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Toxicity Management

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AAEM AMERICAN ACADEMY OF EMERGENCY MEDICINE CHAMPION OF THE EMERGENCY PHYSICIAN

ACCC Association of Community Cancer Centers

HOPA Hematology/Oncology Pharmacy Association

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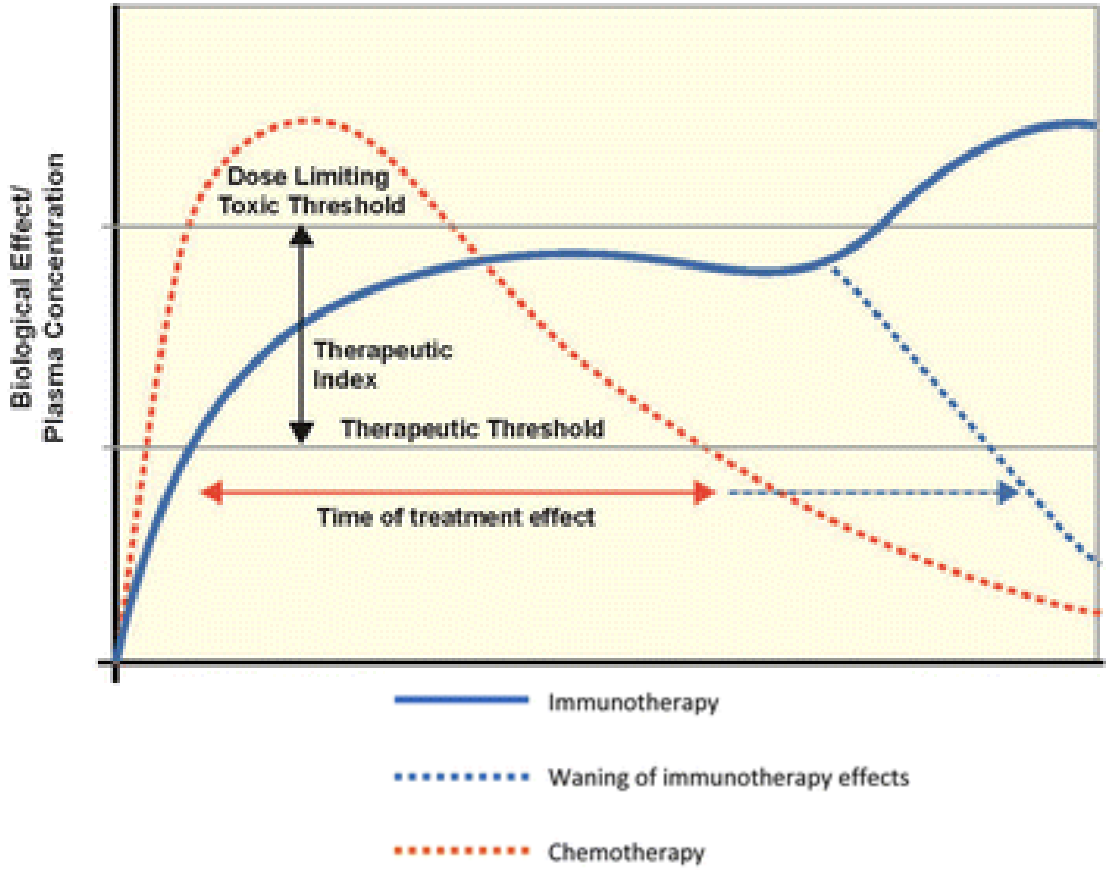
Disclosures

- I have received honoraria from Array, BMS, Merck
- I will be discussing non-FDA approved indications during my presentation.

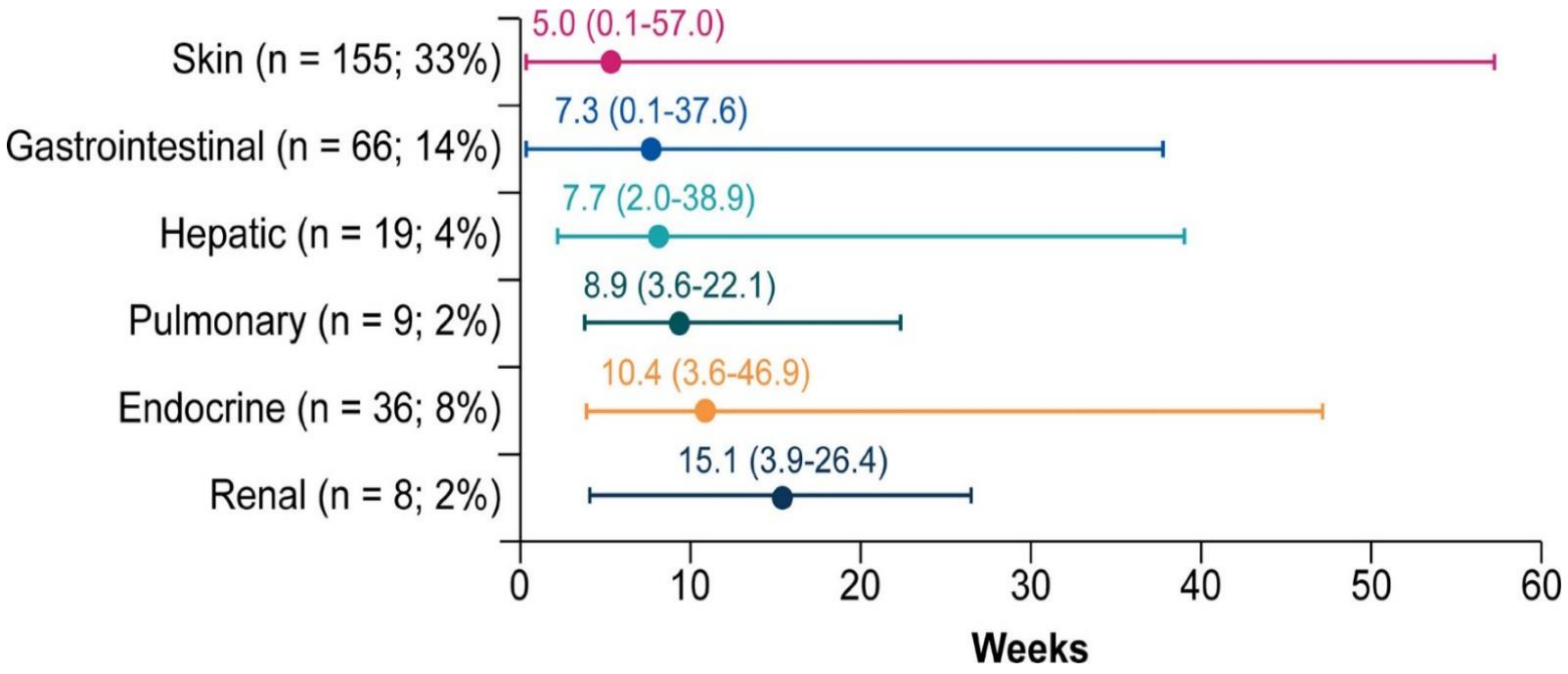
Immune-related adverse events (irAEs)

- Immune checkpoint inhibitor (ICI) toxicities often have delayed onset and prolonged duration relative to chemotherapy toxicity
- Toxicities result from non-specific activation of the immune system and can mimic a number of other medical conditions



Puzanov and Diab, JITC 2017

Onset of irAEs



- Can be days to months after therapy initiation
- May occur even after treatment is discontinued
- Important to identify patients who are currently **OR** previously on ICI treatment!

Pallin, Acad Emerg Med 2018
Puzanov and Diab, JITC 2017

Incidence of irAEs

- Anti-CTLA-4 inhibitor (ipilimumab): dose-dependent toxicities
  - **Grade 3+: ≤ 43%**
- PD-1/PD-L1 inhibitors: toxicities less dose-dependent
  - **Grade 3+: ≤ 20%**
- Life-threatening irAEs are rare but treatment-related deaths reported in clinical trial patients

Puzanov and Diab, JITC 2017.
NCCN Guidelines. Management of immunotherapy-related toxicities. Version 2.2019.

Incidence of specific irAEs by ICI

Drug	Dermatitis	Colitis	Hepatitis	Endocrinopathies	Pneumonitis
	All grades (grade 3-4)				
Ipilimumab	14.5 (12)	10 (7)	5 (2)	10 (3)	<1
Ipilimumab/Nivolumab	30 (3)	26 (16)	13 (6)	35 (4)	6 (2.2)
Nivolumab	28 (1.5)	2.9 (0.7)	1.8 (0.7)	12 (0)	3.1 (1.1)
Pembrolizumab	20 (0.5)	1.7 (1.1)	0.7 (0.4)	12.5 (0.3)	3.4 (1.3)
Atezolizumab	17 (0.8)	1 (<1)	1.3 (<1)	5.9 (<1)	2.6 (<1)
Avelumab	15 (0.4)	1.5 (0.4)	0.9 (0.7)	6.5 (0.3)	1.2 (0.5)
Durvalumab	11 (1)	1.3 (0.3)	1.1 (0.6)	16.2 (0.1)	2.3 (0.5)

Puzanov and Diab, JITC 2017

Common irAEs with ICI's

- Dermatologic: maculopapular rash, dermatitis, pruritis
- Gastrointestinal: diarrhea, colitis, hepatitis, gastritis
- Rheumatologic: arthralgias, myositis, sicca symptoms
- Pulmonary: pneumonitis, sarcoidosis
- Endocrine: thyroid dysfunction, hypophysitis

Puzanov and Diab, JITC 2017.
NCCN Guidelines. Management of immunotherapy-related toxicities. Version 2.2019.

Uncommon irAEs with ICI's

Cardiovascular:

Myocarditis, pericarditis, arrhythmias

Renal:

Interstitial nephritis, granulomatous nephritis

Endocrine:

Adrenal insufficiency, pancreatitis, type 1 diabetes mellitus

Hematologic:

Hemolytic anemia, red cell aplasia, neutropenia, thrombocytopenia

Neurologic:

Myasthenia gravis, Guillain-Barré syndrome, peripheral neuropathies

Ophthalmologic:

Uveitis, episcleritis, conjunctivitis

Puzanov and Diab, JITC 2017.
NCCN Guidelines. Management of immunotherapy-related toxicities. Version 2.2019.

Pre-treatment screening

- Patient History
  - Autoimmune, infectious, endocrine, organ-specific diseases
  - Baseline bowel habits
- Dermatologic
  - Full skin exam
- Pulmonary
  - Baseline O_2 saturation
- Cardiovascular (select patients)
  - ECG
  - Troponin I or T, BNP
- Blood tests
  - CBC with diff
  - CMP
  - TSH
  - HbA1c (consider in select patients)

Pazanov & Diab, JITC 2017.

Approach to Treatment

- Treatment approach is guided by grading/tolerability of specific toxicity
- 1st line for **MOST** severe irAEs is systemic high-dose corticosteroids
  - Endocrine toxicities managed with hormone replacement alone
  - Some grade 1-2 irAEs may respond to topical (dermatologic, ophthalmologic), inhaled (mild bronchitis), or low/intermediate dose steroids (diarrhea, arthralgias not responsive to NSAIDs, pruritus not responsive to anti-histamines)
- Resources for grading:
  - SITC Toxicity Management Working Group
  - Common Terminology Criteria for Adverse Events
  - National Comprehensive Cancer Network

General corticosteroid management

Grade of irAE	Corticosteroid Management	Additional Notes
1	Usually not indicated	Continue immunotherapy, initiate supportive care and increased monitoring.
2	• Start **prednisone 0.5-1 mg/kg/day** (or equivalent dose of IV methylprednisolone) • If no improvement in 2-3 days, **increase dose** to 2 mg/kg/day • Once improved to ≤grade 1, start **4-6 week steroid taper**	• **Hold immunotherapy** during corticosteroid use • **Continue immunotherapy** once resolved to ≤grade 1 and off corticosteroids • Start proton pump inhibitor for GI prophylaxis, TMP/SMX for PJP prophylaxis

Pazanov & Diab, JITC 2017.

General corticosteroid management

Grade of irAE	Corticosteroid Management	Additional Notes
3	• Start **prednisone 1-2 mg/kg/day** (or equivalent dose of IV methylprednisolone) • If no improvement in 2–3 days, **ADD additional** immunosuppressant • Once improved to ≤ grade 1, start **4–6-week steroid taper (consider shorter taper if additional immunosuppressant is used)**	• **Hold immunotherapy**; if symptoms do not improve in 4–6 weeks, **discontinue immunotherapy** • Start proton pump inhibitor for GI prophylaxis • Add PJP prophylaxis if more than 3 weeks of immunosuppression expected (>30 mg prednisone or equivalent/day)
4		• **Discontinue immunotherapy** • Start proton pump inhibitor for GI prophylaxis • Add PJP prophylaxis if more than 3 weeks of immunosuppression expected (>30 mg prednisone or equivalent/day)

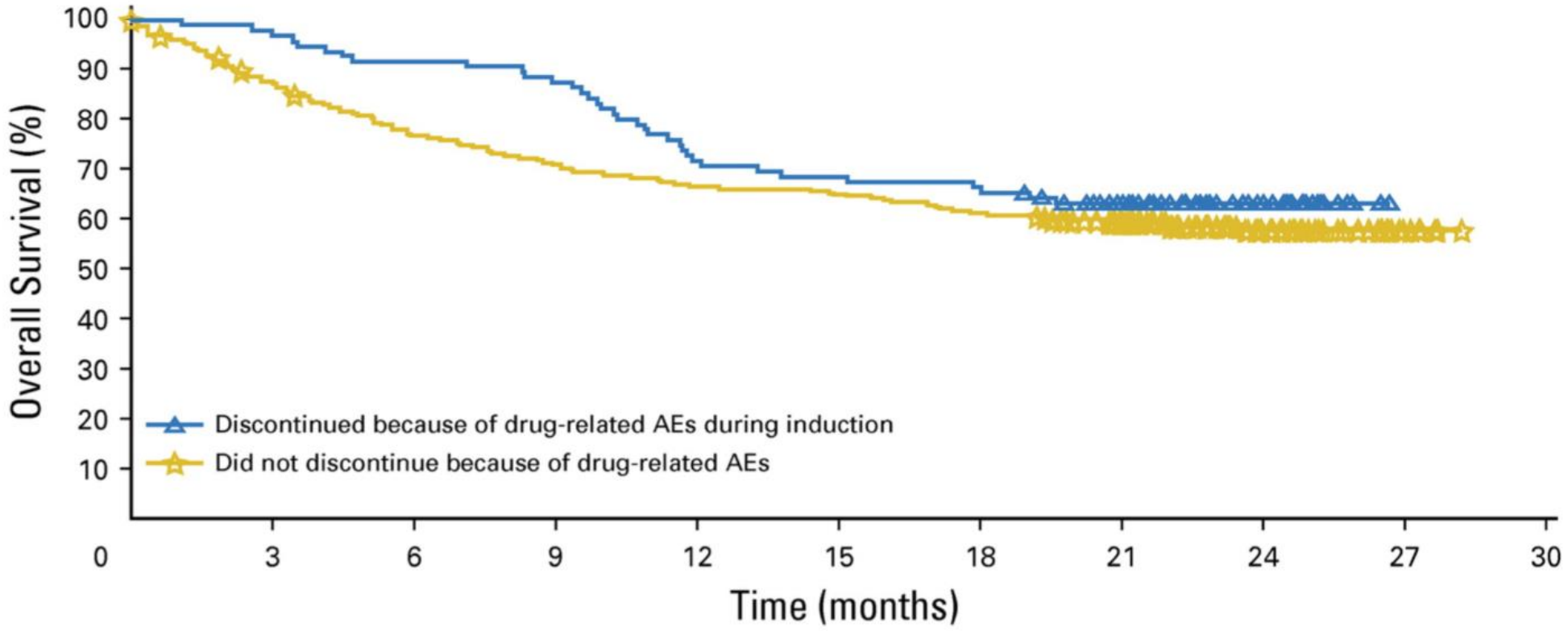
Pazanov & Diab, JITC 2017.

Additional immunosuppressive agents

- Infliximab: anti-TNF-α mAb
  - Commonly used for colitis not responsive to steroids.
  - Hepatotoxic so should NOT be used for immune-mediated hepatitis
  - Risk for hepatitis B and tuberculosis activation; obtain hepatitis serologies and TB testing prior to initiation
  - Dose: 5 mg/kg; 2nd dose may be administered after 2 weeks
- Vedolizumab: α4β7 integrin mAb
  - **Selective GI immunosuppression** → inhibits migration of T cells across endothelium into inflamed GI tissues
  - Dose: 300 mg; repeat dose at 2 and 6 weeks
- Others: budesonide, mycophenolate, cyclosporine, IVIG

Abu-Sbeih H. JITC. 2018 Dec 5;6(1):142.
NCCN Guidelines. Management of immunotherapy-related toxicities. Version 2.2019.

Effect of irAEs on patient outcomes



No significant difference in survival in melanoma patients who discontinued ipilimumab + nivolumab due to irAEs versus those who did not discontinue treatment

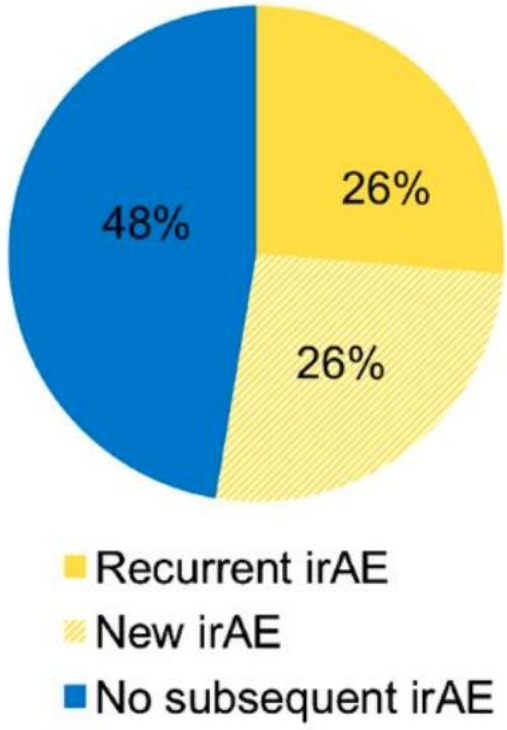
Schadendorf D. J Clin Oncol 2017 Dec; 35(35):3807-3814.

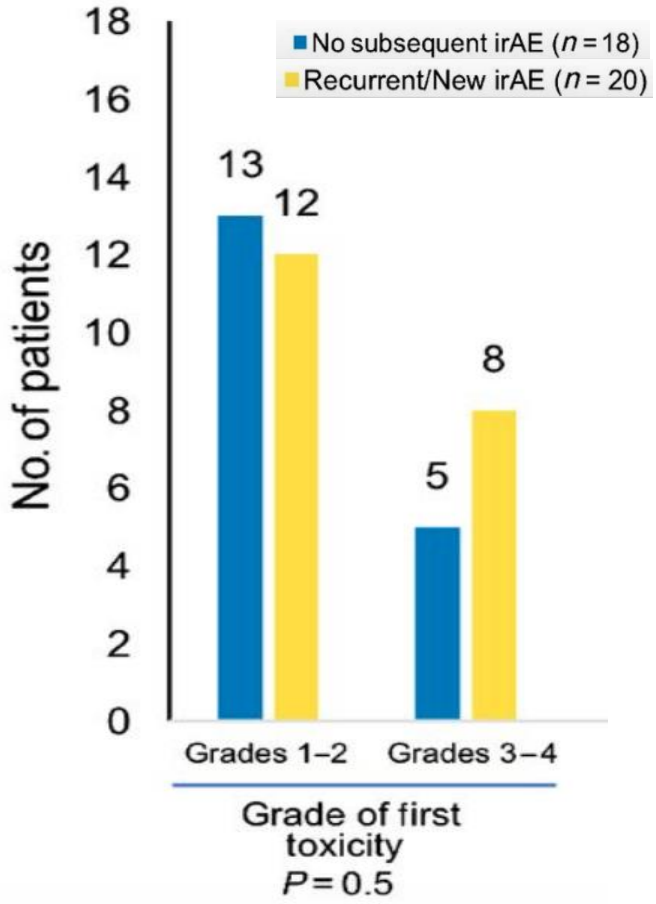
Impact of toxicity management on patient outcomes

- There is no evidence that treatment of toxicity impedes anti-tumor efficacy
- There are some data to suggest that patients who have irAEs have better efficacy outcomes

Re-challenge with ICI after irAEs

- Can consider re-challenge once irAE resolved to grade ≤1
- Re-challenge with anti-PD-1/L1 after anti-CTLA-4 ± anti-PD-1 likely safe
- Caution in re-challenging with same ICI in patients who previously had grade 3-4 irAEs





Santini FC. Cancer Immunol Res 2018.

Patients with autoimmune disorders

- Ipilimumab in melanoma patients
  - 29% experienced flare of pre-existing disorder; 29% experienced new irAEs
  - 56% experienced no flare OR additional irAEs
- PD-1 in melanoma patients
  - 38% experienced flare; 29% experienced new irAEs
- Efficacy appears similar for patients with autoimmune disorders compared to those without

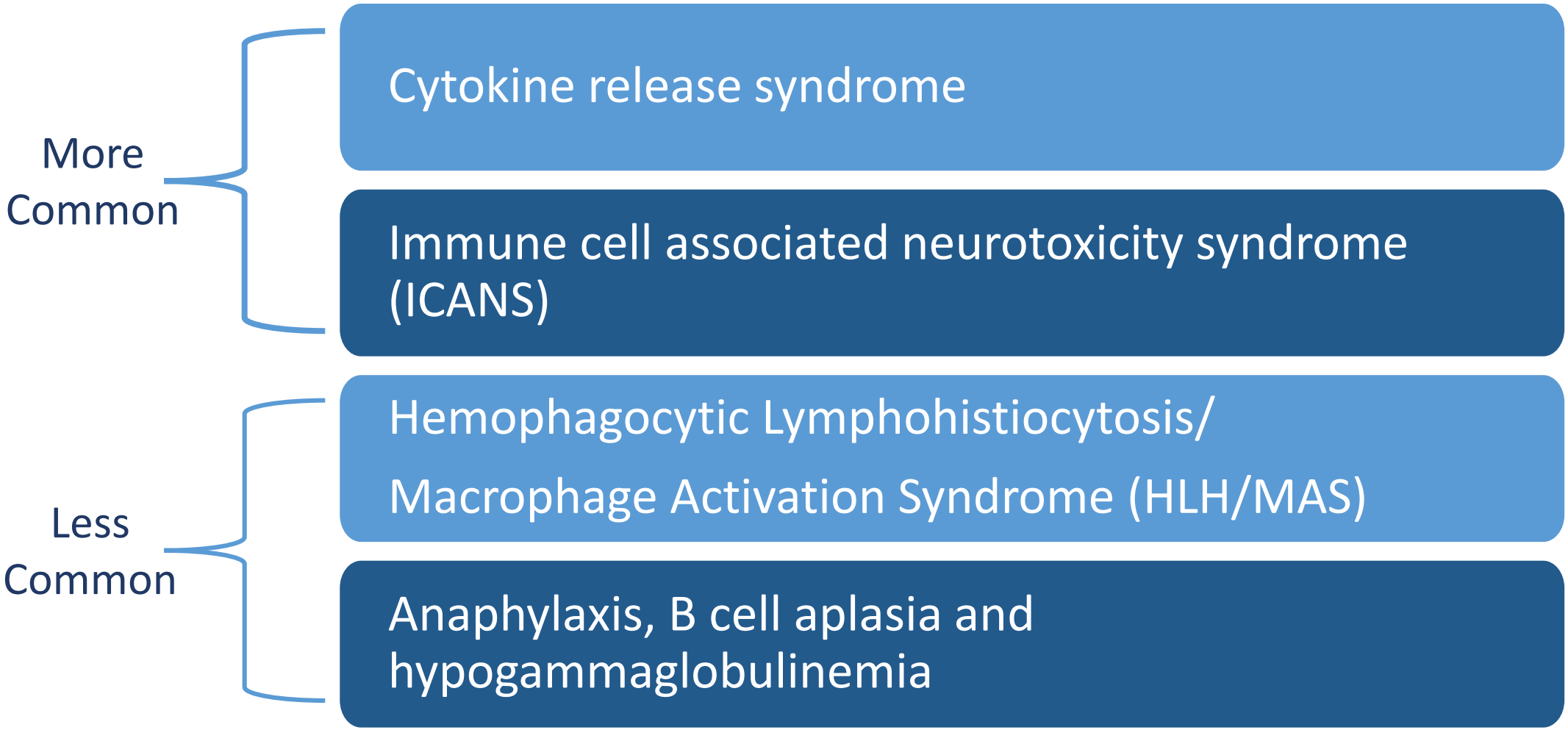
Kahler KC. Cancer Immunol Immunother. 2018.

ICI use in SOT or SCT

- Patients who relapse after allogeneic SCT for lymphoma:
  - Ipilimumab: 32% response (10 mg/kg); 14% GVHD; 21% irAEs
  - Anti-PD-1: 77% response; 26% died due to new-onset GVHD
- Solid organ data are limited; most in renal SOT patients
  - One retrospective study (n=39) reported graft loss in 81% and death in 46%
  - Also reported rapid time to rejection with median onset of 21 days

Davids MS. NEJM 2016.
Haverkos BM. Blood 2017.
Abdel-Wahab. JITC 2019.

CAR T-cell related toxicities



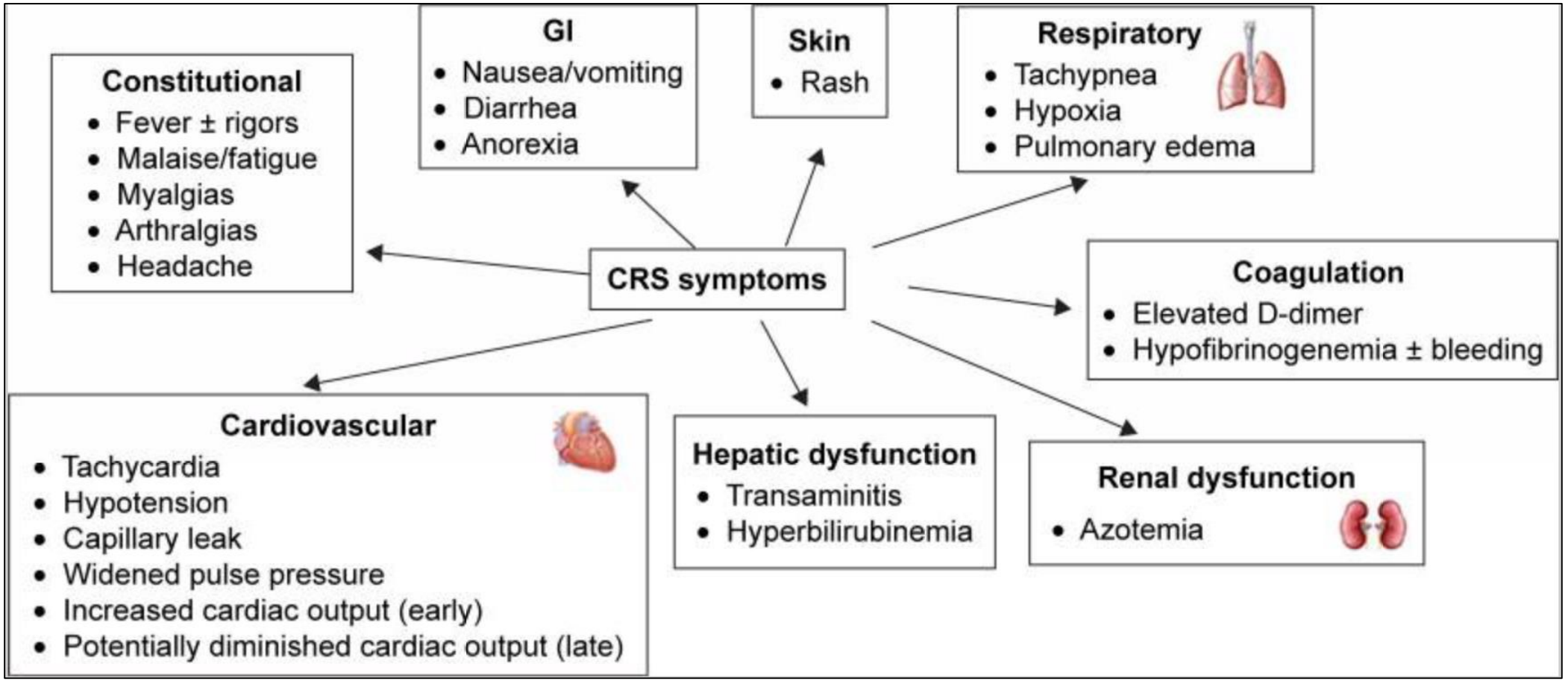
NCCN Guidelines. Management of immunotherapy-related toxicities. Version 2.2019.

CRS and Neurotoxicity

- Should not be viewed as two unrelated adverse events
  - Overlapping toxicities from excessive immune activation
  - May occur together or exclusive of one another
  - However, they do have distinct timing and responses to treatment
- Risk factors for both include:
  - High disease burden
  - Higher infused CAR-T cell dose
  - High intensity lymphodepletion regimen
  - Pre-existing endothelial activation
  - Severe thrombocytopenia

Santomasso BD. Cancer Discov 2018.
Wang Z. Biomark Res. 2018.

Cytokine release syndrome



Riegler LL. Ther Clin Risk Manag 2019.

Cytokine release syndrome

- Occurs in ~70% of patients; severe in 12-47%
  - Median onset 2-3 days after infusion, typical duration 7-8 days
- Multiple grading systems exist (MSKCC, CarTox, ASTCT)
  - Hypotension and hypoxia are main drivers of CRS severity
- Tocilizumab approved for CRS treatment (blocks IL-6R)
  - Dose for patients >30 kg: 8 mg/kg (up to 800 mg/dose)
  - May be repeated every 8 hours up to 4 doses
- Consider adding dexamethasone 10 mg q6h for grade 3-4 CRS and/or refractory to tocilizumab

Lee DW. BBMT 2019.
NCCN Guidelines. Management of immunotherapy-related toxicities. Version 2.2019.

Neurotoxicity

- Also called CAR-T Related Encephalopathy Syndrome (CRES) or iIEC-associated neurologic syndrome (ICANS)
- Occurs in 20-64% of patients, ≥ grade 3 in 11-42%
  - Onset 4-5 days after infusion, typical duration 5-12 days
- Common symptoms include encephalopathy, headache, delirium, anxiety, tremor, aphasia
  - Severe neurotoxicity: seizures, cerebral edema, hemi/paraparesis
- Diagnosis usually based on clinical symptoms
  - MRI/CT often negative although ~30% will have abnormal MRI (poorer outcome)
- Also has multiple grading systems which guide treatment
  - Usually includes early use of high-dose steroids (dexamethasone 10 mg IV q6h)

Wang Z. Biomark Res. 2018.
Hunter BD. J Natl Cancer Inst. 2019.

HLH/MAS

- Inflammatory syndrome caused by hyperactivation of macrophages and lymphocytes
- Rare; frequency reported to be as low as ~1%
- Should be managed with anti-IL-6 and corticosteroid therapy
- If no improvement after 48 hours, consider adding etoposide for additional immunosuppression
  - Dose: 75-100 mg/m^2
  - May be repeated after 4-7 days

Box 5 | Diagnostic criteria for CAR-T-cell-related HLH/MAS

A patient might have HLH/MAS if he/she had a peak serum ferritin level of >10,000 ng/ml during the cytokine-release syndrome phase of CAR-T-cell therapy (typically the first 5 days after cell infusion) and subsequently developed any two of the following:

- Grade ≥3 increase in serum bilirubin, aspartate aminotransferase, or alanine aminotransferase levels*
- Grade ≥3 oliguria or increase in serum creatinine levels*
- Grade ≥3 pulmonary oedema*
- Presence of haemophagocytosis in bone marrow or organs based on histopathological assessment of cell morphology and/or CD68 immunohistochemistry

Titov A. Cell Death Dis. 2018.
Neelapu SS. Nat Rev Clin Oncol. 2018.

The importance of patient education

- Many immune-related adverse events can present in similar ways to other disease states, but the treatment of them is very different.
- Patients may not go back to their oncologist for treatment of irAEs and need to identify themselves as immunotherapy recipients
  - Emergency room & general practitioners need to understand the proper identification and management of irAEs
- Reassure patients that irAEs will likely resolve over time (except endocrinopathies)

Education along the healthcare continuum

- Patients may not go back to their original clinic for adverse event management
- Emergency departments and primary care physicians need to recognize and know how to manage irAEs
- For example, the most common irAE in emergency departments is diarrhea – recognize immune-related symptoms versus other causes

Case Study 1

- A patient presents to the ER with fevers up to 101, nausea, vomiting and new onset of fatigue over the past 2 days.
- The patient has recently received cycle 2 of ipilimumab/nivolumab for metastatic melanoma with small asymptomatic brain mets.
- In the ER, vital signs are T 101.4, HR 101, BP 100/72, RR 18, O2 97%

Case Study 1

- Highly suspect adrenal insufficiency
- Lab data identify a normal CBC, creatinine and LFTs with a cortisol level of <0.001 ug/dL
- Initiate hydrocortisone 20 mg daily physiologic replacement dose and educate patient about AI diagnosis

Case Study 2

- A patient with a history of stage III NSCLC presents to clinic with increased dyspnea over the past 2 weeks.
- He has been treated with prior RT, chemotherapy and completed immunotherapy with PD-1 blockade 8 weeks ago.
- In the clinic, vital signs are T 98.7, HR 96, BP 120/82, RR 23, 91%
- What are the immediate next steps?

Case Study 2

- Raise your hand to indicated whether you would chose option A or B
- Option A: Order re-staging PET imaging
- Option B: Order CT chest imaging

Case Study 2

- A CT chest with contrast is performed
  - No pulmonary embolus
  - No evidence of active disease or effusions
  - New patchy opacities are noted bilaterally

- What is the likely diagnosis?
- What intervention would you recommend?

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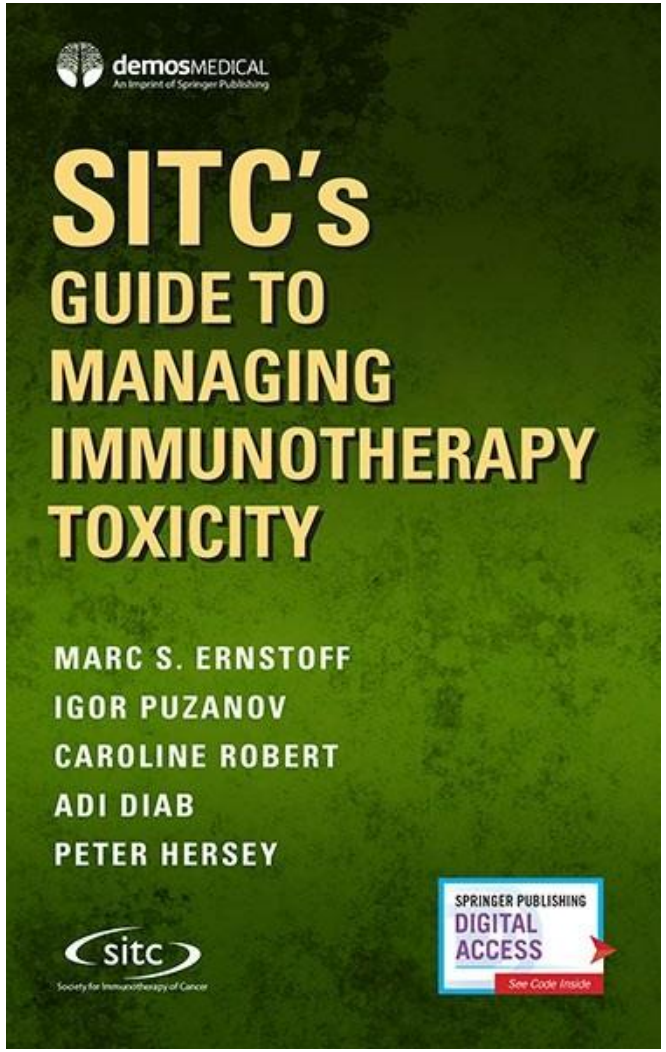
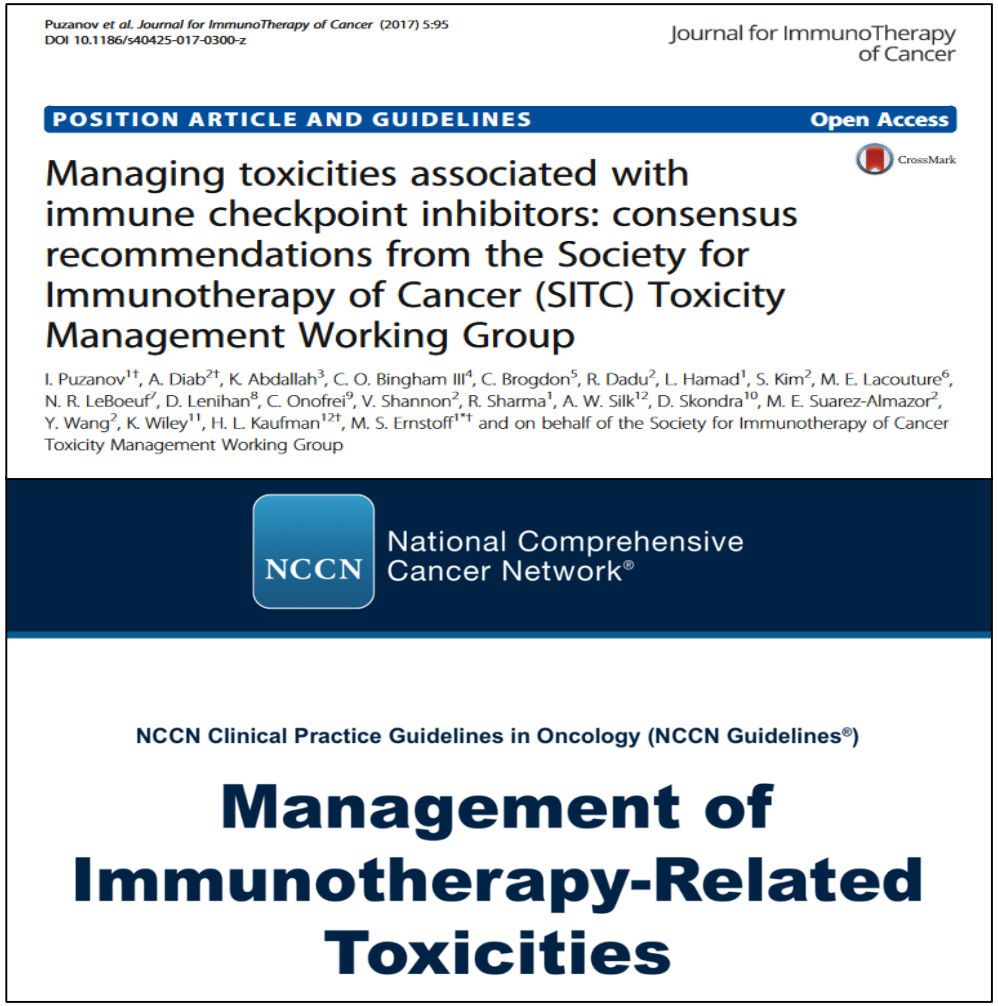
Additional Resources





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