Impact of Tislelizumab on Health-Related Quality of Life in Asian Patients with Esophageal Squamous Cell Carcinoma

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Background
Analysis of the intent-to-treat (ITT) population of RATIONALE-302 (NCT03430843) found overall HRQoL, fatigue, and physical functioning were maintained in esophageal squamous cell carcinoma (ESCC) patients (pts) receiving tislelizumab (TIS) while worsening in pts receiving investigator-chosen chemotherapy (ICC). This post-hoc analysis examined HRQoL and ESCC symptoms in the Asian subgroup of pts in RATIONALE-302.

Methods
Pts with advanced or metastatic ESCC that progressed following systemic therapy were randomized 1:1 to receive either TIS or ICC (paclitaxel, docetaxel, or irinotecan). HRQoL was measured using the EORTC QLQ-C30 and the QLQ-OES18. Least-squares (LS) mean score change from baseline to weeks 12 and 18 in HRQoL scores was assessed using a mixed model for repeated measurements.

Results
Analysis was conducted using the 392 pts in the Asian subgroup (TIS, N=192; ICC, N=200). For the GHS/QoL index score, LS mean change from baseline to week 12 (6.2 [95% CI: 2.2 to 10.2], *P*=0.0025) and week 18 (9.4 [95% CI: 4.1 to 14.7], *P*=0.0006) was significantly different between the arms with the TIS pts experiencing maintenance and the ICC pts worsening. Both arms experienced worsening in fatigue but change was significantly less in the TIS arm vs ICC pts particularly at week 12 (-6.4 [95% CI: -11.5 to -1.4], *P*=0.0118). TIS patients experienced less worsening in eating than ICC pts particularly at week 18 (-5.7 [95% CI: -11.3 to 0.0], *P*=0.0510). Reflux improved at week 12 in the TIS pts and worsened in ICC pts and the difference between the arms was significant (-5.7 [95% CI: -9.7 to -1.6], *P*=0.0063).

Conclusions
The HRQoL and ESCC-related symptoms of the Asian subgroup of TIS pts remained stable or improved while ICC pts experienced worsening. These HRQoL results in Asian pts corroborate the HRQoL findings in the in total population suggesting tislelizumab is a potential new second-line treatment option for pts with advanced or metastatic ESCC.