (MIUC). The dual primary outcome measures of the trial were the disease-free survival (DFS) in the intention-to-treat population and in patients with tumour PD-L1 $\geq 1\%$. The latter was defined by the percentage of positive tumour cell membrane staining in a minimum of 100 evaluable tumour cells using the PD-L1 IHC 28-8 PharmDx immunohistochemistry assay (TPS $\geq 1\%$).²”



Prof. D'Haene: “In upper gastro-intestinal tract cancers, first-line treatment with immunotherapy is only recommended in specific settings. In contrast to the MIUC setting, in the gastrointestinal setting, immune checkpoint inhibitor use is linked to the cancer type and PD-L1 expression evaluation. As such, nivolumab plus chemotherapy is indicated for patients with oesophageal squamous cell carcinoma (ESCC) with a TPS $\geq 1\%$ and for patients with HER2-negative oe-



sophageal adenocarcinoma (EAC), gastro-oesophageal junction cancer (GEJC) or gastric adenocarcinoma (GC) with a CPS ≥ 5 (all 28-8 PharmDx assay).^{3,4} Furthermore, pembrolizumab plus chemotherapy is indicated for patients with ESCC and a CPS ≥ 10 (22C3 assay) or HER2-negative patients with EAC or GEJC and a CPS ≥ 10 (22C3 assay).⁵"

Dr. Roberto Salgado concluded that companion diagnostics PD-L1 IHC assays thus seem to be developed in a "one assay, one drug" paradigm, which raises questions as to feasibility of using a specific PD-L1 assay for a certain drug or therapeutic indication. If pathologists are consistent, each laboratory would need to implement at least 5 different PD-L1-assays, all for the same biomarker. However, Dr. Salgado stressed that, in trials where outcomes were linked to PD-L1 expression, what is actually validated is PD-L1 as a biomarker for response to a certain drug, rather than the PD-L1 assay itself. In addition, neither the EMA nor the RIZIV/INAMI limit anti-PD-(L)1 treatment access to patients tested with a specific companion diagnostic assay. For patient selection, PD-L1 expression should only be confirmed by 'a validated test'.



Are PD-L1 IHC assays interchangeable?

To date, many PD-L1 IHC assays have been implemented in laboratories around the globe, either as companion diagnostic kits or as Laboratory-Developed Tests (LDT), and the analytical concordance between assays has been evaluated in multiple studies. While the Blueprint PD-L1 immunohistochemistry project in real-world clinical lung cancer samples consolidated the analytical evidence for interchangeability of the 22C3, 28-8, and SP263 assays for these patients, there is no real consensus in the setting of MIUC and upper gastro-intestinal cancers. Nonetheless, there is some evidence from literature.

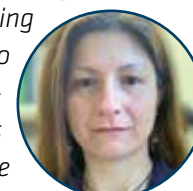
First of all, the concordance between 28-8-, 22C3-, and SP263-based assays in urothelial carcinoma was high when used to assess PD-L1 expression on tumour cells (TCs).⁶ Also in the setting of upper gastro-intestinal can-

cers, several studies have confirmed the interchangeability between the 22C3, 28-8 and SP263 assays. One of these studies demonstrated that the inter-observer variability was higher than the inter-assay variability. In other words, differences in interpretation between pathologists generate more variability than technical differences between assays. This implies that well-trained pathologists are of utmost importance for a correct interpretation of the staining results.⁷⁻¹⁰ Furthermore, the SP263, 28-8 and 22C3 assays all showed similar ranges of limit of detection, suggesting that they are of nearly equal sensitivity. In addition, properly designed and validated laboratory developed tests (LDT) perform equally to the original commercially available assays.¹¹ With the exception of the SP142 assay, **all commercially available as well as validated LDTs can thus be used interchangeably to measure PD-L1 levels in a daily practice setting.**

This is similar to the situation of HER2, where there are 4 different Companion Diagnostics (CdX). Although these assays are not perfectly but nearly interchangeable, for a daily practice use this has never been an issue, since pathologists are never requested to use a particular HER2 CdX depending on the anti-HER2 drug used. Nonetheless, a clear communication between pathologists and oncologists is of utmost importance for a successful diagnosis. In this, the oncologist must clearly communicate to the pathologist(s) which type of information is required. For example, in case of ESCC, the oncologist should request both TPS and CPS values if it is unclear what drug he/she aims to use, while for urothelial cancer in the adjuvant setting, only TPS is sufficient. Based on this information, the pathologist can then decide upon the best assay, knowing that any validated PD-L1 IHC tests can be used, and make a complete report on the staining results, in which PD-L1 expression shall ideally be reported as continuous variables rather than thresholds. This information can then be used by the oncologists to determine the patient's eligibility for a certain PD-(L)1 inhibitor.

Which sample should we test?

Dr. Siozopoulou: "In the adjuvant setting of MIUC, the question is still open as to whether to use the biopsy sample or excision sample for PD-L1 staining. Thus far, there are no clear-cut criteria as to use one or the other. However, the biopsy specimen is usually better fixated than the excision material and fixation plays an important role in IHC. Therefore, I would prefer to stain the biopsy material if enough viable tumour cells are present (a minimum of 100 viable tumour cells is required). However, if the initial biopsy result is negative but the patient already received neoadjuvant chemotherapy, it



TPS/TC	$\frac{(\#PD-L1 \text{ staining tumour cells})}{(\text{Total } \# \text{ viable tumour cells})} \times 100$
CPS	$\frac{(PD-L1 \text{ staining cells } @(\text{tumour cells, lymphocytes, macrophages}))}{(\text{total } \# \text{ viable tumour cells})} \times 100$
IC	$\frac{(\text{tumour area occupied by PD-L1 stained immune cell (lymphocytes, macrophages, dendritic cells, granulocytes)})}{(\text{total } \# \text{ viable tumour cells})} \times 100$

Key messages for clinical practice

- In terms of analytical performance, the SP263, 28-8 and 22C3 PD-L1 IHC assays are highly comparable and can interchangeably be used in a daily practice setting
- Laboratory developed tests (LDT) to measure PD-L1 expression can also be used when properly validated
- A clear communication between pathologists and oncologists is of utmost importance for an appropriate assessment of PD-L1
- Pathologists should be adequately trained to correctly interpret staining results
- Inter- as well as intra-tumour variability in PD-L1 expression levels can be significant and sufficient cells and tumour area thus need to be present before drawing any conclusions on the results
- If both primary and metastatic tumour samples are available, the primary tumour should be preferred for PD-L1 assessment

may be worthwhile to perform an extra analysis on the excision biopsy. Finally, PD-L1 is very heterogeneously expressed from area to area within the same tumour, meaning that results can be false negative if only small samples/areas are analysed.”

Prof. D’Haene: “In gastro-intestinal cancer, there is, as already described for other solid tumours, temporal and spatial heterogeneity of PD-L1 expression. In one study, biopsies showed a higher number of PD-L1 negative cases as compared to gastric surgical resection specimens. Out of patients with discrepant results between biopsy and gastrectomy, positive conversion (PD-L1 negative in biopsy and positive in resection) was more frequent than negative conversion.¹² Furthermore, another study observed that the baseline distant metastatic tumours have a lower PD-L1 positive rate than their matched baseline primary tumours. With regard to the situation pre- and post-treatment, there is temporal heterogeneity and no significant directional change in PD-L1 status after chemotherapy.¹³ Finally, the primary gastric tumour seems to be more often PD-L1 positive than the metastatic tumour.¹⁴ All together, sampling of the primary tumour is thus preferred.”



thologist to score according to the corresponding scoring system is of utmost importance. Important to note is also that all clinical trials with anti-PD-L1 drugs validated the use of PD-L1 as a biomarker for response to a certain drug, rather than validating the used vendor-specific PD-L1 assay itself. The site of biopsy can also largely influence the staining outcomes. Indeed, in most tumour types is the metastatic setting an immune-deprived environment. Given the lower amount of immune cells, PD-L1 expression is often lower in a metastatic biopsy. Hence, testing the primary tumour is always preferred. Finally, neither the EMA nor the RIZIV/INAMI states that the exact same diagnostic assay as in the clinical trials should be used to claim the patient’s eligibility for a certain PD-(L)1 inhibitor.

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CONCLUSION

In terms of analytical comparability, the SP263, 28-8 and 22C3 assays are interchangeable and can be used to assess PD-L1, independent of the tumour type and the organ where the cancer arose. However, the training of the pa-

Ex-factory (excl. VAT)		
OPDIVO 40 mg		€509,90
OPDIVO 100 mg		€1.274,75
OPDIVO 120 mg		€1.529,83
OPDIVO 240 mg		€3.059,65

Ex-factory (excl. VAT)		
YERVY 50 mg		€4.250,00
YERVY 200 mg		€17.000,00

1. NAME OF THE MEDICINAL PRODUCT OPDIVO 10 mg/mL concentrate for solution for infusion. **2. QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE COMPOSITION** Each mL of concentrate for solution for infusion contains 10 mg of nivolumab. One vial of 4 mL contains 40 mg of nivolumab. One vial of 10 mL contains 100 mg of nivolumab. One vial of 12 mL contains 120 mg of nivolumab. One vial of 24 mL contains 240 mg of nivolumab. Nivolumab is produced in Chinese hamster ovary cells by recombinant DNA technology. **Excipient with known effect** Each mL of concentrate contains 0.1 mmol (or 2.5 mg) sodium. For the full list of excipients, see section 6.1. **3. PHARMACEUTICAL FORM** Concentrate for solution for infusion. **4. CLINICAL PARTICULARS** **4.1 Therapeutic indications** **Melanoma** OPDIVO as monotherapy or in combination with ipilimumab is indicated for the treatment of advanced (unresectable or metastatic) melanoma in adults and adolescents 12 years of age and older. Relative to nivolumab monotherapy, an increase in progression-free survival (PFS) and overall survival (OS) for the combination of nivolumab with ipilimumab is established only in patients with low tumour PD-L1 expression (see sections 4.4 and 5.1). **Adjuvant treatment of melanoma** OPDIVO as monotherapy is indicated for the adjuvant treatment of adults and adolescents 12 years of age and older with melanoma with involvement of lymph nodes or metastatic disease who have undergone complete resection (see section 5.1). **Non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC)** OPDIVO in combination with ipilimumab and 2 cycles of platinum-based chemotherapy is indicated for the first-line treatment of metastatic non-small cell lung cancer in adults whose tumours have no sensitising EGFR mutation or ALK translocation. OPDIVO as monotherapy is indicated for the treatment of locally advanced or metastatic non-small cell lung cancer after prior chemotherapy in adults. **Malignant pleural mesothelioma (MPM)** OPDIVO in combination with ipilimumab is indicated for the first-line treatment of adult patients with unresectable malignant pleural mesothelioma. **Renal cell carcinoma (RCC)** OPDIVO as monotherapy is indicated for the treatment of advanced renal cell carcinoma after prior therapy in adults. OPDIVO in combination with ipilimumab is indicated for the first-line treatment of adult patients with intermediate/poor-risk advanced renal cell carcinoma (see section 5.1). OPDIVO in combination with cabozantinib is indicated for the first-line treatment of adult patients with advanced renal cell carcinoma (see section 5.1). **Classical Hodgkin lymphoma (CHL)** OPDIVO as monotherapy is indicated for the treatment of adult patients with relapsed or refractory classical Hodgkin lymphoma after autologous stem cell transplant (ASCT) and treatment with brentuximab vedotin. **Squamous cell cancer of the head and neck (SCCHN)** OPDIVO as monotherapy is indicated for the treatment of recurrent or metastatic squamous cell cancer of the head and neck in adults progressing on or after platinum-based therapy (see section 5.1). **Urothelial carcinoma** OPDIVO as monotherapy is indicated for the treatment of locally advanced or metastatic urothelial carcinoma in adults after failure of prior platinum-containing therapy. **Adjuvant treatment of urothelial carcinoma** OPDIVO as monotherapy is indicated for the adjuvant treatment of adults with muscle invasive urothelial carcinoma (MIUC) with tumour cell PD-L1 expression $\geq 1\%$, who are at high risk of recurrence after undergoing radical resection of MIUC (see section 5.1). **Mismatch repair deficient (dMMR) or microsatellite instability high (MSI-H) colorectal cancer (CRC)** OPDIVO in combination with ipilimumab is indicated for the treatment of adult patients with mismatch repair deficient or microsatellite instability high metastatic colorectal cancer after prior fluoropyrimidine-based combination chemotherapy (see section 5.1). **Oesophageal squamous cell carcinoma (OSCC)** OPDIVO in combination with ipilimumab is indicated for the first-line treatment of adult patients with unresectable advanced, recurrent or metastatic oesophageal squamous cell carcinoma with tumour cell PD-L1 expression $\geq 1\%$. OPDIVO in combination with fluoropyrimidine- and platinum-based combination chemotherapy is indicated for the first-line treatment of adult patients with unresectable advanced, recurrent or metastatic oesophageal squamous cell carcinoma with tumour cell PD-L1 expression $\geq 1\%$. OPDIVO as monotherapy is indicated for the treatment of adult patients with unresectable advanced, recurrent or metastatic oesophageal squamous cell carcinoma after prior fluoropyrimidine- and platinum-based combination chemotherapy. **Adjuvant treatment of oesophageal or gastro-oesophageal junction cancer (OC or GEJC)** OPDIVO as monotherapy is indicated for the adjuvant treatment of adult patients with oesophageal or gastro-oesophageal junction cancer who have residual pathologic disease following prior neoadjuvant chemotherapy (see section 5.1). **Gastric, gastro-oesophageal junction (GEJ) or oesophageal adenocarcinoma** OPDIVO in combination with fluoropyrimidine- and platinum-based combination chemotherapy is indicated for the first-line treatment of adult patients with HER2-negative advanced or metastatic gastric, gastro-oesophageal junction or oesophageal adenocarcinoma whose tumours express PD-L1 with a combined positive score (CPS) ≥ 5 . **4.2 Posology and method of administration** Treatment must be initiated and supervised by physicians experienced in the treatment of cancer. **PD-L1 testing** If specified in the indication, patient selection for treatment with OPDIVO based on the tumour expression of PD-L1 should be confirmed by a validated test (see sections 4.1, 4.4, and 5.1). **Posology OPDIVO as monotherapy** The recommended dose of OPDIVO is either nivolumab 240 mg every 2 weeks or 480 mg every 4 weeks depending on the indication and population (see sections 5.1 and 5.2), as presented in Table 1. **Table 1: Recommended dose and infusion time for intravenous administration of nivolumab monotherapy Indication*** : Recommended dose and infusion time Melanoma (advanced or adjuvant treatment) **Adults and adolescents (12 years of age and older and weighing at least 50 kg):** 240 mg every 2 weeks over 30 minutes or 480 mg every 4 weeks over 60 minutes **Adolescents (12 years of age and older and weighing less than 50 kg):** 3 mg/kg every 2 weeks over 30 minutes or 6 mg/kg every 4 weeks over 60 minutes. **Renal cell carcinoma, Muscle invasive urothelial carcinoma (MIUC) (adjuvant treatment):** 240 mg every 2 weeks over 30 minutes or 480 mg every 4 weeks over 60 minutes. **Oesophageal or gastro-oesophageal junction cancer (adjuvant treatment):** 240 mg every 2 weeks over 30 minutes or 480 mg every 4 weeks over 30 minutes; 240 mg every 4 weeks over 30 minutes; Non-small cell lung cancer, Classical Hodgkin lymphoma, Squamous cell cancer of the head and neck, Urothelial carcinoma, Oesophageal squamous cell carcinoma Recommended dose and infusion time: 240 mg every 2 weeks over 30 minutes *As per monotherapy indication in section 4.1. If melanoma, RCC, OC, GEJC or MIUC (adjuvant treatment) patients need to be switched from the 240 mg every 2 weeks schedule to the 480 mg every 4 weeks schedule, the first 480 mg dose should be administered two weeks after the last 240 mg dose. Conversely, if patients need to be switched from the 480 mg every 4 weeks schedule to the 240 mg every 2 weeks schedule, the first 240 mg dose should be administered four weeks after the last 480 mg dose. **OPDIVO in combination with ipilimumab Melanoma** In adults and adolescents 12 years of age and older and weighing at least 50 kg, the recommended dose is 1 mg/kg nivolumab in combination with 3 mg/kg ipilimumab administered intravenously every 3 weeks for the first 4 doses. This is then followed by a second phase in which nivolumab monotherapy is administered intravenously at either 240 mg every 2 weeks or at 480 mg every 4 weeks (see sections 5.1 and 5.2), as presented in Table 2. For the monotherapy phase, the first dose of nivolumab should be administered: 3 weeks after the last dose of the combination of nivolumab and ipilimumab if using 240 mg every 2 weeks; or 6 weeks after the last dose of the combination of nivolumab and ipilimumab if using 480 mg every 4 weeks. In adolescents 12 years of age and older and weighing less than 50 kg, the recommended dose is 1 mg/kg nivolumab in combination with 3 mg/kg ipilimumab administered intravenously every 3 weeks for the first 4 doses. This is then followed by a second phase in which nivolumab monotherapy is administered intravenously at either 240 mg every 2 weeks or at 480 mg every 4 weeks (see sections 5.1 and 5.2), as presented in Table 2. For the monotherapy phase, the first dose of nivolumab should be administered: 3 weeks after the last dose of the combination of nivolumab and ipilimumab if using 3 mg/kg every 2 weeks; or 6 weeks after the last dose of the combination of nivolumab and ipilimumab if using 6 mg/kg every 4 weeks. **Table 2: Recommended doses and infusion times for intravenous administration of nivolumab in combination with ipilimumab for melanoma Nivolumab** Combination phase, every 3 weeks for 4 dosing cycles **Adults and adolescents 12 years of age and older:** 1 mg/kg over 30 minutes. **Monotherapy phase** **Adults and adolescents (12 years of age and older and weighing at least 50 kg):** 240 mg every 2 weeks over 30 minutes or 480 mg every 4 weeks over 60 minutes; **Adolescents (12 years of age and older and weighing less than 50 kg):** 3 mg/kg over 2 weeks over 30 minutes or 6 mg/kg every 4 weeks over 60 minutes. **Ipilimumab** Combination phase, every 3 weeks for 4 dosing cycles **Adults and adolescents 12 years of age and older:** 3 mg/kg over 30 minutes. **Malignant pleural mesothelioma** The recommended dose is 360 mg nivolumab administered intravenously over 30 minutes every 3 weeks in combination with 1 mg/kg ipilimumab administered intravenously over 30 minutes every 6 weeks. Treatment is continued for up to 24 months in patients without disease progression. **Renal cell carcinoma and dMMR or MSI-H colorectal cancer** The recommended dose is 3 mg/kg nivolumab in combination with 1 mg/kg ipilimumab administered intravenously every 3 weeks for the first 4 doses. This is then followed by a second phase in which nivolumab monotherapy is administered intravenously at either 240 mg every 2 weeks or at 480 mg every 4 weeks (RCC only), as presented in Table 3. For the monotherapy phase, the first dose of nivolumab should be administered; 3 weeks after the last dose of the combination of nivolumab and ipilimumab if using 240 mg every 2 weeks; or 6 weeks after the last dose of the combination of nivolumab and ipilimumab if using 480 mg every 4 weeks (RCC only). **Table 3: Recommended doses and infusion times for intravenous administration of nivolumab in combination with ipilimumab for RCC and dMMR or MSI-H CRC Nivolumab** Combination phase, every 3 weeks for 4 dosing cycles: 3 mg/kg over 30 minutes **Monotherapy phase:** 240 mg every 2 weeks over 30 minutes or 480 mg every 4 weeks over 60 minutes **Ipilimumab** Combination phase, every 3 weeks for 4 dosing cycles: 1 mg/kg over 30 minutes - **Oesophageal squamous cell carcinoma** The recommended dose is either 3 mg/kg nivolumab every 2 weeks or 360 mg nivolumab every 3 weeks administered intravenously over 30 minutes in combination with 1 mg/kg ipilimumab administered intravenously over 30 minutes every 6 weeks. Treatment is recommended until disease progression, unacceptable toxicity, or up to 24 months in patients without disease progression. **OPDIVO in combination with cabozantinib Renal cell carcinoma** The recommended dose is nivolumab administered intravenously at either 240 mg every 2 weeks or 480 mg every 4 weeks in combination with 40 mg cabozantinib administered orally every day. **Table 4: Recommended doses and infusion times for intravenous administration of nivolumab in combination with oral administration of cabozantinib for RCC. Nivolumab** Combination phase: 240 mg every 2 weeks over 30 minutes or 480 mg every 4 weeks over 60 minutes **Cabozantinib** Combination phase: 40 mg once daily. **OPDIVO in combination with ipilimumab and chemotherapy Non small cell lung cancer** The recommended dose is 360 mg nivolumab administered intravenously over 30 minutes every 3 weeks in combination with 1 mg/kg ipilimumab administered intravenously over 30 minutes every 6 weeks, and platinum-based chemotherapy administered every 3 weeks. After completion of 2 cycles of chemotherapy, treatment is continued with 360 mg nivolumab administered intravenously every 3 weeks in combination with 1 mg/kg ipilimumab every 6 weeks. Treatment is recommended until disease progression, unacceptable toxicity, or up to 24 months in patients without disease progression. **OPDIVO in combination with chemotherapy Oesophageal squamous cell carcinoma** The recommended dose of nivolumab is 240 mg every 2 weeks or 480 mg every 4 weeks administered intravenously over 30 minutes in combination with fluoropyrimidine- and platinum-based chemotherapy (see section 5.1). **Treatment with nivolumab is recommended until disease progression, unacceptable toxicity, or up to 24 months in patients without disease progression. Gastric, gastro-oesophageal junction or oesophageal adenocarcinoma** The recommended dose is 360 mg nivolumab administered intravenously over 30 minutes in combination with fluoropyrimidine- and platinum-based chemotherapy administered every 3 weeks or 240 mg nivolumab administered intravenously over 30 minutes in combination with fluoropyrimidine- and platinum-based chemotherapy administered every 2 weeks (see section 5.1). **Treatment with nivolumab is recommended until disease progression, unacceptable toxicity, or up to 24 months in patients without disease progression. Duration of treatment** Treatment with OPDIVO, either as a monotherapy or in combination with ipilimumab or other therapeutic agents, should be continued as long as clinical benefit is observed or until treatment is no longer tolerated by the patient (and up to maximum duration of therapy if specified for an indication). For adjuvant therapy, the maximum treatment duration with OPDIVO is 12 months. For OPDIVO in combination with cabozantinib, OPDIVO should be continued until disease progression, unacceptable toxicity, or up to 24 months in patients without disease progression. Cabozantinib should be continued until disease progression or unacceptable toxicity. Refer to the Summary of Product Characteristics (SmPC) for cabozantinib. Atypical responses (i.e., an initial transient increase in tumour size or small new lesions within the first few months followed by tumour shrinkage) have been observed. It is recommended to continue treatment with nivolumab or nivolumab in combination with ipilimumab for clinically stable patients with initial evidence of disease progression until disease progression is confirmed. Dose escalation or reduction is not recommended for OPDIVO as monotherapy or in combination with other therapeutic agents. Dosing delay or discontinuation may be required based on individual safety and tolerability. Guidelines for permanent discontinuation or withholding of doses are described in Table 5. Detailed guidelines for the management of immune-related adverse reactions are described in section 4.4. When nivolumab is administered in combination with other therapeutic agents, refer to the SmPC of these other combination therapeutic agents regarding dosing. **Table 5: Recommended treatment modifications for OPDIVO or OPDIVO in combination Immune-related pneumonitis** Severity: Grade 2 pneumonitis **Treatment modification** Withhold dose(s) until symptoms resolve, radiographic abnormalities improve, and management with corticosteroids is complete **Severity:** Grade 3 or 4 pneumonitis **Treatment modification:** Permanently discontinue treatment **Immune-related colitis** Severity: Grade 2 diarrhoea or colitis **Treatment modification:** Withhold dose(s) until symptoms resolve and management with corticosteroids, if needed, is complete **Severity:** Grade 3 diarrhoea or colitis - OPDIVO monotherapy **Treatment modification:** Withhold dose(s) until symptoms resolve and management with corticosteroids is complete - OPDIVO-**ipilimumab** **Treatment modification:** Permanently discontinue treatment **Severity:** Grade 4 diarrhoea or colitis **Treatment modification:** Permanently discontinue treatment **Immune-related hepatitis** Severity: Grade 2 elevation in aspartate aminotransferase (AST), alanine aminotransferase (ALT), or total bilirubin **Treatment modification:** Withhold dose(s) until laboratory values return to baseline and management with corticosteroids, if needed, is complete **Severity:** Grade 3 or 4 elevation in AST, ALT, or total bilirubin **Treatment modification:** Permanently discontinue treatment. **NOTE:** for RCC patients treated with OPDIVO in combination with cabozantinib with liver enzyme elevations, see dosing guidelines following this table. **Immune-related nephritis and renal dysfunction** Severity: Grade 2 or 3 creatinine elevation **Treatment modification:** Withhold dose(s) until creatinine returns to baseline and management with corticosteroids is complete **Severity:** Grade 4 creatinine elevation **Treatment modification:** Permanently discontinue treatment **Immune-related endocrinopathies** Severity: Symptomatic Grade 2 or 3 hypothyroidism, hyperthyroidism, hypophysitis, **Severity:** Grade 2 adrenal insufficiency **Severity:** Grade 3 diabetes **Treatment modification:** Withhold dose(s) until symptoms resolve and management with corticosteroids (if needed for symptoms of acute inflammation) is complete. Treatment should be continued in the presence of hormone replacement therapy^a as long as no symptoms are present **Severity:** Grade 4 hypothyroidism **Severity:** Grade 4 hypophysitis **Severity:** Grade 3 or 4 adrenal insufficiency **Severity:** Grade 4 diabetes **Treatment modification:** Permanently discontinue treatment **Immune-related skin adverse reactions** Severity: Grade 3 rash **Treatment modification:** Withhold dose(s) until symptoms resolve and management with corticosteroids is complete **Severity:** Grade 4 rash **Treatment modification:** Permanently discontinue treatment **Severity:** Stevens-Johnson syndrome (SJS) or toxic epidermal necrolysis (TEN) **Treatment modification:** Permanently discontinue treatment (see section 4.4) **Immune-related myocarditis** Severity: Grade 2 myocarditis **Treatment modification:** Withhold dose(s) until symptoms resolve and management with corticosteroids is complete **Severity:** Grade 3 or 4 myocarditis **Treatment modification:** Permanently discontinue treatment **Other immune-related adverse reactions** Severity: Grade 3 (first occurrence) **Treatment modification:** Withhold dose(s) **Severity:** Grade 4 or recurrent Grade 3; persistent **Severity:** Grade 2 or 3 despite treatment modification; inability to reduce corticosteroid dose to 10 mg prednisone or equivalent per day **Treatment modification:** Permanently discontinue treatment **Note:** Toxicity grades are in accordance with National Cancer Institute Common Terminology Criteria for Adverse Events Version 4.0 (NCTCAE v4). ^a During administration of the second phase of treatment (nivolumab monotherapy) following combination treatment, permanently discontinue treatment if Grade 3 diarrhoea or colitis occurs. ^b Recommendation for the use of hormone replacement therapy is provided in section 4.4. ^c The safety of re-initiating nivolumab or nivolumab in combination with ipilimumab therapy in patients previously experiencing immune-related myocarditis is not known. OPDIVO as monotherapy or in combination with other therapeutic agents should be permanently discontinued for: Grade 4 or recurrent Grade 3 adverse reactions; Persistent Grade 2 or 3 adverse reactions despite management. Patients treated with OPDIVO must be given the patient alert card and be informed about the risks of OPDIVO (see also package leaflet). When OPDIVO is administered in combination with ipilimumab, if either agent is withheld, the other agent should also be withheld. If dosing is resumed after a delay, either the combination treatment or OPDIVO monotherapy could be resumed based on the evaluation of the individual patient. When OPDIVO is administered in combination with chemotherapy, refer to the SmPC of the other combination therapy agents regarding dosing. If any agents are withheld, the other agents may be continued. If dosing is resumed after a delay, either the combination treatment, OPDIVO monotherapy or chemotherapy alone could be resumed based on the evaluation of the individual patient. **OPDIVO in combination with cabozantinib in RCC** When OPDIVO is used in combination with cabozantinib, the above treatment modifications in Table 5 also apply to the OPDIVO component. In addition, for liver enzyme elevations, in patients with RCC being treated with OPDIVO in combination with cabozantinib: - If ALT or AST > 3 times ULN but ≤ 10 times ULN without concurrent total bilirubin ≥ 2 times ULN, both OPDIVO and cabozantinib should be withheld until these adverse reactions recover to Grades 0-1. Corticosteroid therapy may be considered. Rechallenge with a single medicine or rechallenge with both medicines after recovery may be considered. If rechallenging with cabozantinib, refer to cabozantinib SmPC. - If ALT or AST > 10 times ULN or > 3 times ULN with concurrent total bilirubin ≥ 2 times ULN, both OPDIVO and cabozantinib should be permanently discontinued and corticosteroid therapy may be considered. **Special populations Paediatric population** The safety and efficacy of OPDIVO in children below 18 years of age have not been established except in adolescents 12 years of age and older with melanoma. Currently available data of OPDIVO as monotherapy or in combination with ipilimumab are described in sections 4.2, 4.8, 5.1 and 5.2. **Elderly** No dose adjustment is required for elderly patients (≥ 65 years) (see section 5.2). **Renal impairment** Based on the population pharmacokinetic (PK) results, no dose adjustment is required in patients with mild or moderate renal impairment (see section 5.2). Data from patients with severe renal impairment are too limited to draw conclusions on this population. **Hepatic impairment** Based on the population PK results, no dose adjustment is required in patients with mild hepatic impairment (see section 5.2). Data from patients with moderate or severe hepatic impairment are too limited to draw conclusions on these populations. OPDIVO must be administered with caution in patients with moderate (total bilirubin $> 1.5 \times$ to $3 \times$ the upper limit of normal [ULN] and any AST) or severe (total bilirubin $> 3 \times$ ULN and any AST) hepatic impairment. **Method of administration** OPDIVO is for intravenous use only. It is to be administered as an intravenous infusion over a period of 30 or 60 minutes depending on the dose (see Tables 1, 2, 3 and 4). The infusion must be administered through a sterile, non-pyrogenic, low protein binding in-line filter with a pore size of 0.2-2.2 μm . OPDIVO must not be administered as an intravenous push or bolus injection. The total dose of OPDIVO required can be infused directly as a 10 mg/mL solution or can be diluted with sodium chloride 9 mg/mL (0.9%) solution for injection or glucose 50 mg/mL (5%) solution for injection (see section 6.6). When administered in combination with ipilimumab and/or chemotherapy, OPDIVO should be given first followed by ipilimumab (if applicable) and then by chemotherapy on the same day. Use separate infusion bags and filters for each infusion. For instructions on the preparation and handling of the medicinal product before administration, see section 6.6. **4.3 Contraindications** Hypersensitivity to the active substance or to any of the excipients listed in section 6.1. **4.4 Undesirable effects** **Nivolumab as monotherapy (see section 4.2)** **Summary of the safety profile** In the pooled dataset of nivolumab as monotherapy across tumour types (n = 4122) with minimum follow-up ranging from 2.3 to 28 months, the most frequent adverse reactions ($\geq 10\%$) were fatigue (45%), musculoskeletal pain (31%), diarrhoea (26%), cough (24%), rash (24%), nausea (23%), pruritus (19%), decreased appetite (18%), constipation (17%), dyspnoea (17%), abdominal pain (16%), upper respiratory tract infection (16%), arthralgia (14%), pyrexia (14%), vomiting (14%), headache (13%) and oedema (10%). The majority of adverse reactions were mild to moderate (Grade 1 or 2). The incidence of Grade 3-5 adverse reactions was 44%, with 0.3% fatal adverse reactions attributed to study drug. With a minimum of 63 months follow-up in NSCLC, no new safety signals were identified. **Tabulated summary of adverse reactions** Adverse reactions reported in the pooled dataset for patients treated with nivolumab monotherapy

