

ASPEN: RESULTS OF A PHASE 3 RANDOMIZED TRIAL OF ZANUBRUTINIB VERSUS IBRUTINIB FOR PATIENTS WITH WALDENSTRÖM MACROGLOBULINEMIA

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INTRODUCTION

- Bruton tyrosine kinase (BTK) plays a critical role in B-cell receptor signaling; this pathway is constitutively activated in Waldenström macroglobulinemia (WM) (>90% with MYD88 mutations), leading to malignant cell survival<sup>1,2</sup>
- BTK inhibition is an emerging standard of care for WM<sup>3</sup>
- Zanubrutinib is a next-generation BTK inhibitor designed to maximize BTK occupancy and minimize off-target inhibition of TEC- and EGFR-family kinases (Figure 1)
- Potent, selective, irreversible<sup>4</sup>
- Equipotent against BTK compared with ibrutinib; higher selectivity versus EGFR, ITK, JAK3, HER2, and TEC<sup>5</sup>
- Advantageous pharmacokinetic (PK)/pharmacodynamic properties: complete and sustained BTK occupancy in peripheral blood mononuclear cells and lymph nodes<sup>4</sup>
- Favorable drug-drug interaction properties: can be coadministered with strong/moderate CYP3A inhibitors at a reduced dose, proton pump inhibitors, acid-reducing agents, and antithrombotic agents<sup>6,7</sup>



Secondary Objectives

- To further compare the efficacy, clinical benefit, and anti-lymphoma effects of zanubrutinib versus ibrutinib
- To evaluate safety and tolerability of zanubrutinib versus ibrutinib as measured by the incidence, timing, and severity of treatment-emergent adverse events (AEs) according to National Cancer Institute Common Terminology Criteria for Adverse Events (version 4.03)

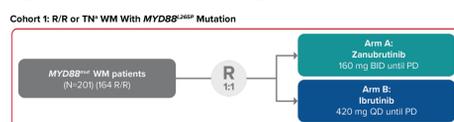
Exploratory Objectives

- To characterize the PK of zanubrutinib in patients with WM
- To compare quality of life (QoL) by European Organisation for Research and Treatment of Cancer QLQ-C30 and EQ-5D

METHODS

- ASPEN (NCT03053440) is an ongoing open-label, multicenter, randomized, phase 3 study designed to assess the safety, efficacy, and clinical benefit of zanubrutinib versus ibrutinib in patients with MYD88<sup>mut</sup> WM (Figure 2)

Figure 2. Phase 3 ASPEN Trial Design<sup>8</sup>



Stratification factors:  
 • CXCR4 status (CXCR4<sup>WT</sup> vs CXCR4<sup>mut</sup> vs missing)  
 • Number of prior lines of therapy (0 vs 1-3 vs >3)

Cohort 2: WM with MYD88<sup>WT</sup>; Present in ~10% of Enrolled Patients



EUDRACT 2016-002980-33; NCT03053440. \*TN must be unsuitable for standard chemoimmunotherapy.  
 Abbreviations: BID, twice daily; BTK, Bruton tyrosine kinase; CLL, chronic lymphocytic leukemia; C<sub>max</sub>, maximum concentration; C<sub>50</sub>, 50% inhibitory concentration; DLCL, diffuse large B-cell lymphoma; EGFR, epidermal growth factor receptor; FL, follicular lymphoma; HER2, human epidermal growth factor receptor 2; HTRF, homogeneous time resolved fluorescence; IC<sub>50</sub>, half maximal inhibitory concentration; ITK, IL-2-inducible T-cell kinase; JAK3, Janus-associated kinase 3; MCL, mantle cell lymphoma; MZL, marginal zone lymphoma; PLC, phospholipase C; QD, once daily; TEC, tyrosine protein kinase; WM, Waldenström macroglobulinemia; Zanu, zanubrutinib.

Eligibility

- Clinical and definitive diagnosis of WM, with measurable disease (serum IgM >0.5 g/dL), and meeting ≥1 criterion for treatment according to consensus panel criteria from the Seventh International Workshop on WM<sup>8</sup>
- If treatment naïve, must be considered by treating physician unsuitable for standard chemoimmunotherapy regimens
- Eastern Cooperative Oncology Group performance status 0-2
- Absolute neutrophil count ≥750/μL, platelets ≥50,000/μL (independent of growth factor/transfusions)
- Adequate renal, hepatic, and coagulation function
- No significant cardiac disease, active central nervous system involvement, or prior BTK inhibitors

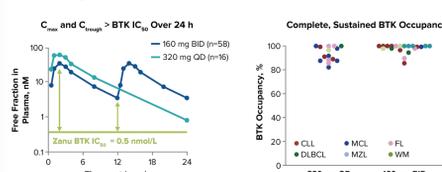
Cohort Assignment

- At ASPEN study entry, MYD88 gene mutations were assessed by a central laboratory (NeoGenomics Laboratory, Aliso Viejo, CA, USA)
- Patients with MYD88 mutation-positive (MYD88<sup>mut</sup>) WM were randomized (1:1) to receive zanubrutinib (160 mg twice daily) or ibrutinib (420 mg once daily)
- Patients without MYD88 mutations were assigned to a separate cohort to receive zanubrutinib; these results are reported separately

STUDY OBJECTIVES

- Primary Objective
- To compare the efficacy of zanubrutinib versus ibrutinib
- Primary endpoint was complete response (CR) plus very good partial response (VGPR) rate in patients with activating mutations (MYD88<sup>mut</sup>) WM

Figure 1B. Complete, Sustained BTK Occupancy With BID or QD Dosing<sup>4,5</sup>



Abbreviations: BID, twice daily; BTK, Bruton tyrosine kinase; CLL, chronic lymphocytic leukemia; C<sub>max</sub>, maximum concentration; C<sub>50</sub>, 50% inhibitory concentration; DLCL, diffuse large B-cell lymphoma; EGFR, epidermal growth factor receptor; FL, follicular lymphoma; HER2, human epidermal growth factor receptor 2; HTRF, homogeneous time resolved fluorescence; IC<sub>50</sub>, half maximal inhibitory concentration; ITK, IL-2-inducible T-cell kinase; JAK3, Janus-associated kinase 3; MCL, mantle cell lymphoma; MZL, marginal zone lymphoma; PLC, phospholipase C; QD, once daily; TEC, tyrosine protein kinase; WM, Waldenström macroglobulinemia; Zanu, zanubrutinib.

RESULTS

- Overall, 201 patients with MYD88<sup>mut</sup> WM were randomized to receive zanubrutinib (n=102) or ibrutinib (n=99) (Figure 3)
- While the treatment groups were well balanced for most baseline factors, more elderly patients (>75 years, 33.3% vs 22.2%) and more patients with anemia (hemoglobin ≤110 g/L, 65.7% vs 53.5%) were randomized to receive zanubrutinib than ibrutinib (Table 1)
- The primary analysis results are presented here (data cutoff: August 2019), with additional follow-up data on efficacy by investigator (data cutoff: January 2020)

Figure 3. ASPEN: Disposition of Patients in Cohort 1

- Median follow-up: 19.4 months

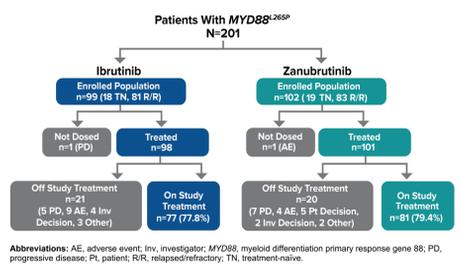


Table 1. ASPEN: Demographics and Disease Characteristics

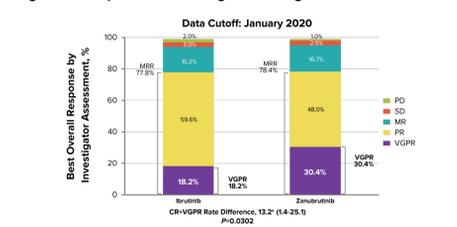
Characteristics, n (%)	Ibrutinib (n=99)	Zanubrutinib (n=102)
Age median (range), y	70.0 (38-90)	70.0 (45-87)
>65 y	70 (70.7)	61 (59.8)
>75 y	22 (22.2)	34 (33.3)
Sex, n (%)		
Male	65 (65.7)	69 (67.6)
Female	34 (34.3)	33 (32.4)
Prior lines of therapy, n (%)		
0	18 (18.2)	19 (18.6)
1-3	74 (74.7)	76 (74.5)
>3	7 (7.1)	7 (6.9)
Genotype by central lab <sup>a</sup> , n (%)		
MYD88 <sup>299P</sup> /CXCR4 <sup>WT</sup>	90 (90.9)	91 (89.2)
MYD88 <sup>299P</sup> /CXCR4 <sup>mut</sup>	8 (8.1)	11 (10.8)
IPSS WM <sup>b</sup>		
Low	13 (13.1)	17 (16.7)
Intermediate	42 (42.4)	38 (37.3)
High	44 (44.4)	47 (46.1)
Hemoglobin ≤110 g/L	53 (53.5)	67 (65.7)

<sup>a</sup>Wild-type-binding polymerase chain reaction for MYD88 and Sanger sequencing for CXCR4 using bone marrow aspirates. One patient had local next-generation sequencing testing results of MYD88<sup>WT</sup>/CXCR4 Unknown.  
 Abbreviations: CXCR4, C-X-C motif chemokine receptor 4; IPSS WM, International Prognostic Scoring System for Waldenström macroglobulinemia; ITT, intention-to-treat; MYD88, myeloid differentiation primary response gene 88; WT, wild-type.

Efficacy

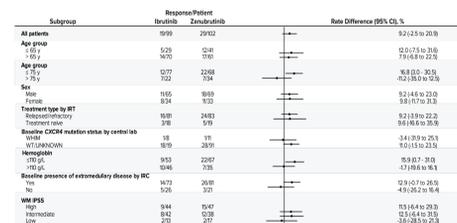
- At the primary analysis, superiority in the CR+VGPR rate of zanubrutinib compared with ibrutinib in the relapsed/refractory population was not significant (descriptive P=0.0921)
- Area under the curve for IgM reduction over time was significantly greater for zanubrutinib versus ibrutinib (P=0.037)
- The VGPR rate was higher with zanubrutinib than ibrutinib (30.4% vs 18.2%; P=0.0302) at the additional 5-month follow-up (data cutoff: January 2020) (Figure 4)
- No CRs were observed
- Subgroup analysis of CR+VGPR response rates are shown in Figure 5
- Progression-free survival (PFS) and overall survival (OS) were similar between patients receiving zanubrutinib and ibrutinib (Figure 6)

Figure 4. Response According to Investigator



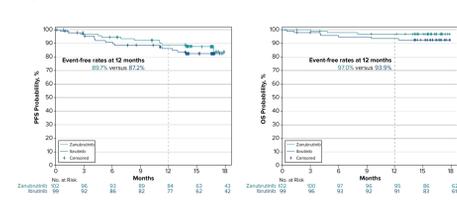
<sup>a</sup>Adjusted for stratification factors and age group. P-value is for descriptive purpose only.  
 Abbreviations: CR, complete response; MR, minor response; MRR, major response rate; PD, progressive disease; PR, partial response; SD, stable disease; VGPR, very good PR.

Figure 5. Forest Plot of CR+VGPR Response Rate Difference by IRC, in Overall ITT Population



Abbreviations: CI, confidence interval; CR, complete response; CXCR4, C-X-C motif chemokine receptor 4; IRC, independent review committee; IR, interactive response technology; ITT, intention-to-treat; VGPR, very good partial response; WM IPSS, Waldenström macroglobulinemia International Prognostic Scoring System; WT, wild-type.

Figure 6. PFS and OS in ITT Population



Disease progression determined by IRC.  
 Abbreviations: IRC, independent review committee; ITT, intention-to-treat; OS, overall survival; PFS, progression-free survival.

Safety

- Most patients in both treatment arms reported ≥1 AE (Table 2)
- Rates of atrial fibrillation, contusion, diarrhea, peripheral edema, hemorrhage, muscle spasms, pneumonia, and AEs leading to discontinuation or death were lower with zanubrutinib compared with ibrutinib (Table 3)
- An additional five patients in the ibrutinib arm discontinued treatment because of AEs versus zero in the zanubrutinib arm (14.3% vs 4%) with an additional 5-month follow-up (data cutoff: January 2020)
- Although the rate of neutropenia was higher with zanubrutinib (29.7% vs 13.3%), grade ≥3 infection rates were similar between treatments (17.8% vs 19.4%) (Table 4)
- Risk of atrial fibrillation/flutter and hypertension was lower in patients receiving zanubrutinib (Figure 7)
- There was a trend toward improved QoL in patients receiving zanubrutinib (Figure 8)

Table 2. AE Overview

Category, n (%)	Overall	
	Ibrutinib (n=98)	Zanubrutinib (n=101)
Patients with ≥1 AE	97 (99.0)	98 (97.0)
Grade ≥3	62 (63.3)	59 (58.4)
Serious	40 (40.8)	40 (39.6)
AE leading to death	4 (4.1) <sup>a</sup>	1 (1.0) <sup>b</sup>
AE leading to treatment discontinuation	9 (9.2) <sup>c</sup>	4 (4.0) <sup>d</sup>
AE leading to dose reduction	23 (23.5)	14 (13.9)
AE leading to dose held	55 (56.1)	47 (46.5)
Patients with ≥1 treatment-related AE	84 (85.7)	80 (79.2)
Patients with ≥1 AE of interest	81 (82.7)	86 (85.1)

<sup>a</sup>Cardiac failure acute; sepsis (n=2); unexplained death. <sup>b</sup>Cardiac arrest after plasmapheresis. <sup>c</sup>G5 sepsis (n=2); G5 unexplained death; G3 acute myocardial infarction; G3 hepatitis; G3 pneumonia; G2 drug-induced liver injury; G2 pneumonitis; G1 pneumonia; G5 cardiac arrest after plasmapheresis; G4 neutropenia; G4 subdural hemorrhage; G2 plasma cell myeloma.  
 Abbreviations: AE, adverse event (treatment-emergent); G, grade.

Table 3. Most Common AEs

Event Preferred Term <sup>a</sup> , n (%)	All Grades (≥20%)		Grade ≥3 (≥5%)	
	Ibrutinib (n=98)	Zanubrutinib (n=101)	Ibrutinib (n=98)	Zanubrutinib (n=101)
Diarrhea	31 (32)	21 (21)	1 (1)	3 (3)
Upper respiratory tract infection	28 (29)	24 (24)	1 (1)	0
Contusion	23 (24)	13 (13)	0	0
Muscle spasms <sup>b</sup>	23 (24)	10 (10)	1 (1)	0
Peripheral edema <sup>c</sup>	19 (19)	9 (9)	0	0
Hypertension	16 (16)	11 (11)	1 (1)	6 (6)
Atrial fibrillation <sup>d</sup>	14 (14)	2 (2)	3 (3)	0
Neutropenia <sup>e</sup>	12 (12)	25 (25)	8 (8)	16 (16)
Pneumonia <sup>f</sup>	12 (12)	2 (2)	7 (7)	1 (1)
Anemia	10 (10)	12 (12)	5 (5)	5 (5)
Thrombocytopenia	10 (10)	10 (9)	3 (3)	6 (6)

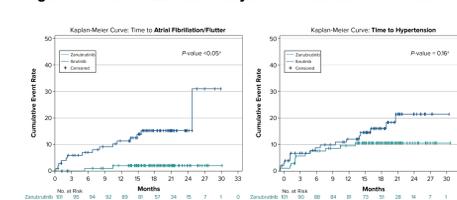
<sup>a</sup>Including most common AEs and AEs with ≥10% or ≥5% differentials, respectively. <sup>b</sup>Descriptive two-sided P<0.05.  
 Abbreviation: AE, adverse event.

Table 4. AE Categories of Interest (BTKi Class AEs)<sup>a</sup>

AE Categories, n (%) (Preferred Terms)	All Grades		Grade ≥3	
	Ibrutinib (n=98)	Zanubrutinib (n=101)	Ibrutinib (n=98)	Zanubrutinib (n=101)
Atrial fibrillation/flutter <sup>b</sup>	15 (15.3)	2 (2.0)	4 (4.1)	0 (0.0)
Diarrhea (PT)	31 (31.6)	21 (20.8)	1 (1.0)	3 (3.0)
Hemorrhage	58 (59.2)	49 (48.5)	8 (8.2)	6 (5.9)
Major hemorrhage <sup>c</sup>	9 (9.2)	6 (5.9)	8 (8.2)	6 (5.9)
Hypertension	17 (17.3)	11 (10.9)	12 (12.2)	6 (5.9)
Neutropenia <sup>d,e</sup>	13 (13.3)	30 (29.7)	8 (8.2)	20 (19.8)
Infection	66 (67.3)	67 (66.3)	19 (19.4)	18 (17.8)
Second malignancy	11 (11.2)	12 (11.9)	1 (1.0)	2 (2.0)

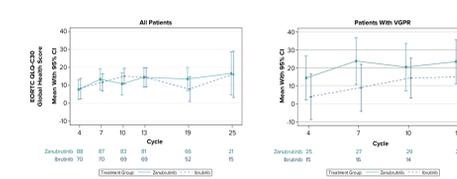
<sup>a</sup>Higher AE rate in bold with ≥10% difference in any grade or ≥5% difference in grade 3 or above. <sup>b</sup>Data cutoff, August 2019. <sup>c</sup>Descriptive two-sided P<0.05. Defined as any grade ≥3 hemorrhage or any grade central nervous system hemorrhage. <sup>d</sup>Including PT terms of neutropenia, neutrophil count decreased, febrile neutropenia, agranulocytosis, neutropenic infection, and neutropenic sepsis.  
 Abbreviations: AE, adverse event; BTKi, Bruton tyrosine kinase inhibitor; PT, preferred term.

Figure 7. Time to AE: Risk Analysis Over Duration of Treatment



<sup>a</sup>Descriptive purpose only.

Figure 8. Quality of Life: Change From Baseline Over Time



Abbreviations: CI, confidence interval; EORTC QLQ-C30, European Organisation for Research and Treatment of Cancer Quality of Life Questionnaire - Core Questionnaire; VGPR, very good partial response.

CONCLUSIONS

- Although not statistically significant, zanubrutinib was associated with a higher VGPR response rate compared with ibrutinib in the primary analysis
- Additional 5-month follow-up showed a higher VGPR response rate by investigator assessment (intention-to-treat, 30.4% vs 18.2%; P=0.0302)
- No CRs were observed
- Deeper and sustained IgM reduction over time (descriptive two-sided P=0.04)
- Major response rates were comparable, with directionally favorable PFS, OS, and QoL
- Zanubrutinib demonstrated clinically meaningful advantages in safety and tolerability
- Lower risk of atrial fibrillation/flutter compared with ibrutinib (2.0% vs 15.3%; descriptive two-sided P<0.05)
- Lower rates of major bleeding (5.9% vs 9.2%), diarrhea (20.8% vs 31.6%), and hypertension (10.9% vs 17.3%)
- There was no difference in the rate of infection despite higher rates of neutropenia with zanubrutinib
- Fewer AEs leading to death, treatment discontinuation, or interruption were observed with zanubrutinib

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