Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer

ADVANCES IN Cancer IMMUNOTHERAPY™

Basic Principles of Cancer Immunotherapy

Stephen Schoenberger, PhD

Professor

La Jolla Institute for Immunology

AAEM AMERICAN ACADEMY OF EMERGENCY MEDICINE CHAMPION OF THE EMERGENCY PHYSICIAN

ACCC Association of Community Cancer Centers

HOPA Hematology/Oncology Pharmacy Association

Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer

© 2019–2020 Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer

Disclosures

- Consulting Fees: Ariagen, Nektar
- Contracted Research: Pfizer, Nektar

- I will not be discussing non-FDA approved indications during my presentation.

© 2019–2020 Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer

The Premise of Cancer Immunotherapy

- Normally, the immune system eliminates damaged cells, including precancerous and cancer cells

- To escape, tumors evolve mechanisms to locally disable the immune system.

The goal of immunotherapy is to restore the capacity of the immune system to recognize and eliminate cancer.

© 2019–2020 Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer

Two major mechanisms of tumor immune escape

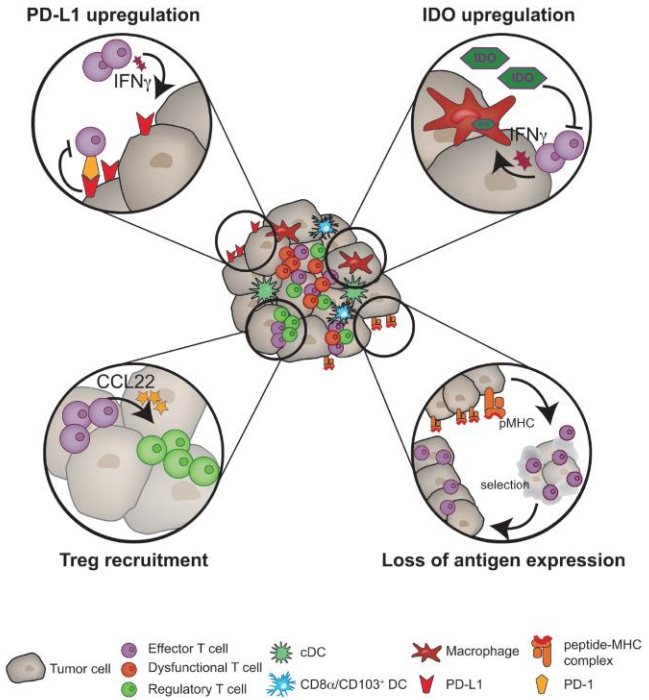
- **Render the immune response dysfunctional:** cytotoxic (CD8+) T cells often become dysfunctional or exhausted during chronic stimulation (chronic viral responses or responses against tumors). To enhance T cell dysfunction, the tumor microenvironment upregulates a suite of suppressive molecules.

- **Avoiding an immune response:** A state in which the tumor remains invisible to the immune system. Many features of tumors can result in immune exclusion/avoidance including lack of antigens (T cells don't "see" anything on the tumor) or active immune repellents.

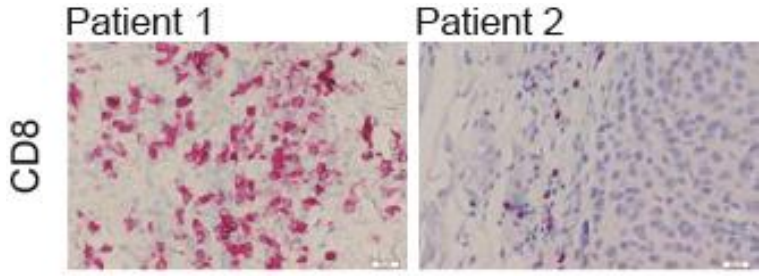
© 2019–2020 Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer

Immune evasion

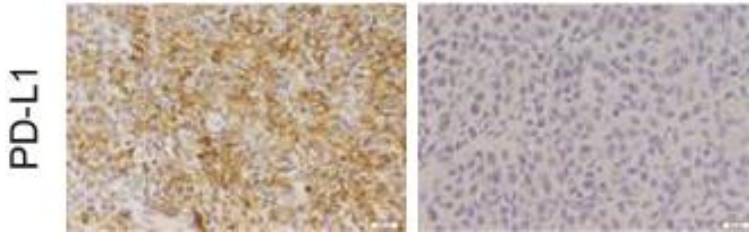
T cell-inflamed tumor microenvironment



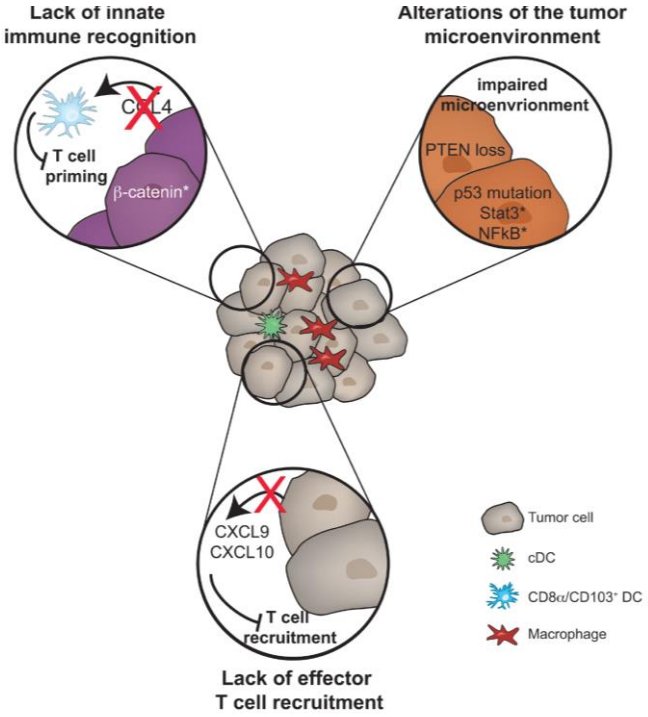
T cells



Immune suppression



Non-T cell-inflamed tumor microenvironment

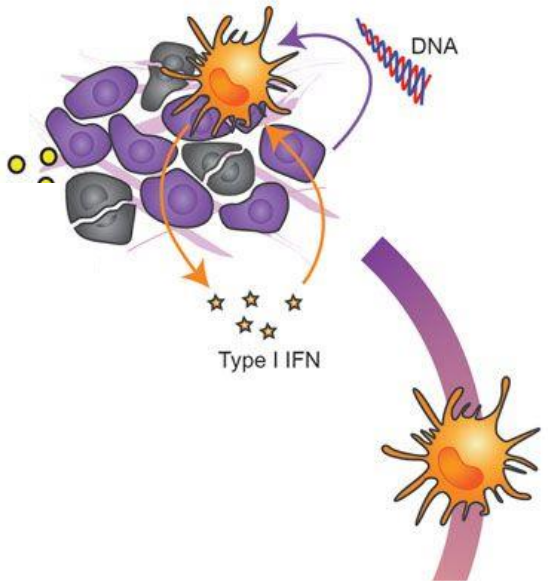


Spranger et al., STM 2013
Spranger, Internat Immunol. 2016

© 2019–2020 Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer

Initiation of an anti-tumor immune response

Innate immune sensing (i.e. Sting activation)



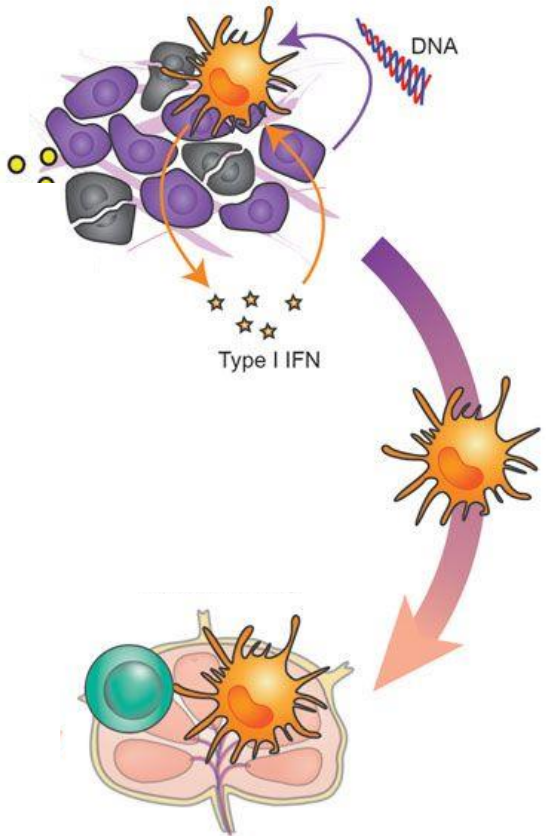
APC maturation
&
Transport to lymph node

Modified from Corrales et al. Cell Res. 2017

© 2019–2020 Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer

Initiation of an anti-tumor immune response

Innate immune sensing (i.e. Sting activation)



APC maturation
&
Transport to lymph node

Cytotoxic T cell activation

Modified from Corrales et al. Cell Res. 2017

© 2019–2020 Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer

Antigen-specific T cell Activation

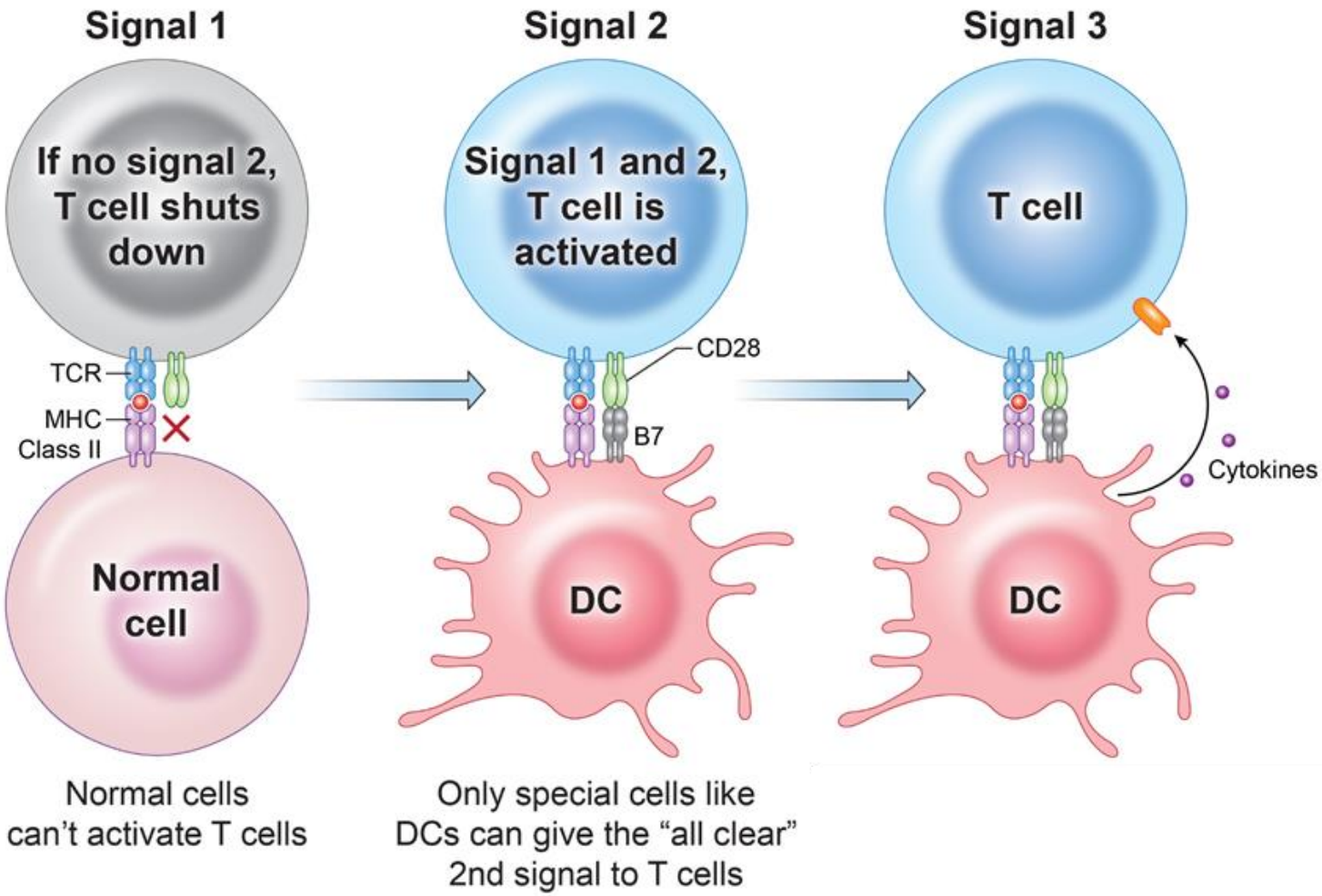


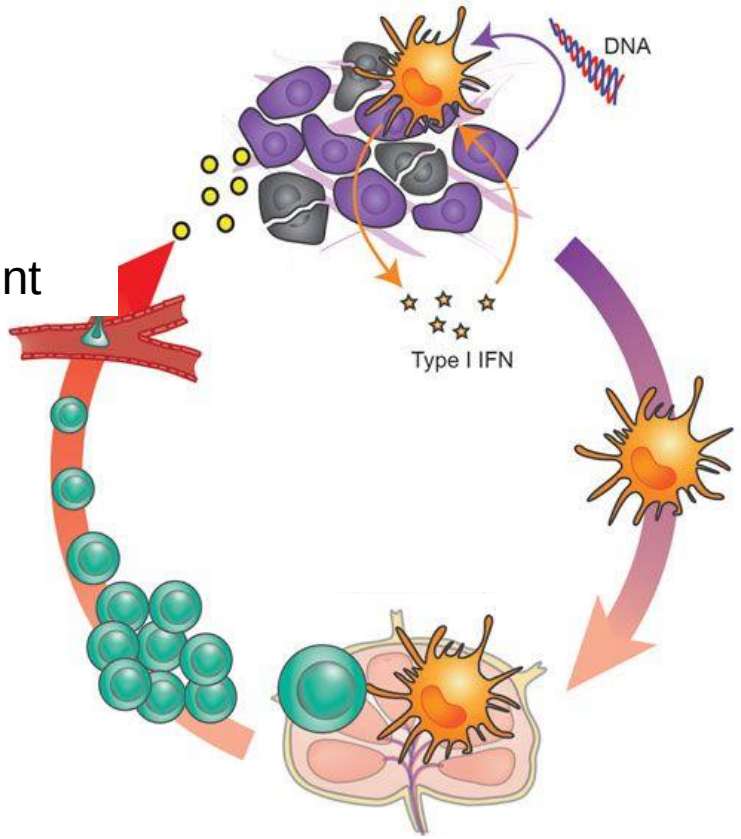
Image courtesy of NCI

© 2019–2020 Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer

Initiation of an anti-tumor immune response

Innate immune sensing (i.e. Sting activation)

T cell recruitment



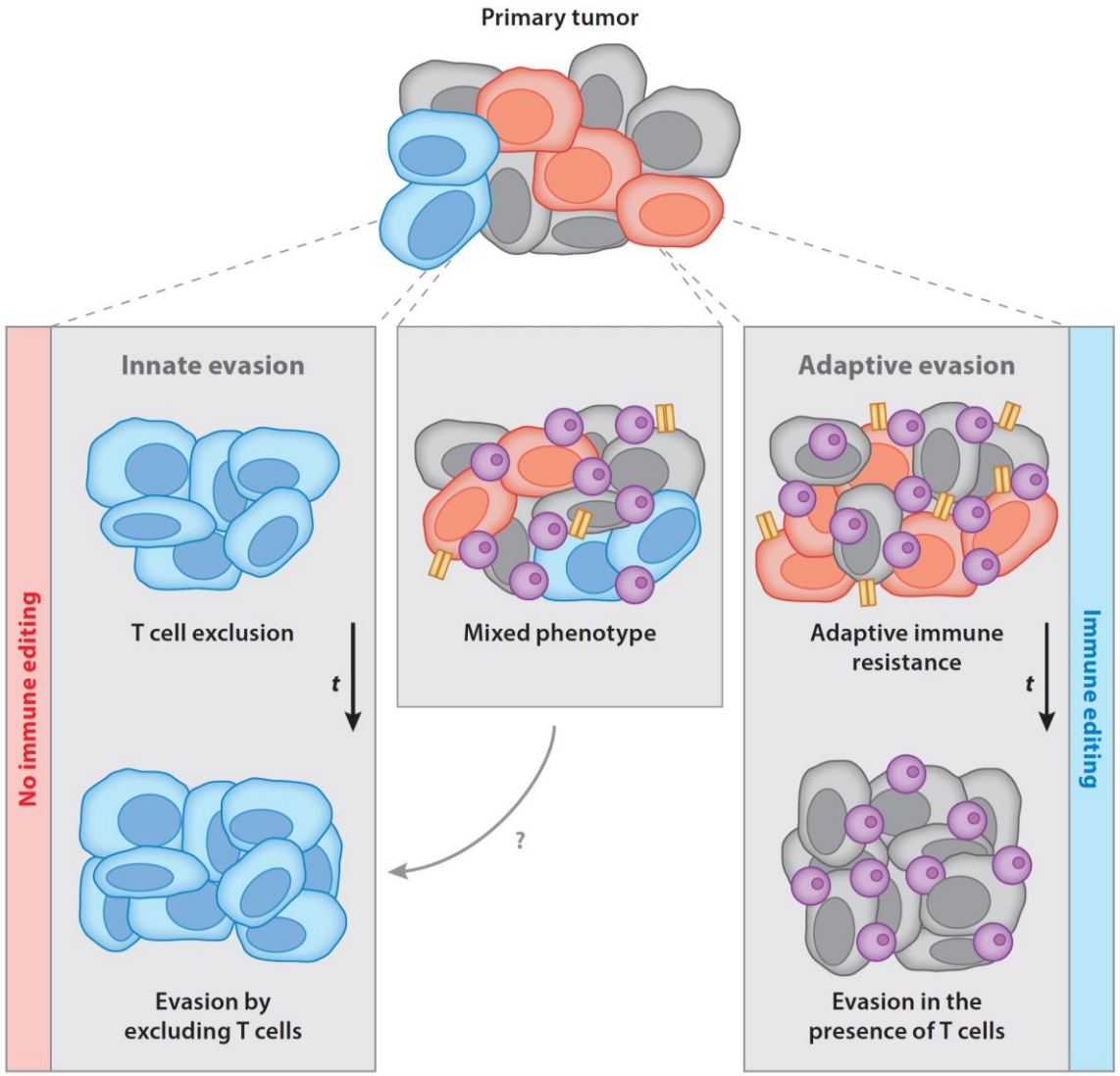
APC maturation
&
Transport to lymph node

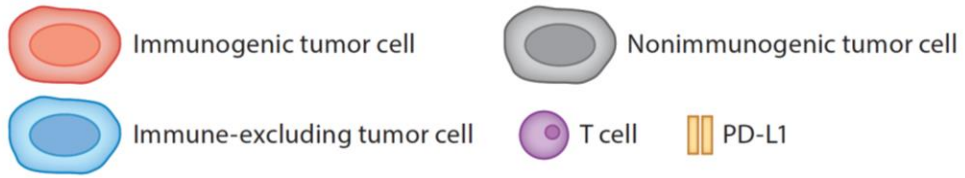
Cytotoxic T cell activation

Modified from Corrales et al. Cell Res. 2017

© 2019–2020 Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer

Immune evasion occurs over time

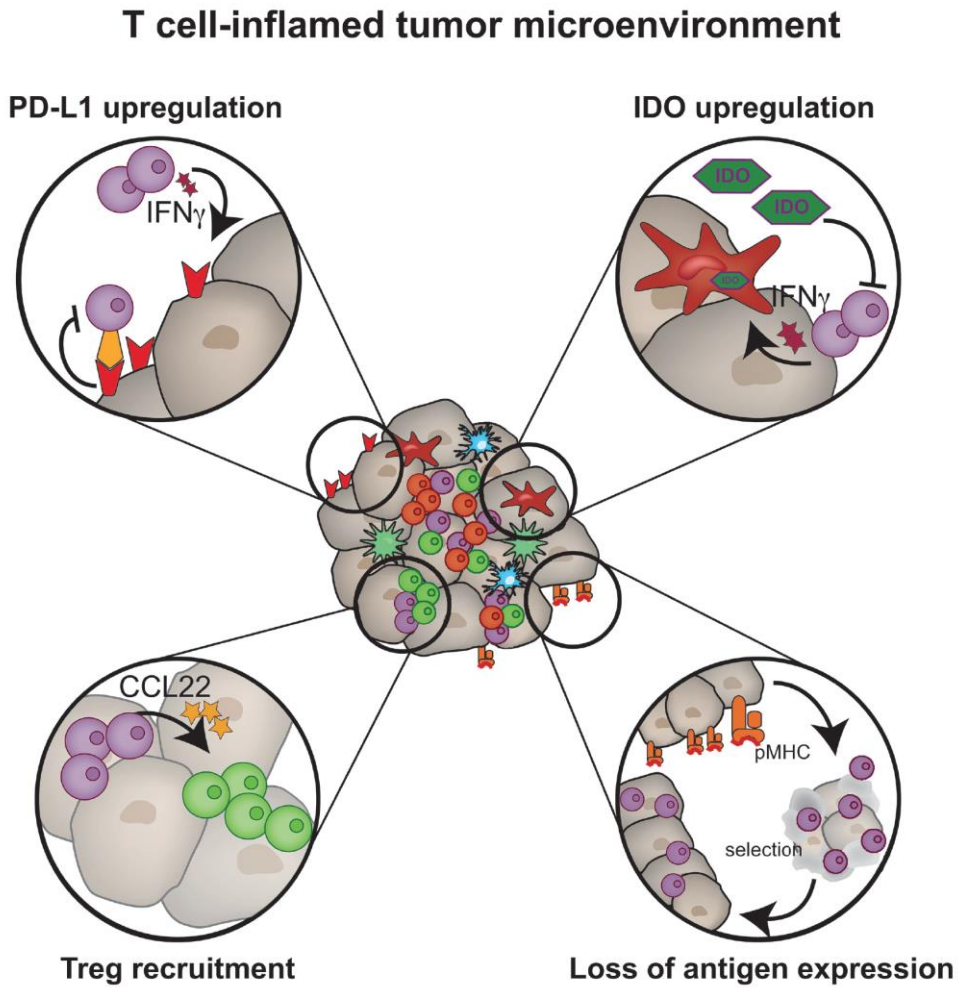




Spranger, AR Cancer 2018

© 2019–2020 Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer

T cell inflamed tumor microenvironment is immune suppressive



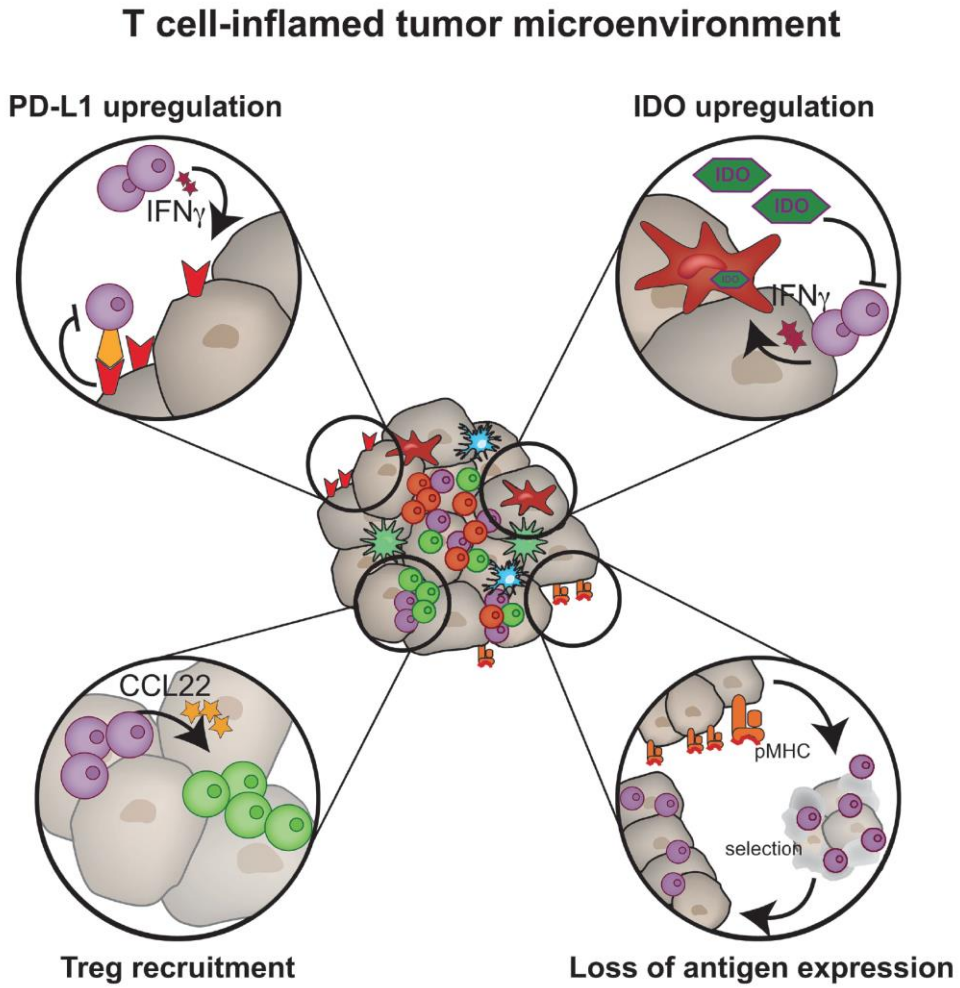
T cell-inflamed tumors escape by suppressing T cell function

Tumor cell
Effector T cell
Dysfunctional T cell
Regulatory T cell
cDC
CD8α/CD103⁺ DC
Macrophage
PD-L1
peptide-MHC complex
PD-1

Spranger, Internat Immunol. 2016

© 2019–2020 Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer

T cell inflamed tumor microenvironment is immune suppressive



T cell-inflamed tumors escape by suppressing T cell function

Non-T cell-inflamed tumors are a result of a malfunctioning cancer immune cycle

Tumor cell
Effector T cell
Dysfunctional T cell
Regulatory T cell
cDC
CD8α/CD103⁺ DC
Macrophage
PD-L1
peptide-MHC complex
PD-1

Spranger, Internat Immunol. 2016

© 2019–2020 Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer

Types of Immunotherapy

- Checkpoint blockade immunotherapy
- Cancer vaccines
- Adoptive cell transfer
- Effector antibodies
- Innate immune activation

© 2019–2020 Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer

The CTLA-4 Checkpoint

Cytotoxic **T**-**L**ymphocyte **A**ssociated Protein **4**

Up-regulated in response to T cell activation

Limits positive stimulation by competition

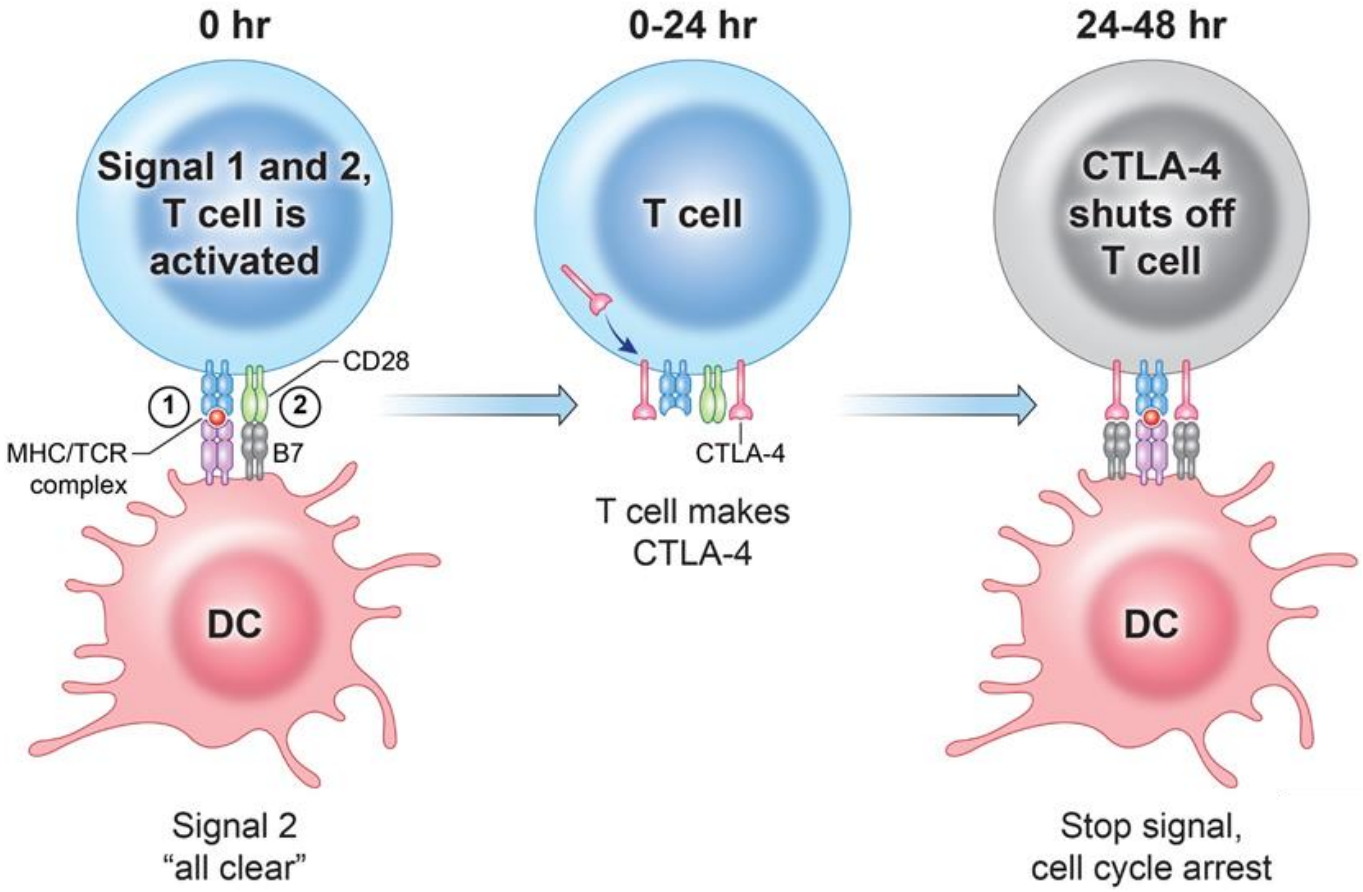


Image courtesy of NCI

© 2019–2020 Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer

The PD-1/PD-L1 Checkpoint

Programmed **D**eath **1**

Up-regulated in response to T cell activation

Ligands PD-L1 and PD-L2 are up-regulated following inflammation (IFNγ)

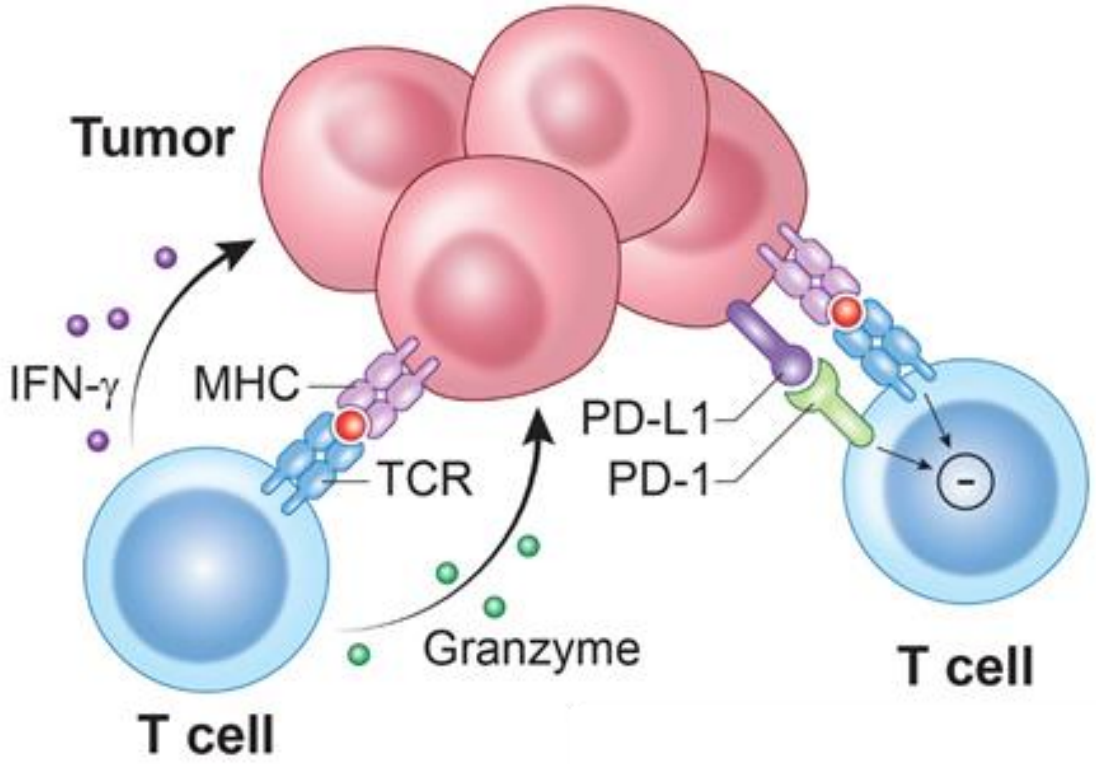
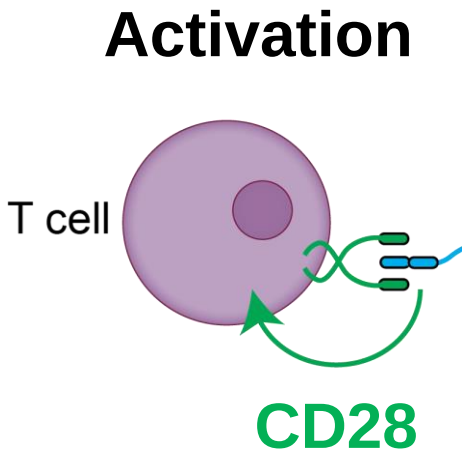


Image courtesy of NCI

© 2019–2020 Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer

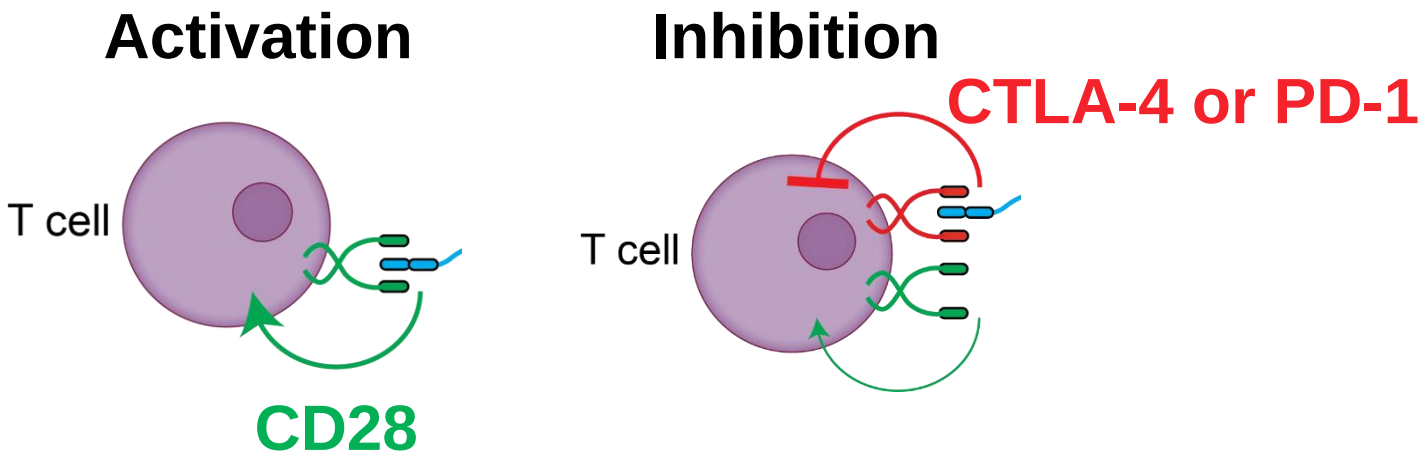
Checkpoint blockade therapy unleashes the “brakes” on T cells



Goal: to reduce immune inhibitory signals and/or enhance stimulatory signals to allow T cells to regain effector functions.

© 2019–2020 Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer

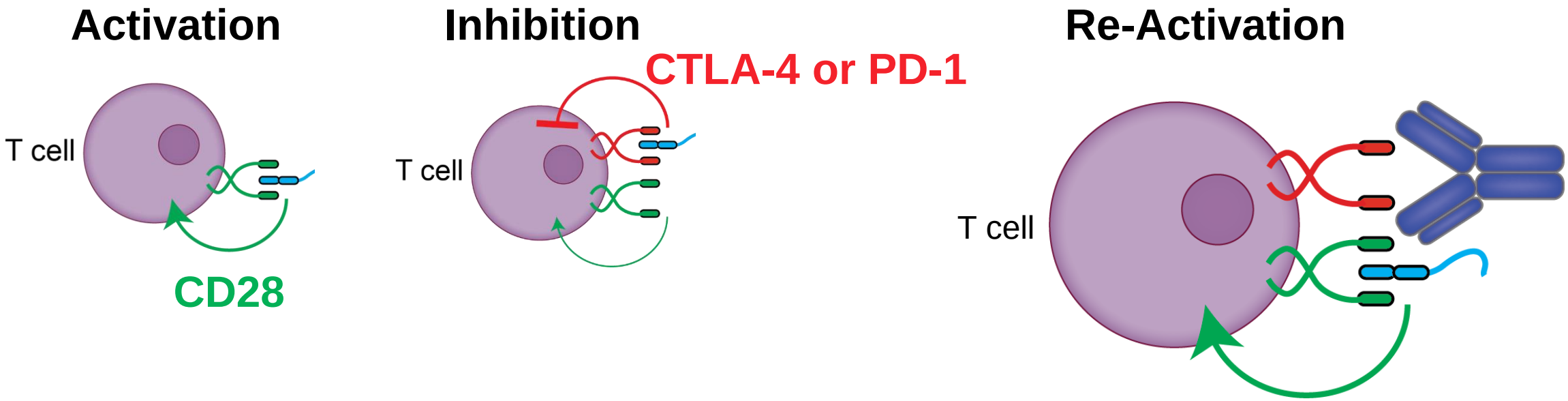
Checkpoint blockade therapy unleashes the “brakes” on T cells



Goal: to reduce immune inhibitory signals and/or enhance stimulatory signals to allow T cells to regain effector functions.

© 2019–2020 Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer

Checkpoint blockade therapy unleashes the “brakes” on T cells



Goal: to reduce immune inhibitory signals and/or enhance stimulatory signals to allow T cells to regain effector functions.

© 2019–2020 Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer

T Cell Checkpoint Modulation

- First generation of checkpoint modulation: blocking inhibitory checkpoints
- Second generation of checkpoint modulation: activating stimulatory checkpoints

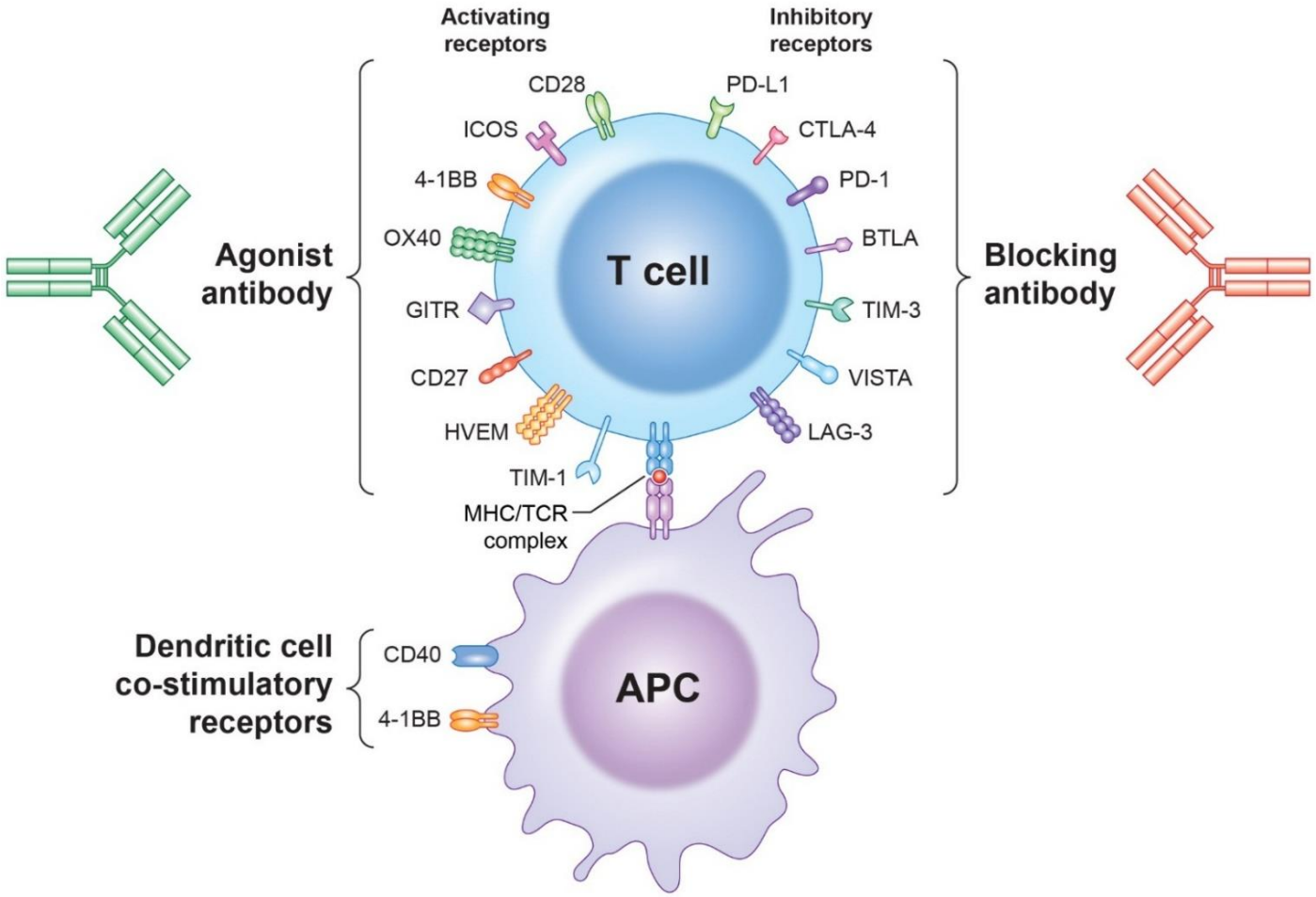


Image courtesy of NCI

© 2019–2020 Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer

Therapeutic Cancer Vaccines

Goal: to increase the immunogenicity of tumor antigens in order to generate a high frequency of tumor-specific T cells.

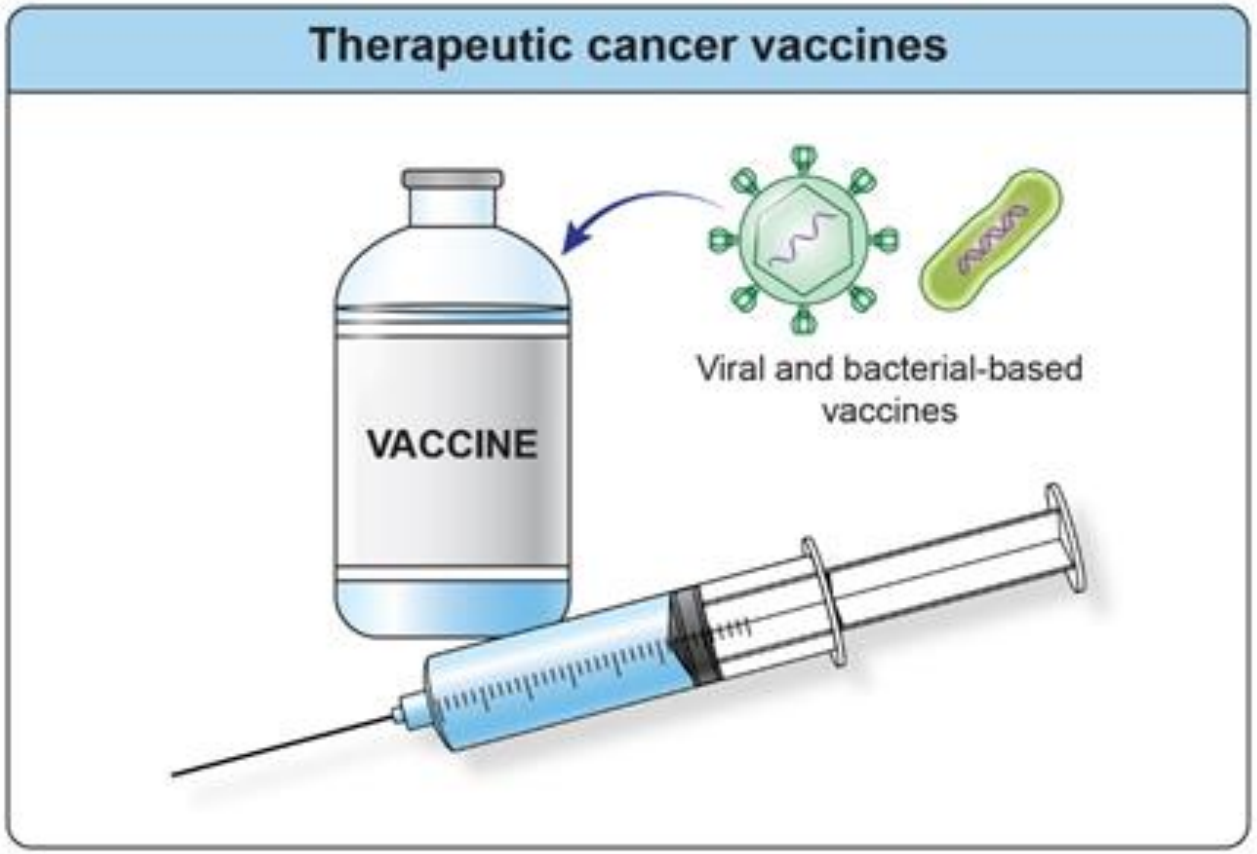


Image courtesy of NCI

© 2019–2020 Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer

Adoptive Cell Therapy

Goal: overwhelm the tumor with a higher frequency of tumor-specific immune cells and/or engineer immune cells to target cancer.

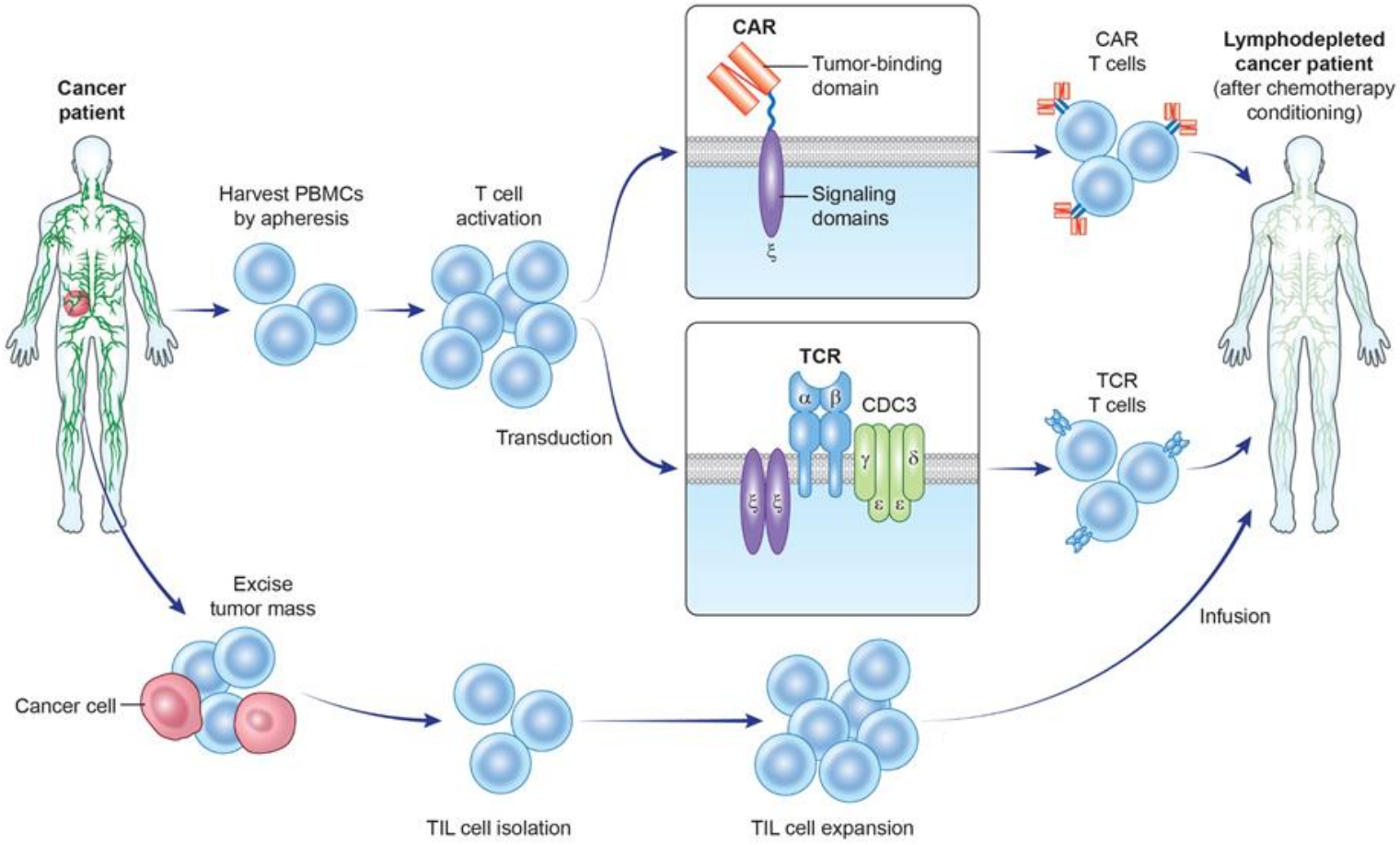


Image courtesy of NCI

© 2019–2020 Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer

Effector Antibodies and Antibody-Drug Conjugates (ADCs)

Goal: specifically target and kill tumor cells using innate mechanisms which are difficult to evade or suppress and/or through delivery of cytotoxic agents

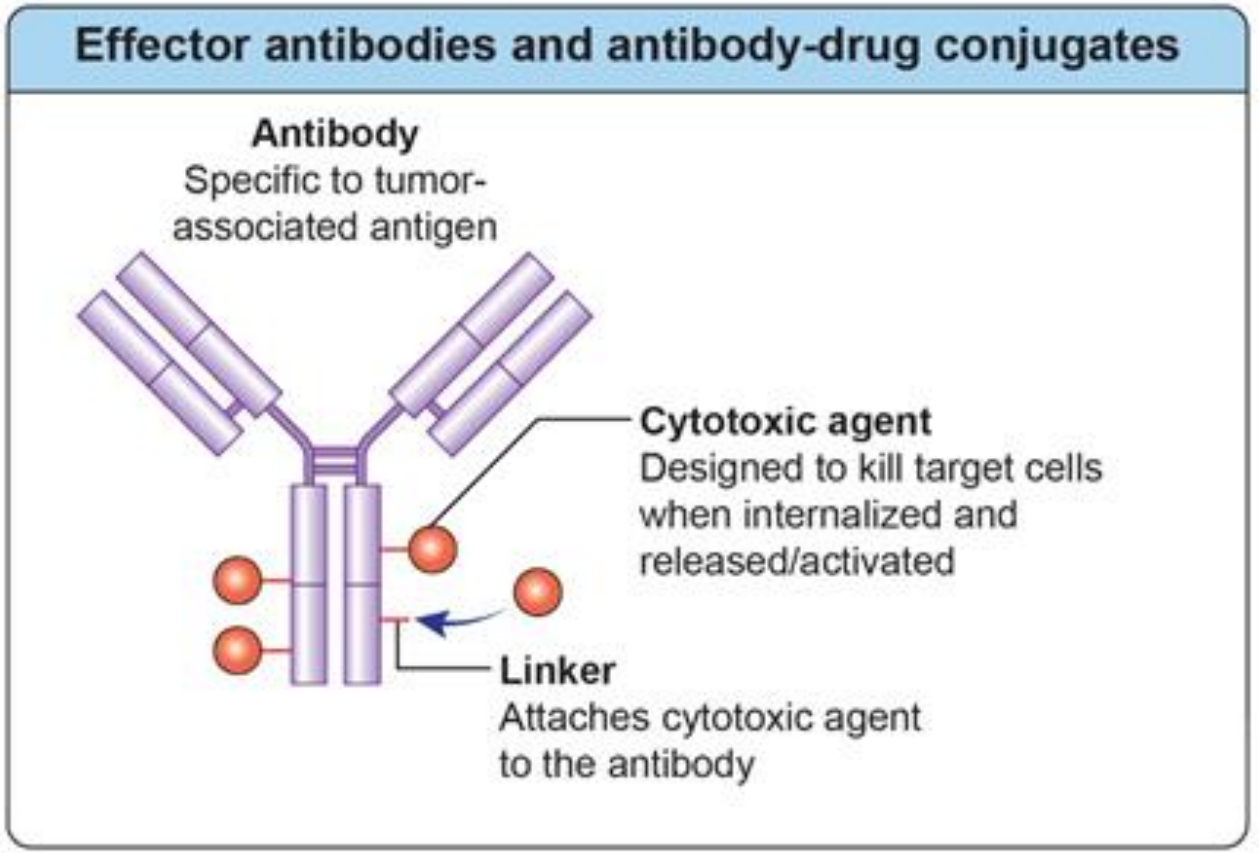
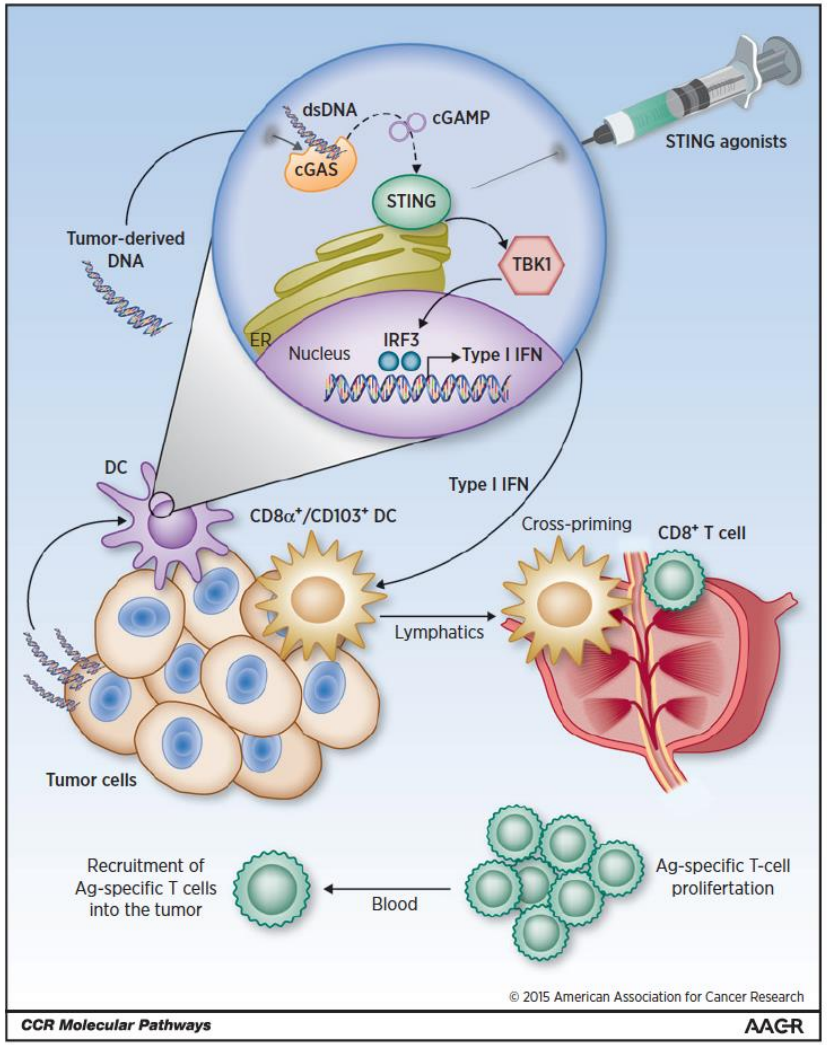


Image courtesy of NCI

© 2019–2020 Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer

Innate immune activation

Goal: enhance innate immune sensing by providing stimulatory agents (frequently into the tumor itself)



Agents:

Sting agonists

TLR agonists

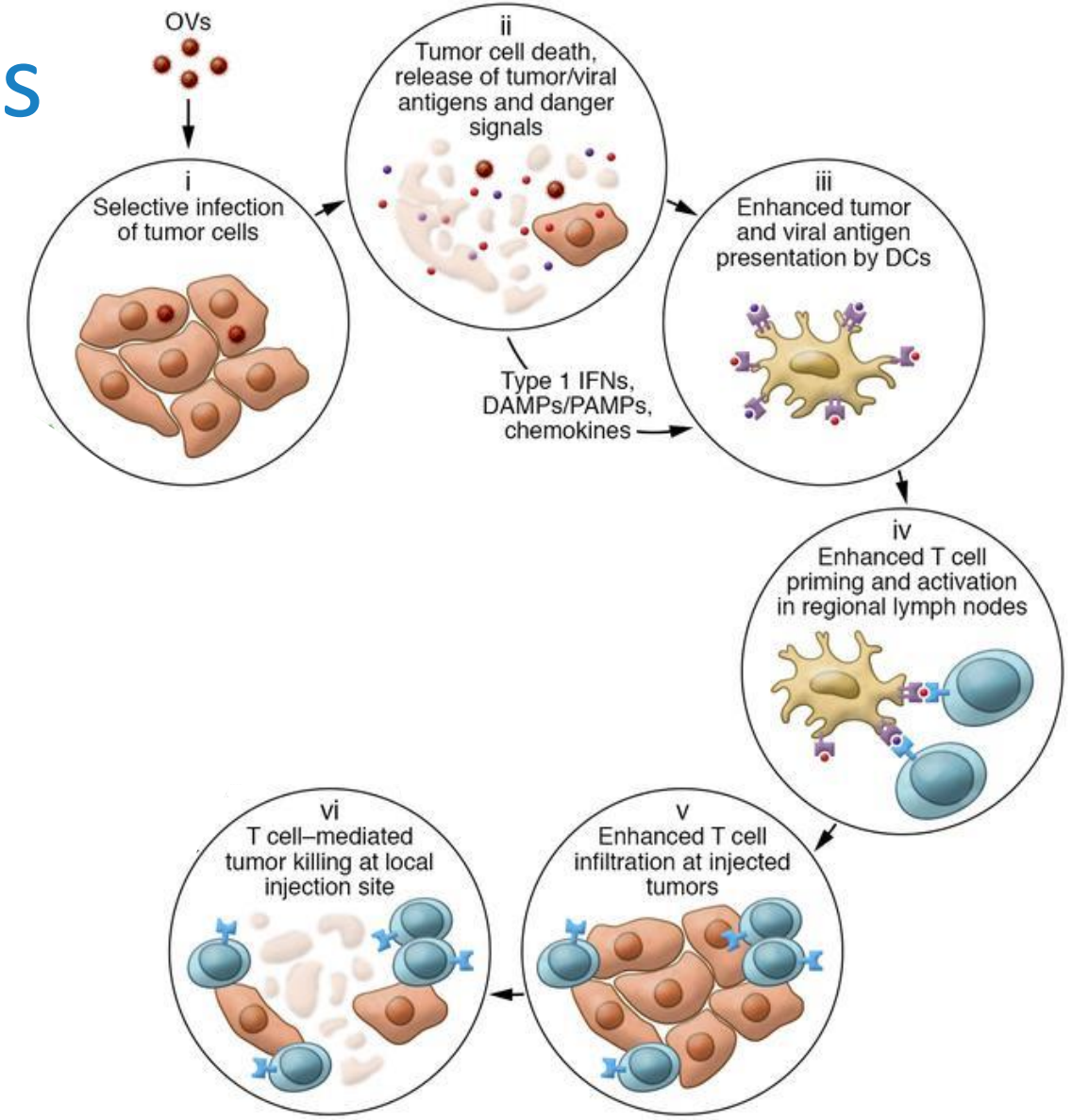
Immunogenic RNA

Corrales, Clin Can Res 2015

© 2019–2020 Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer

Oncolytic Viruses

Goal: specifically target and kill tumor cells through viral replication AND release innate immune activators and tumor antigens

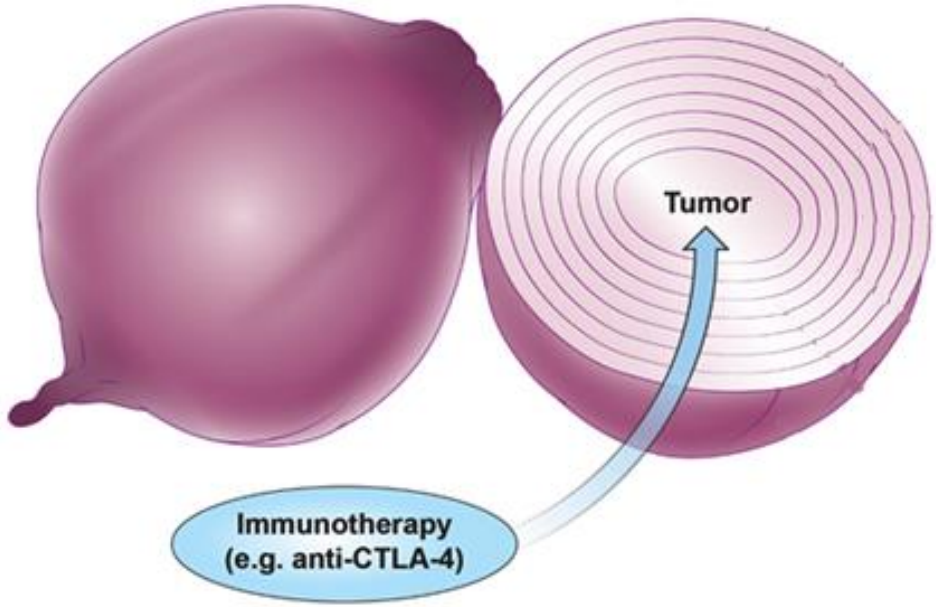


Modified from Bommereddy et al. JCI 2018

© 2019–2020 Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer

Multi-layered Immunosuppression

- Tumors insulate themselves with dense layers of immune-suppression
- Overcoming the many layers of interconnected and often functionally redundant immune suppressive mechanisms represents a daunting challenge for tumor-specific T cells
- Immunotherapy can “peel back” the layers of local immune suppression
- Combination therapy might be needed to overcome all layers

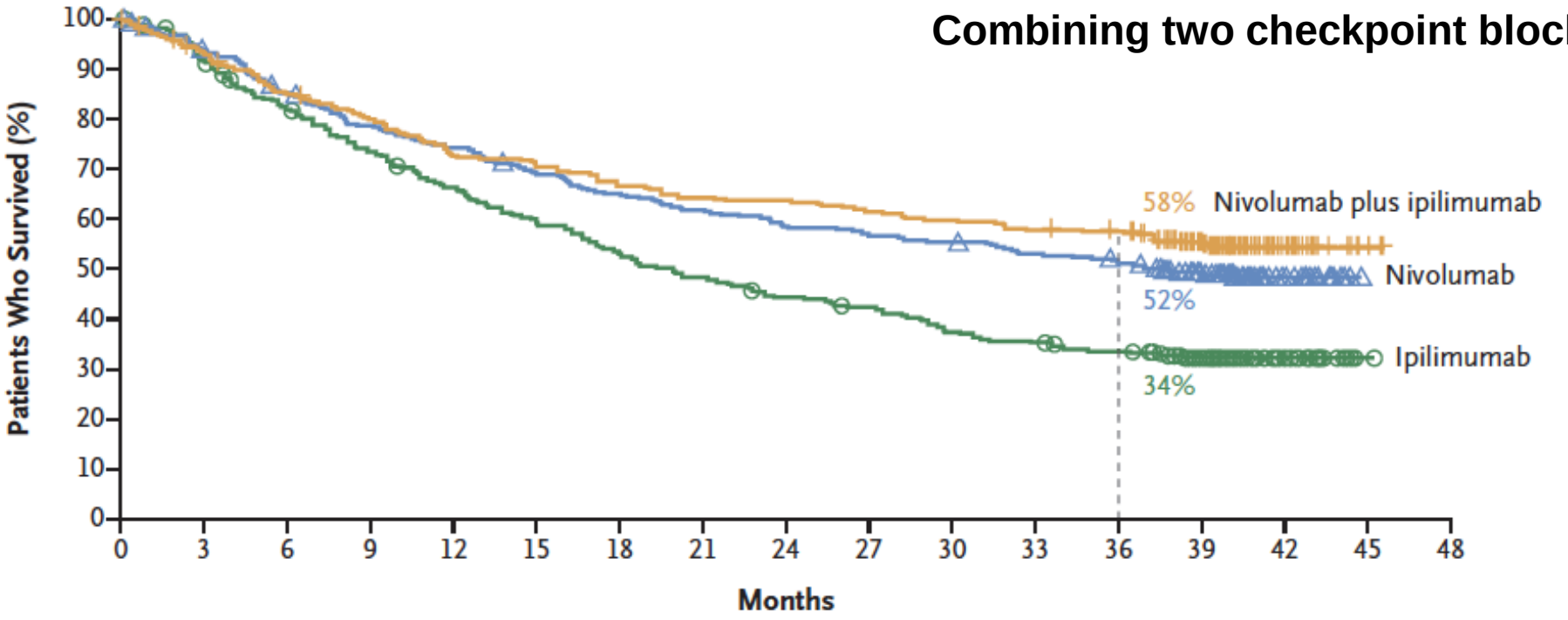


© 2019–2020 Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer

Combination Immunotherapies

Dual CTLA-4 and PD-1 inhibition

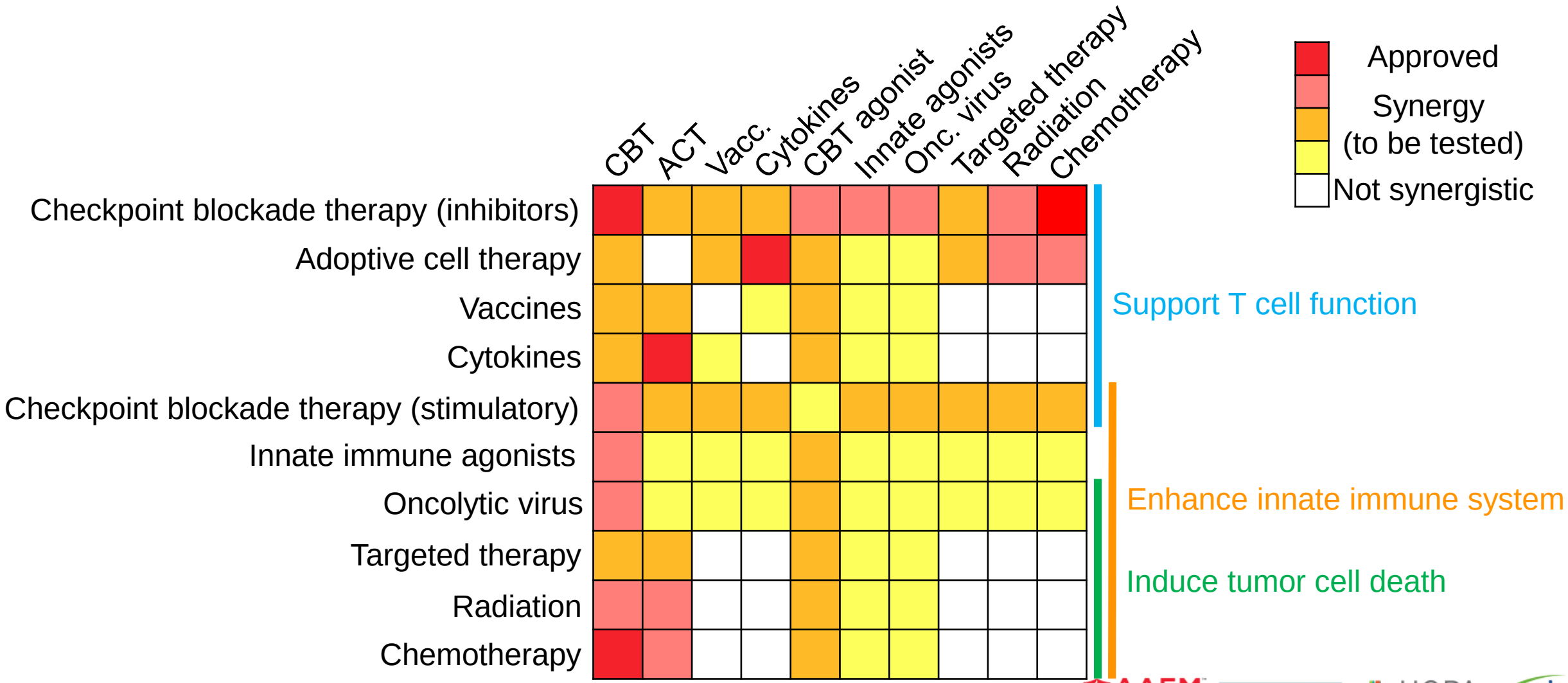
Combining two checkpoint blockade agents



Wolchok et al., NEJM 2017

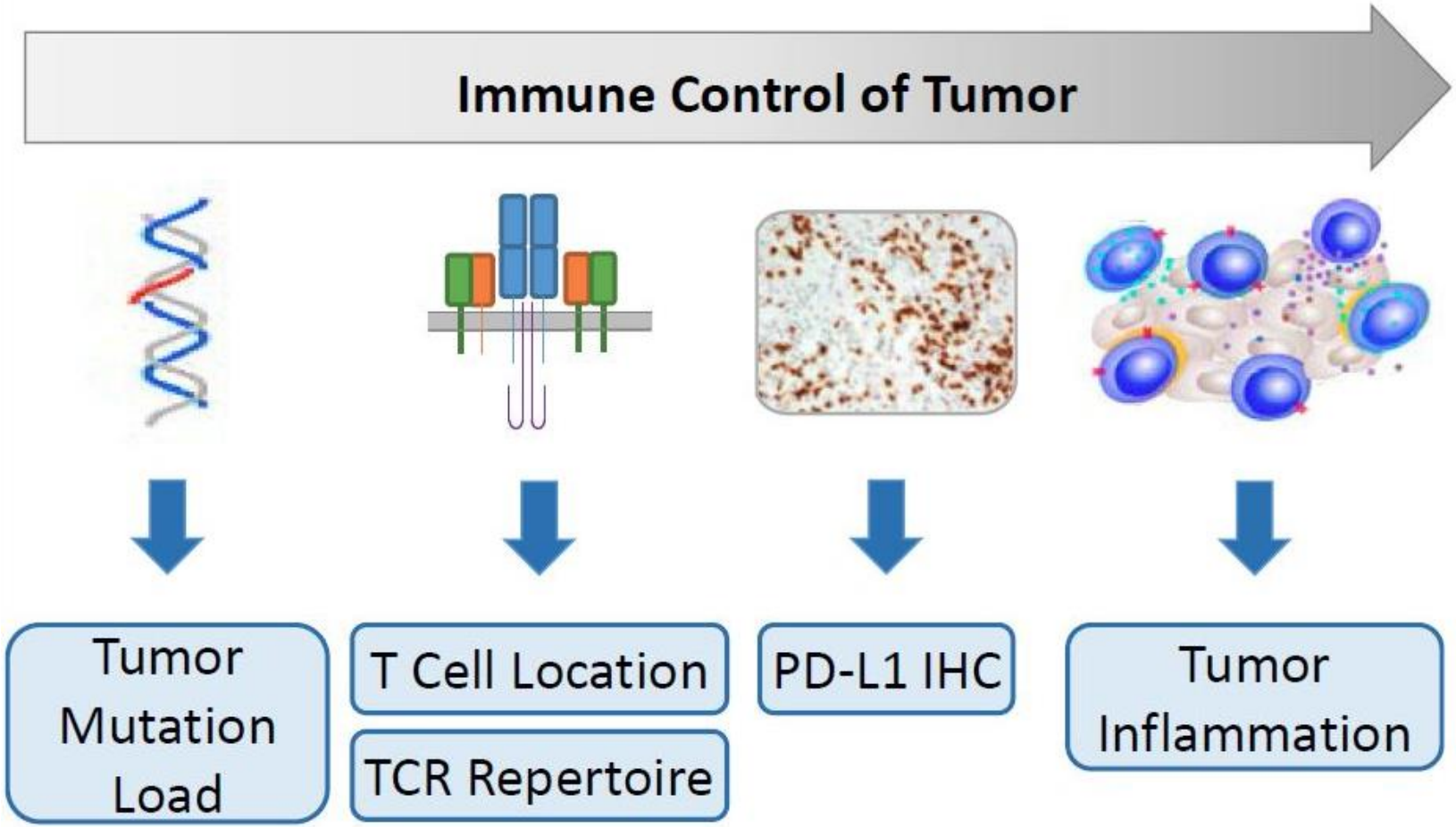
© 2019–2020 Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer

Combination Immunotherapies



© 2019–2020 Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer

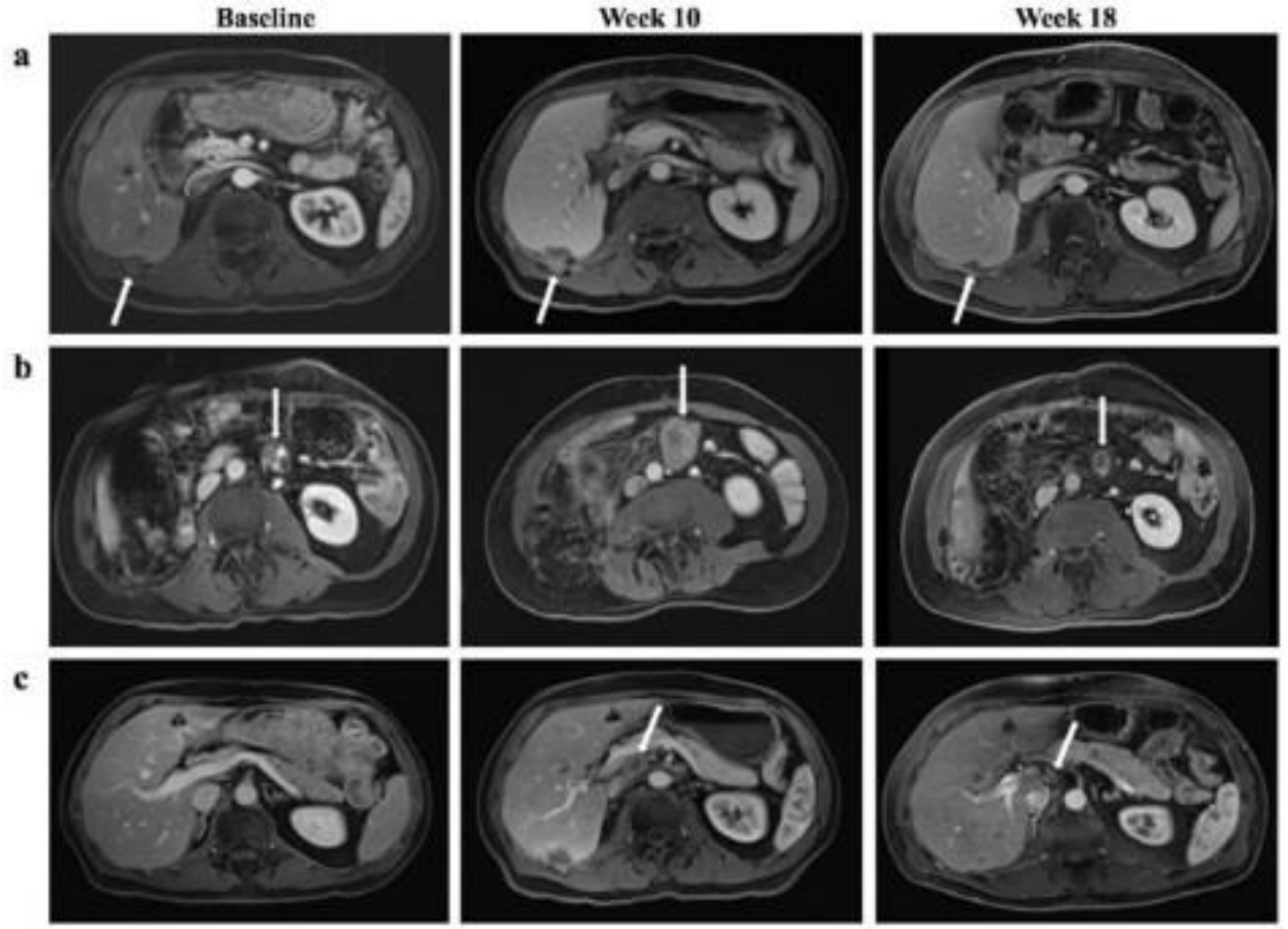
Immunotherapy Biomarkers



Cesano et al. Biomedicines 2018

© 2019–2020 Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer

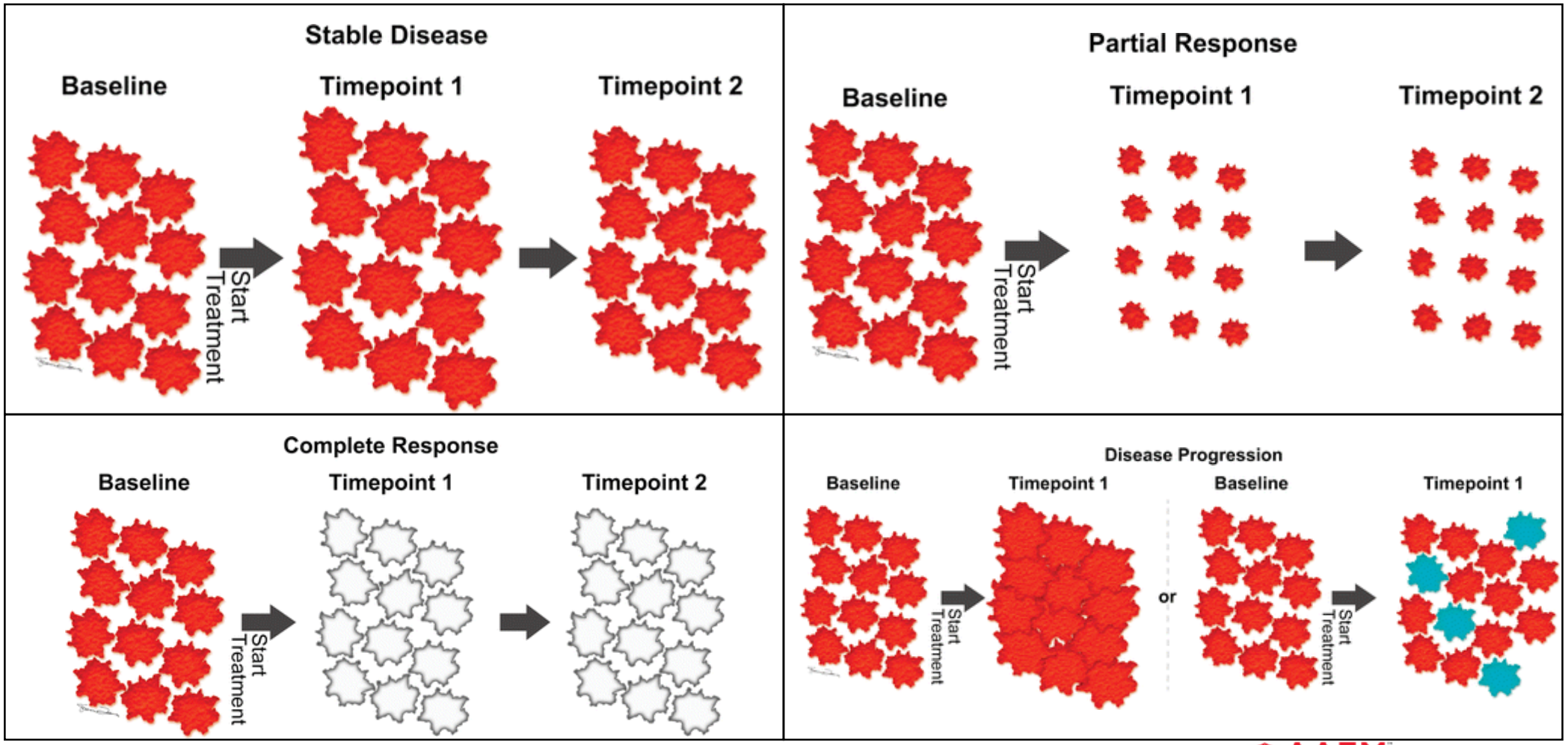
Assessment of response



Chae, Oncotarget 2017.

© 2019–2020 Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer

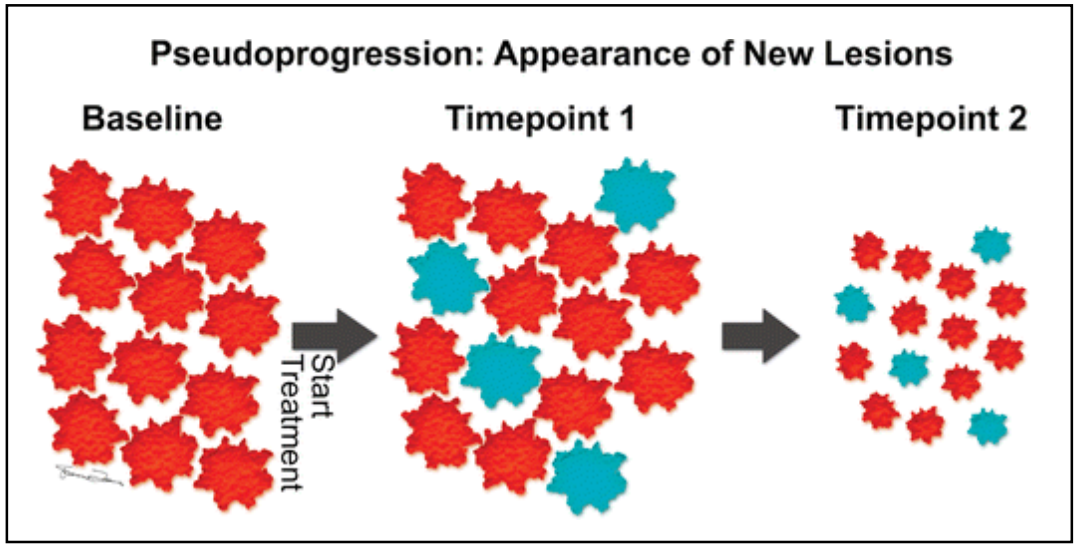
Many possible imaging findings

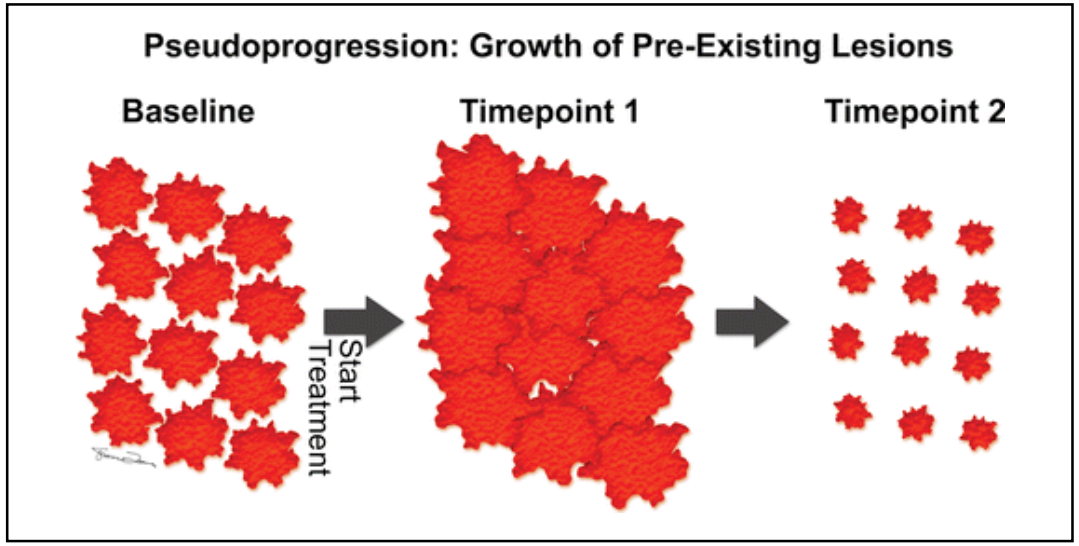


Wang, RadioGraphics 2017.

© 2019–2020 Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer

Many possible imaging findings

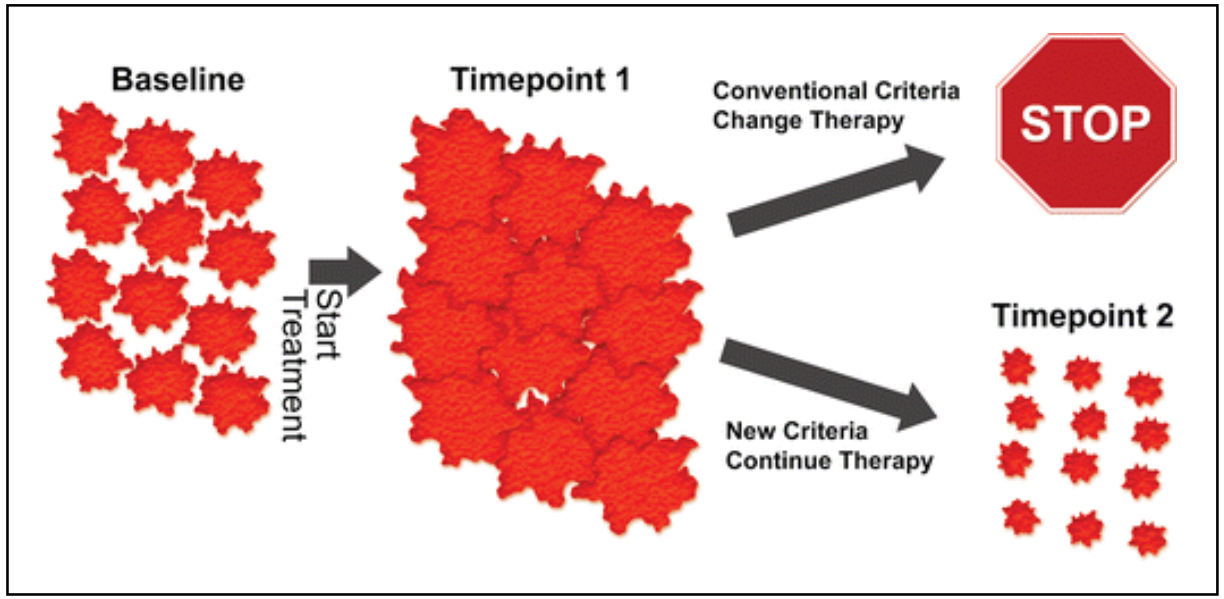


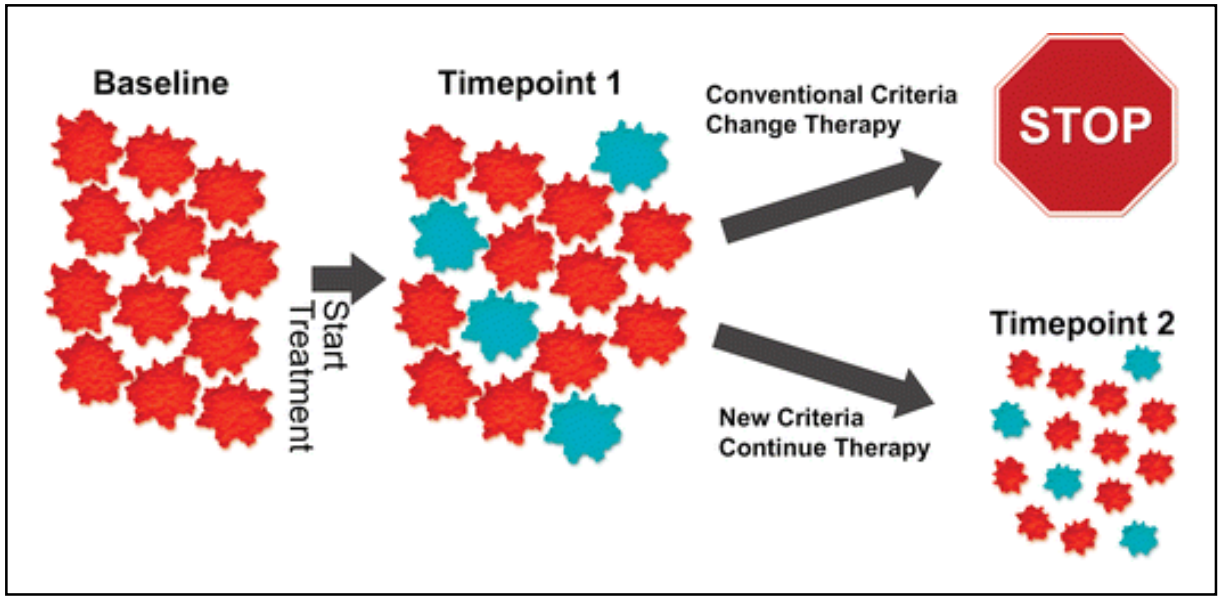


Wang, RadioGraphics 2017.

© 2019–2020 Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer

Assessment of response – unique considerations for immunotherapy





Wang, RadioGraphics 2017.

© 2019–2020 Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer

Comparison of disease progression by conventional and immune-related criteria

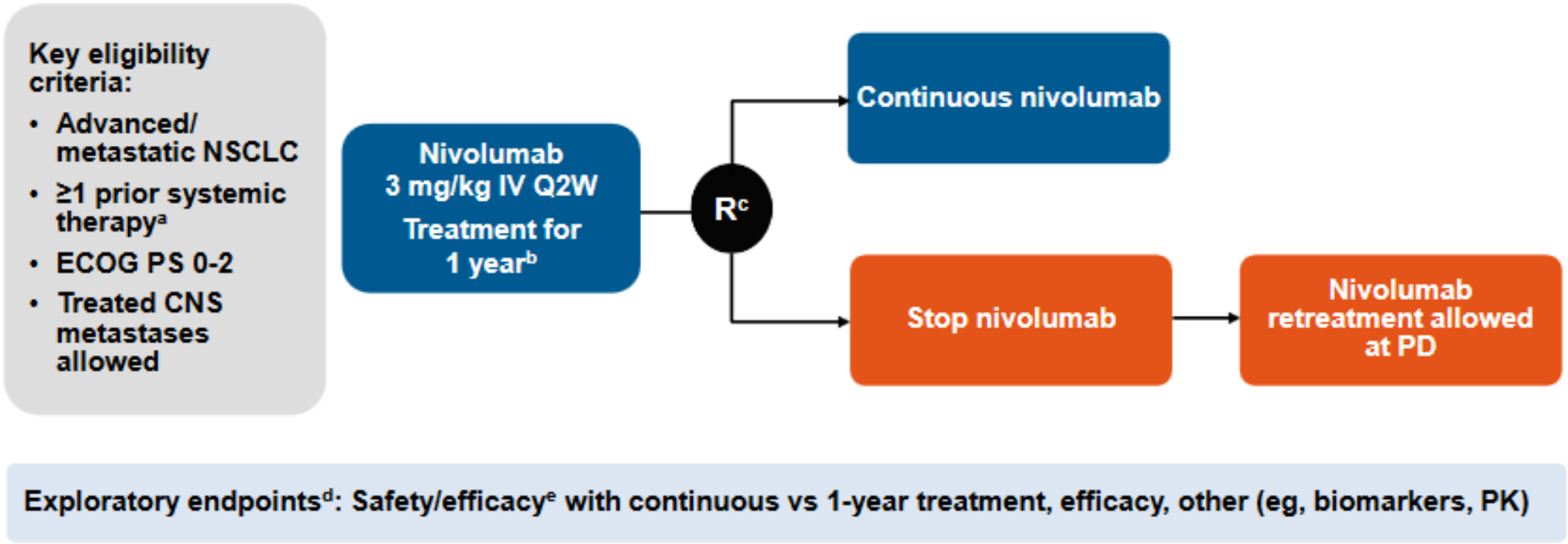
Treatment Response	RECIST 1.1	irRC
Progressive disease	≥20% increase in lesion sum* (absolute size increase ≥5 mm) or 1+ new lesions at any single observation	≥25% increase in tumor burden[+] versus nadir in two consecutive observations ≥4 weeks apart
New measurable lesions[#]	Always represent progressive disease	Incorporated into disease burden
New non-measurable lesions	Considered equivocal; followed at future examinations to clarify whether it is truly new disease	Does not define progression but precludes complete response

Wang, RadioGraphics 2017.

*Sum of lesion diameters: sum of the longest diameter in the plane of measurement for non-nodal target lesions and short-axis diameter for target nodal lesions.
[+]Based on the sum of the products of the two largest perpendicular diameters of all index lesions.
[#]Measurable lesion for RECIST1.1 is ≥10mm at CT; irRC is ≥10x10mm at CT. Smaller lesions are considered non-measurable.

© 2019–2020 Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer

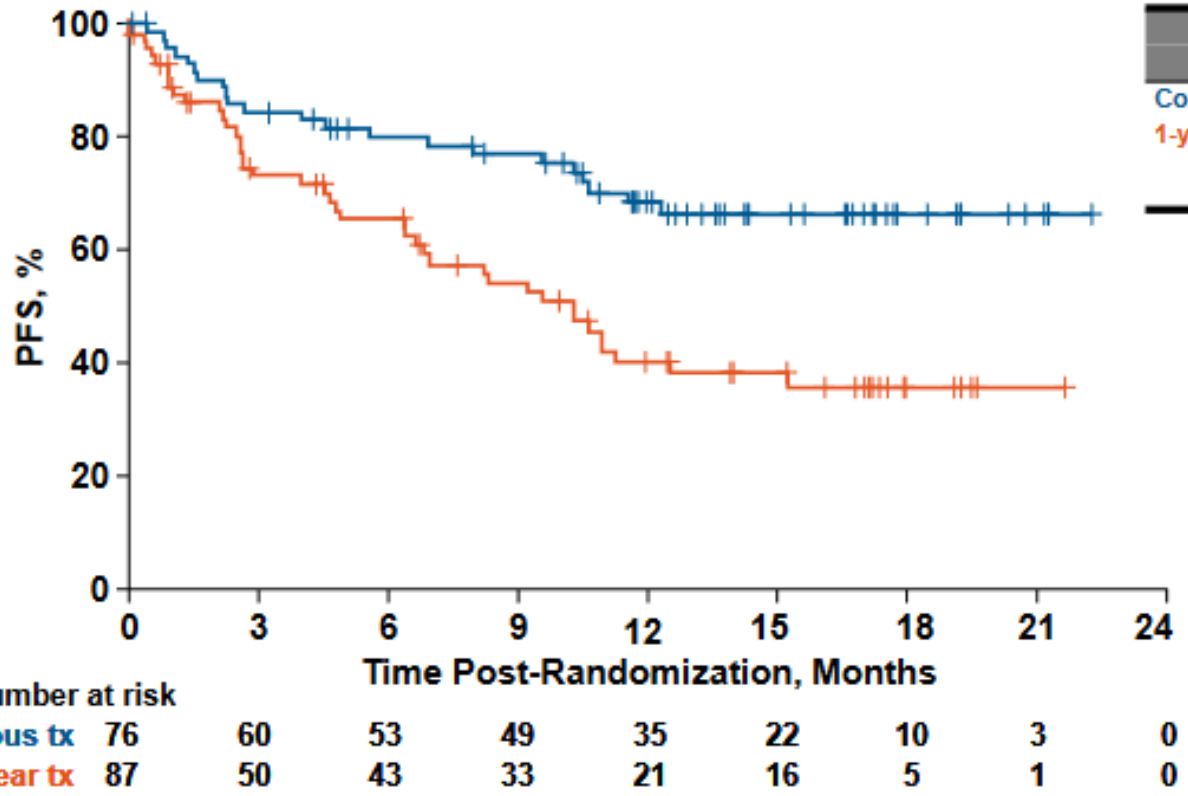
When to stop immunotherapy: Checkmate 153



Spigel, Ann Oncol 2017.

© 2019–2020 Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer

When to stop immunotherapy: Checkmate 153



	Median, Months (95% CI)	PFS Rate, % 6-Month	1-Year
Continuous tx	NR (NR)	80	65
1-year tx[b]	10.3 (6.4, 15.2)	69	40

HR: 0.42 (95% CI: 0.25, 0.71)

Conclusion: >1 year of treatment may be necessary

Spigel, Ann Oncol 2017.

© 2019–2020 Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer

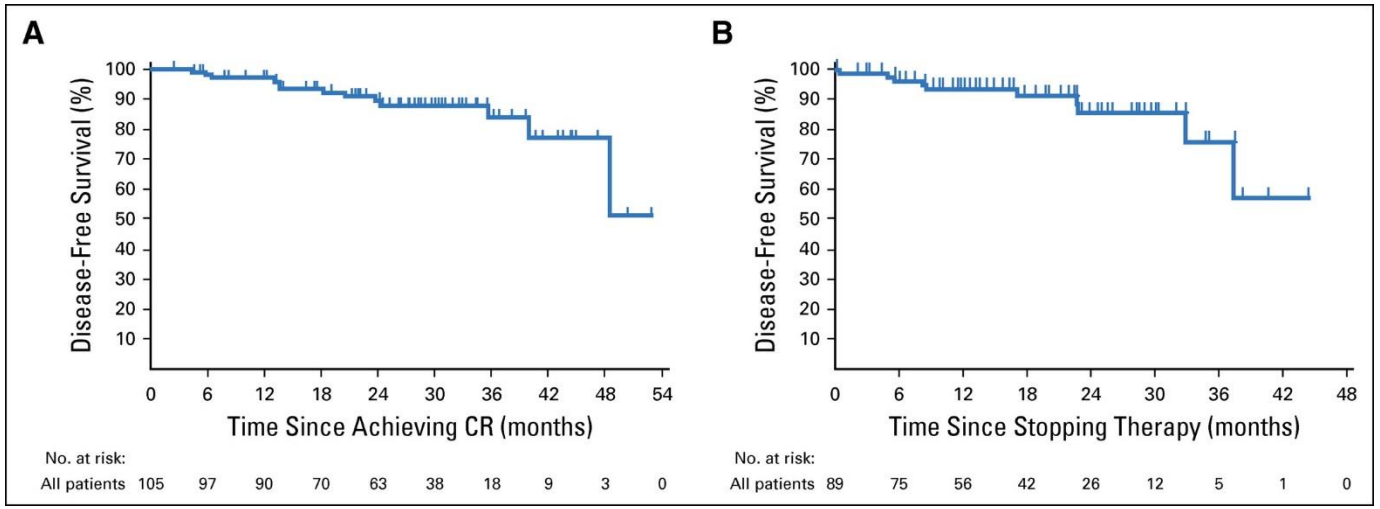
When to stop immunotherapy: KEYNOTE-006

- Pembrolizumab 10 mg/kg Q2W or Q3W or ipilimumab 3 mg/kg Q3W for 4 doses
- Could stay on pembrolizumab for up to 2 years
- Of patients who completed 2 y pembro treatment, **86%** did not progress after 20 months follow-up
- More responders with pembrolizumab, but duration of response was similar for pembrolizumab and ipilimumab

© 2019–2020 Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer

When to stop immunotherapy: KEYNOTE-001

- 16% of patients achieved complete response
- Disease-free survival at 24 months after complete response:
  - In all CR patients: 90.9%
  - In patients who discontinued cancer therapy: 89.9%



Robert, J Clin Oncol 2018.

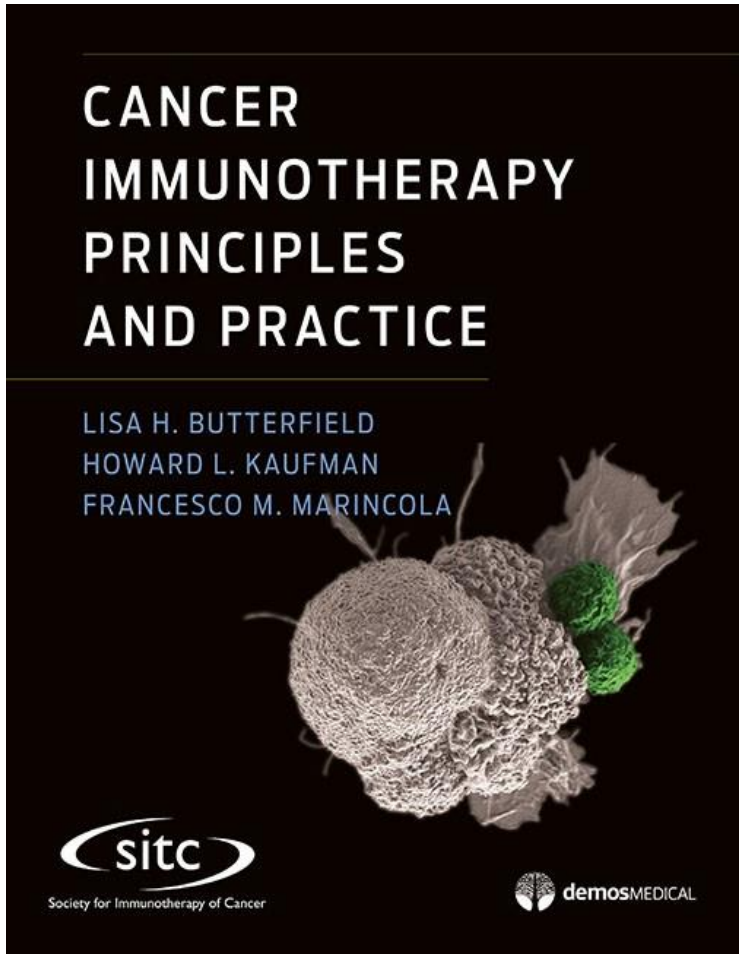
© 2019–2020 Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer

When to stop immunotherapy: clinical measures

- PET-based metabolic response
  - Metabolic response may precede anatomical changes on CT or MRI
- Achievement of CR

© 2019–2020 Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer

Further Resources



SOCIETY FOR IMMUNOTHERAPY OF CANCER

Cancer Immunotherapy CONNECT

© 2019–2020 Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer