

# ALK: First-line treatment and mechanism of resistance

Sai-Hong Ignatius Ou, MD PhD

University of California Irvine School of Medicine

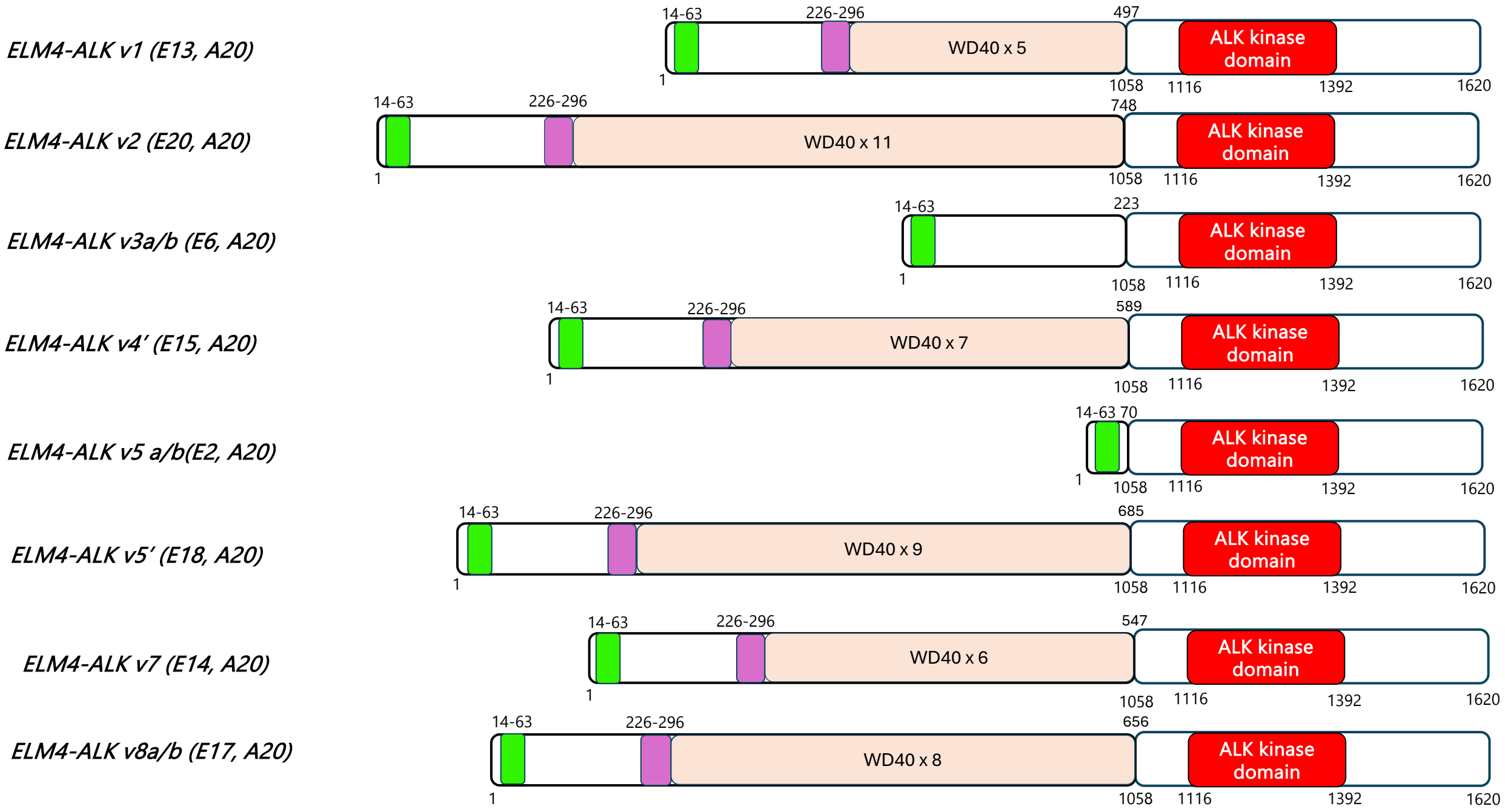
Chao Family Comprehensive Cancer Center,

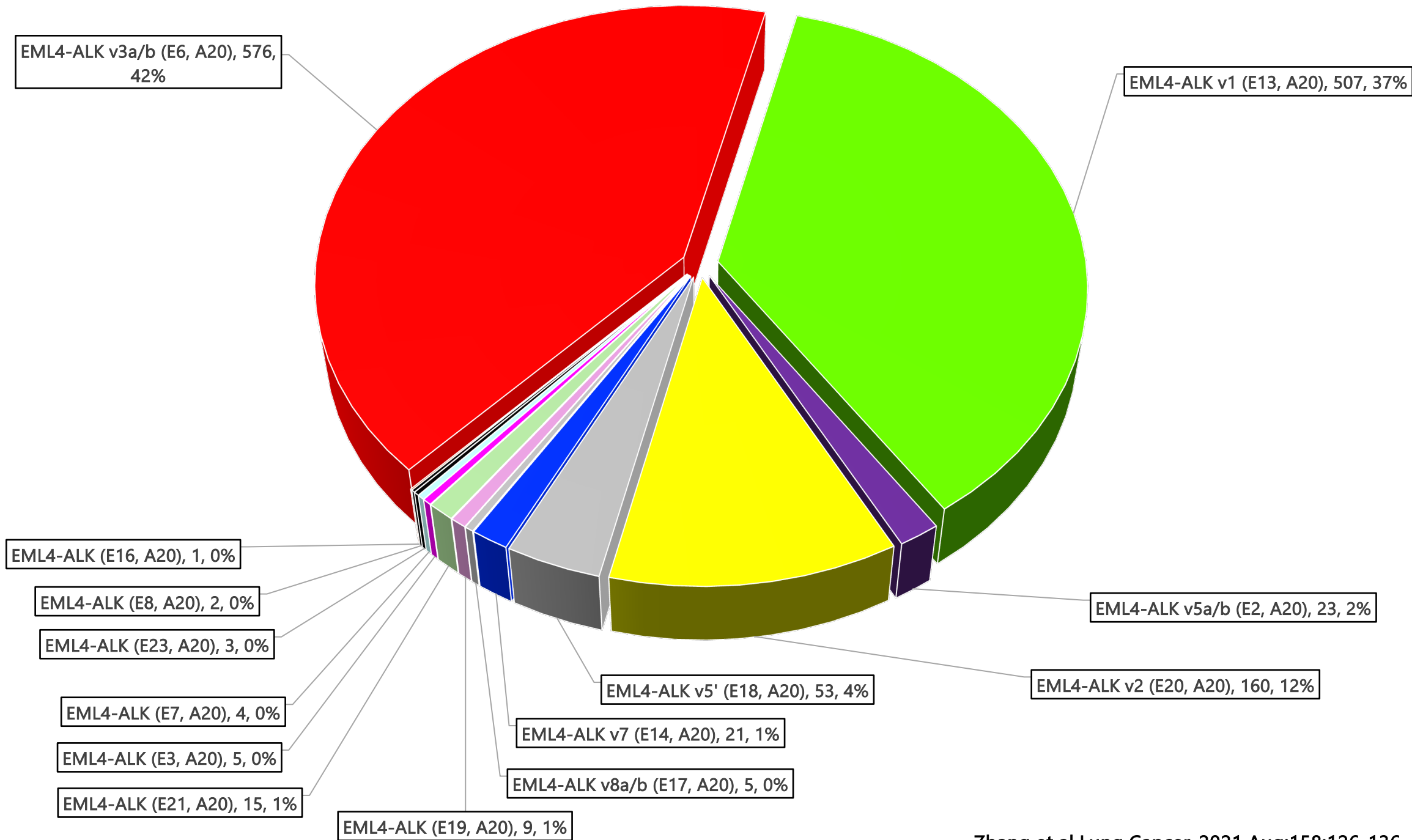
Orange and Irvine, CA, USA

[ignatiusou@yahoo.com](mailto:ignatiusou@yahoo.com)

4:05 pm to 4:20 pm July 20, 2024 (Saturday)





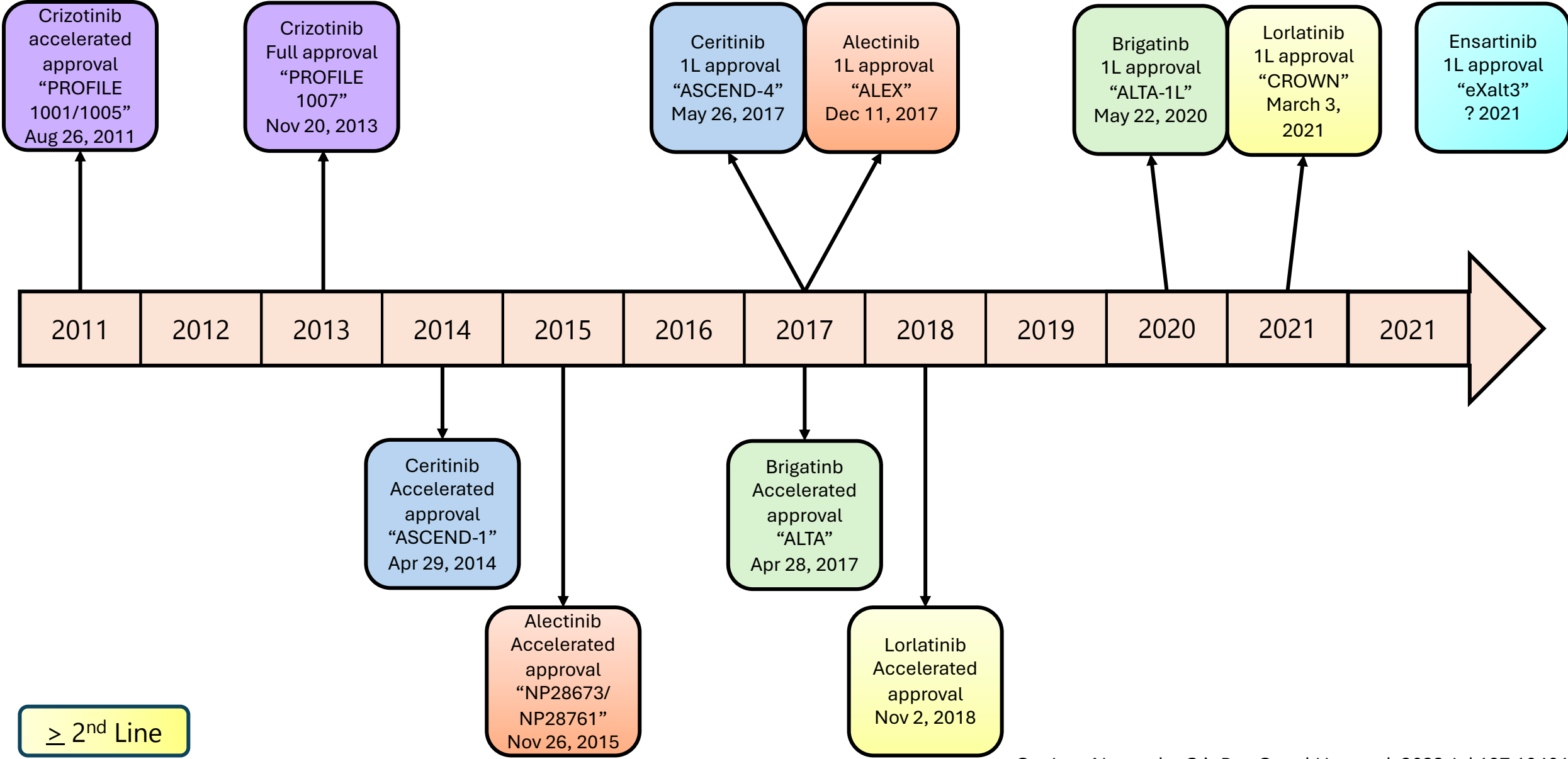


## 5 pillars of an ideal ALK TKI for *ALK+* NSCLC

- 1. High potency to inhibit wildtype ALK kinase
- 2. Excellent CNS penetration to treat and to delay CNS progression
- 3. Ability to overcome multiple acquired ALK mutations in particular “solvent-front” mutation, *ALK G1202R*, given legacy use of crizotinib and 2<sup>nd</sup> generation ALK TKIs
- 4. Ability to treat the poor prognostic group of *ALK+* NSCLC (*EML4-ALK variant 3* AND/OR *TP53+*)
- 5. Well tolerated as measured by MEAN and MEDIAN relative dose intensity (RDI) over a long duration of treatment



1<sup>st</sup> Line (1L)



≥ 2<sup>nd</sup> Line

# Landscape of 1L ALK TKIs approved globally

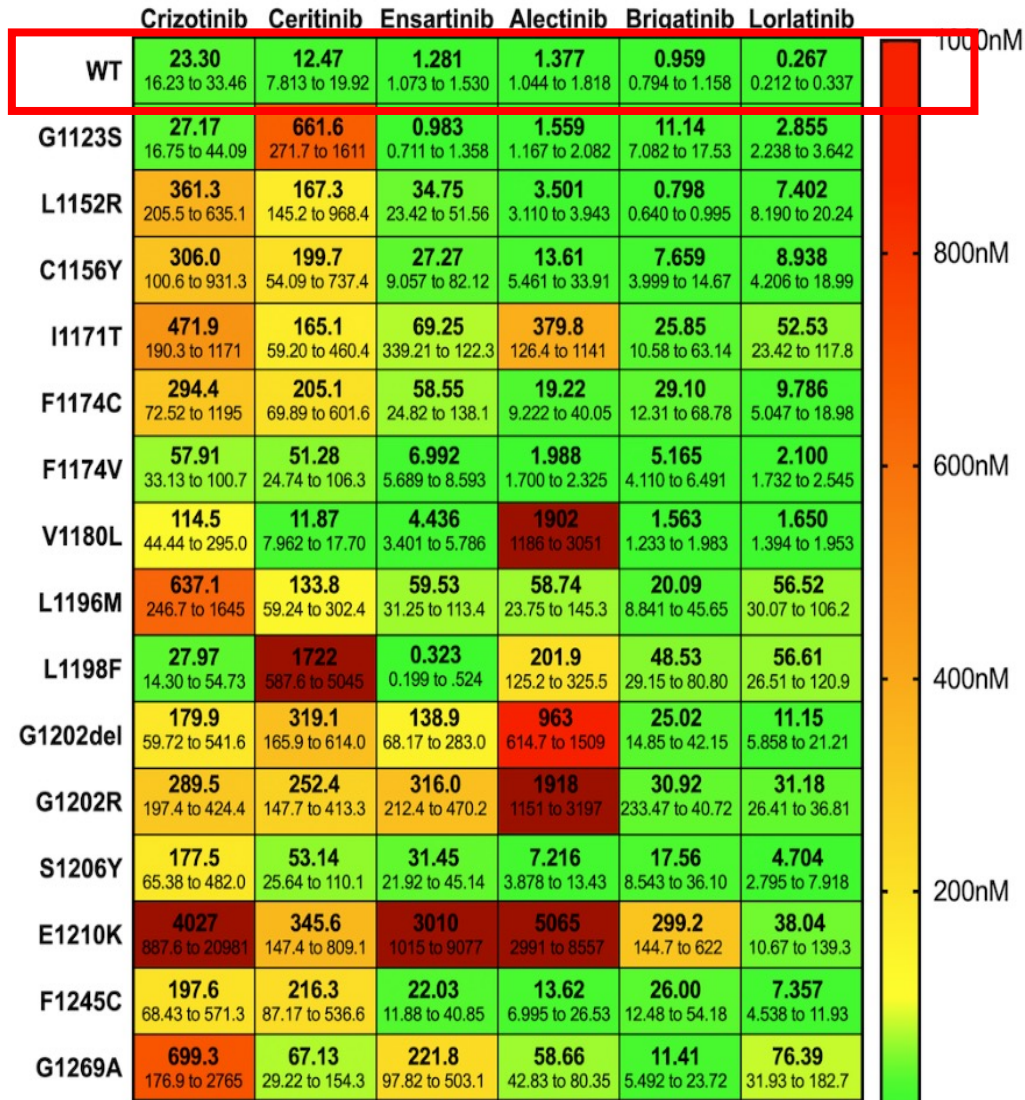
- **5** ALK TKIs Approved for 1<sup>st</sup>-line treatment of advanced *ALK+* NSCLC in USA
  - Crizotinib, ceritinib, alectinib, brigatinib, lorlatinib
  - Ensartinib's Prescription Drug User Fee Act (PDUFA) date is December 28, 2024
- **8** ALK TKIs Approved for 1<sup>st</sup>-line treatment of advanced *ALK+* NSCLC in China
  - Crizotinib, ceritinib, alectinib, brigatinib, ensartinib, lorlatinib
  - Iruplinalkib, envonalkib

# All 6 approved ALK TKIs heatmaps

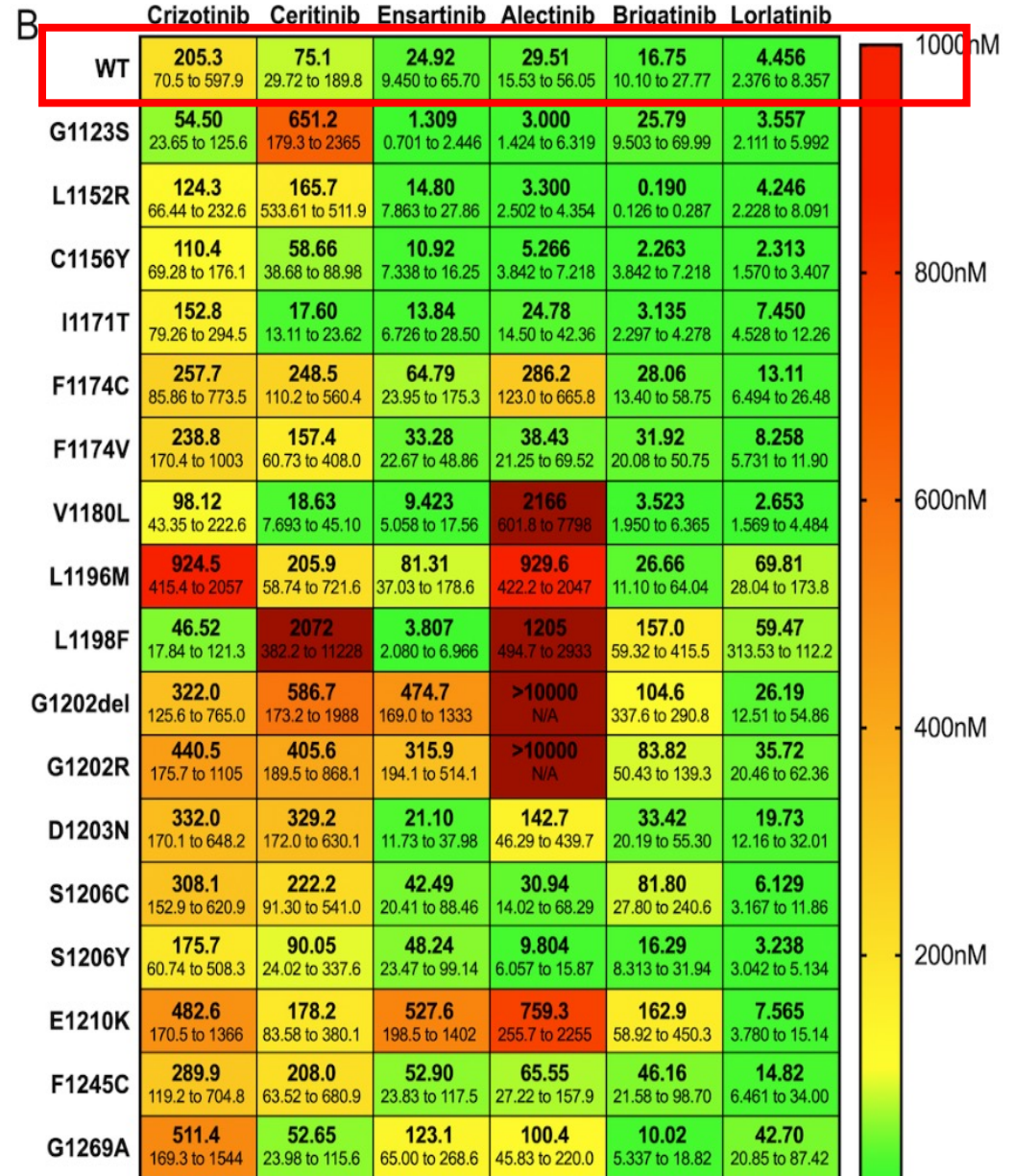
EML4-ALK Variant

EML4-ALK Variant 3

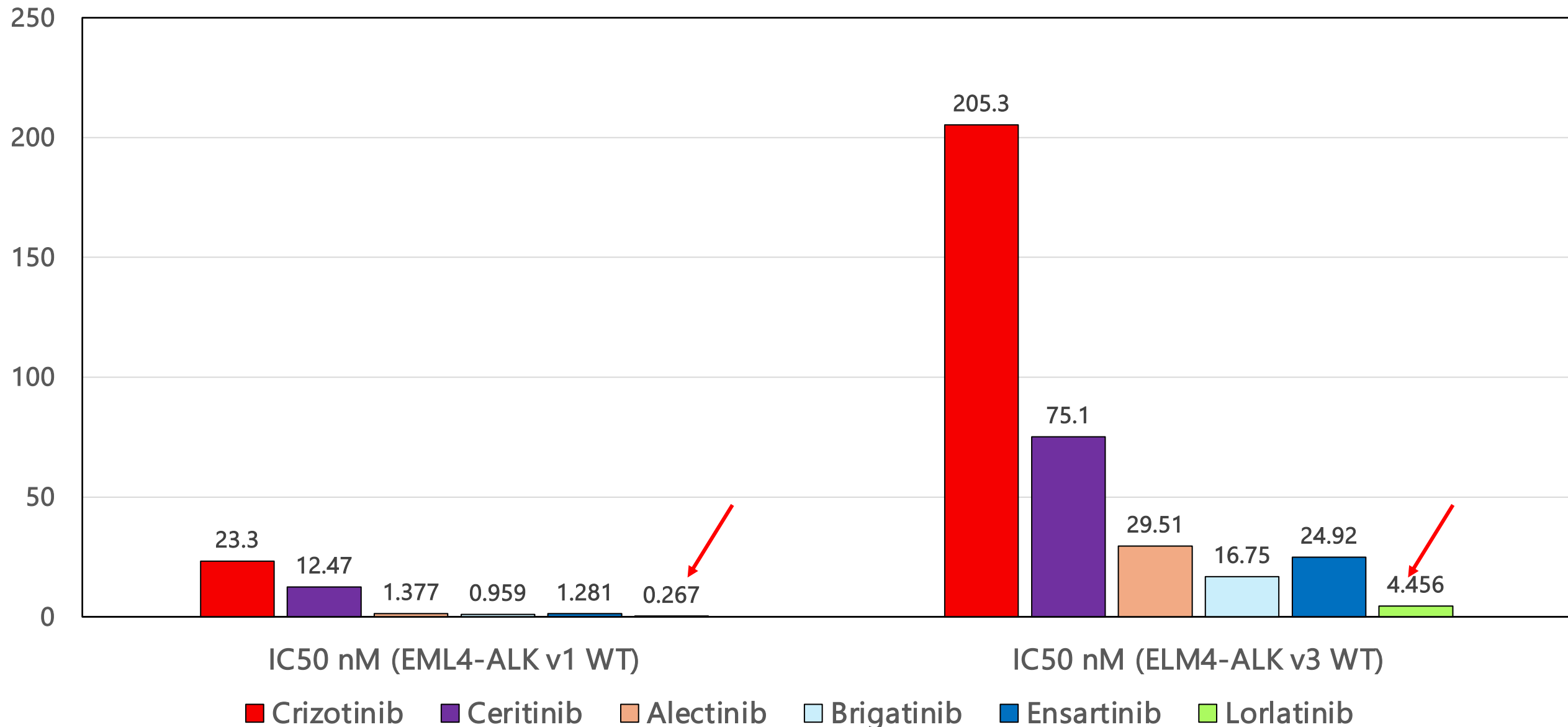
A 1



B



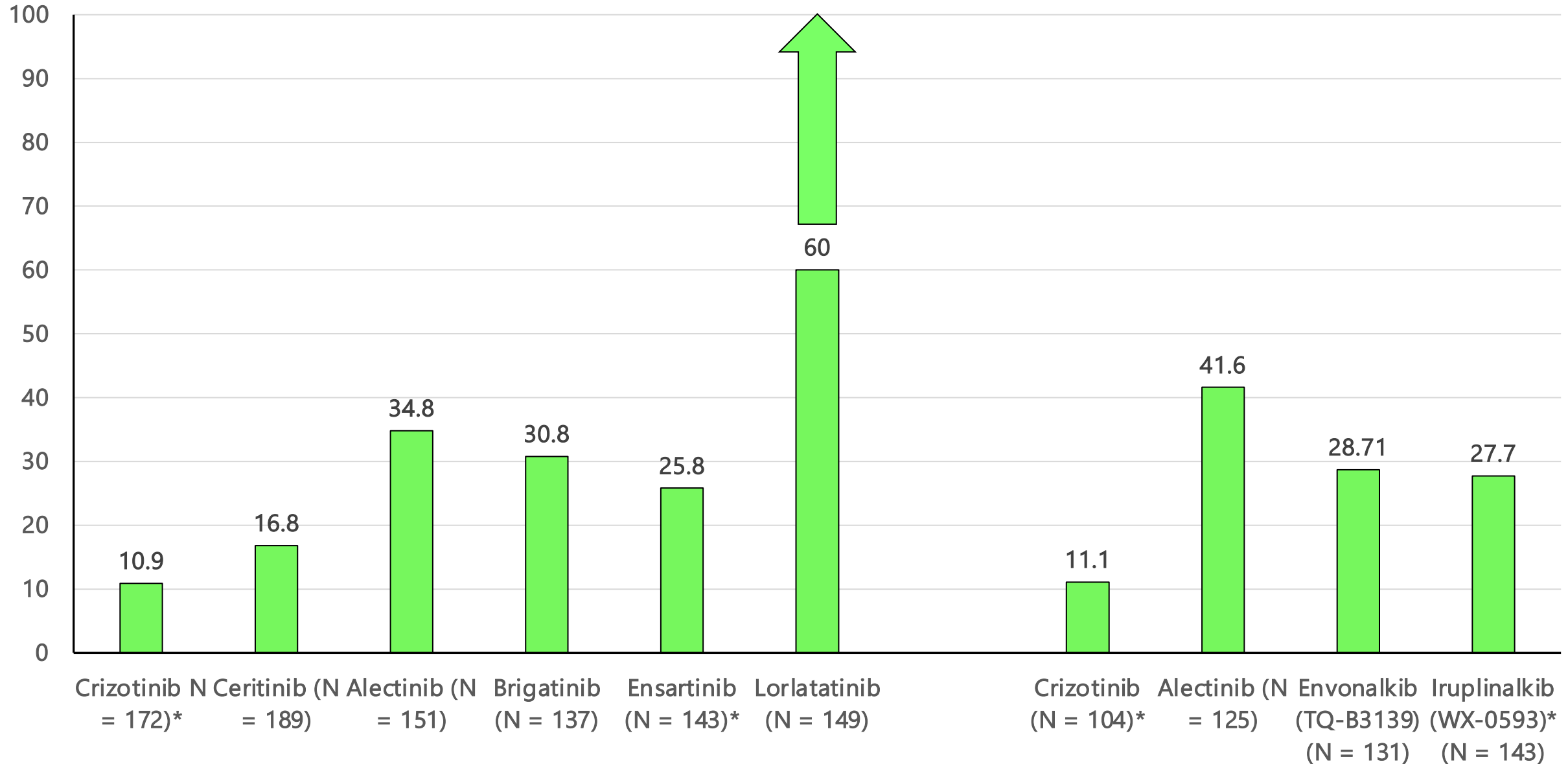
# Comparison of IC<sub>50</sub> among ALK TKIs in the back ground of EML4-ALK variant 1 and variant 3





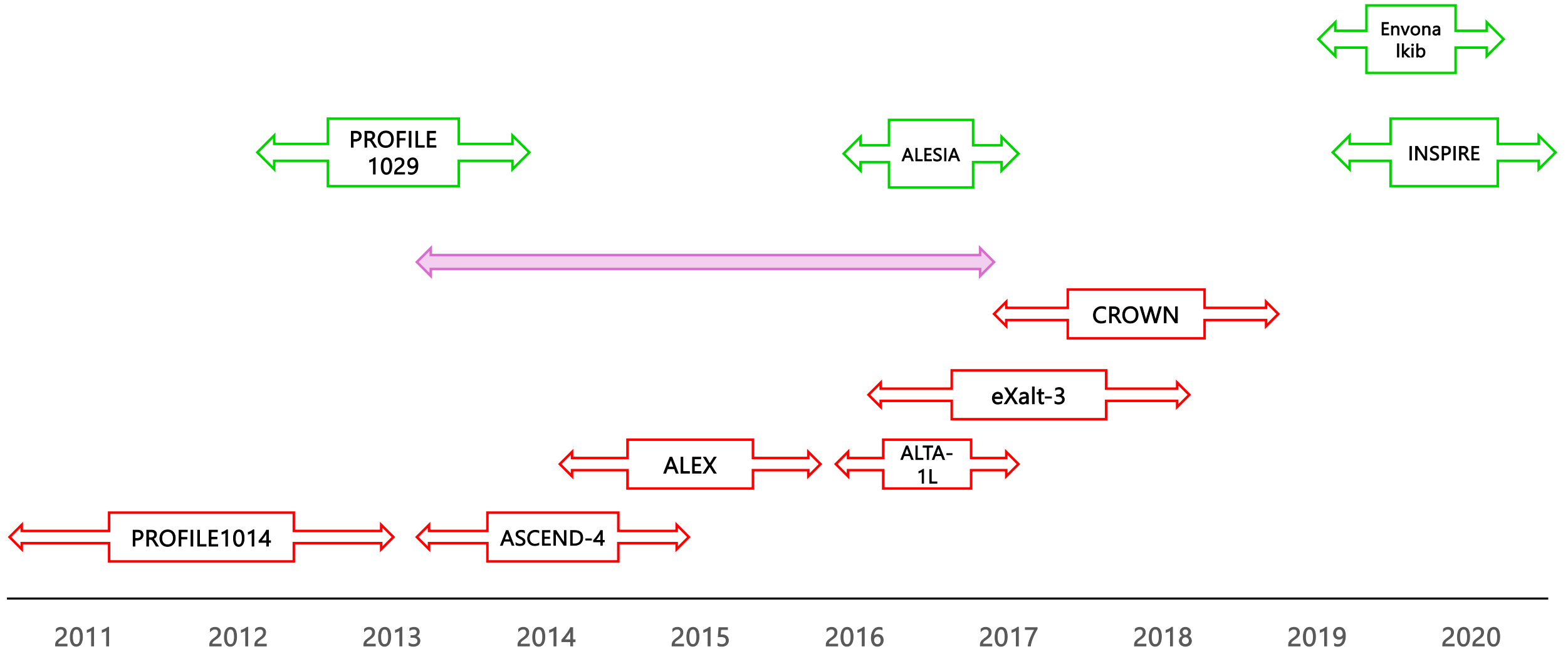
# Median Investigator-assessed median PFS of the comparison arm ALK TKI

Median PFS (months)

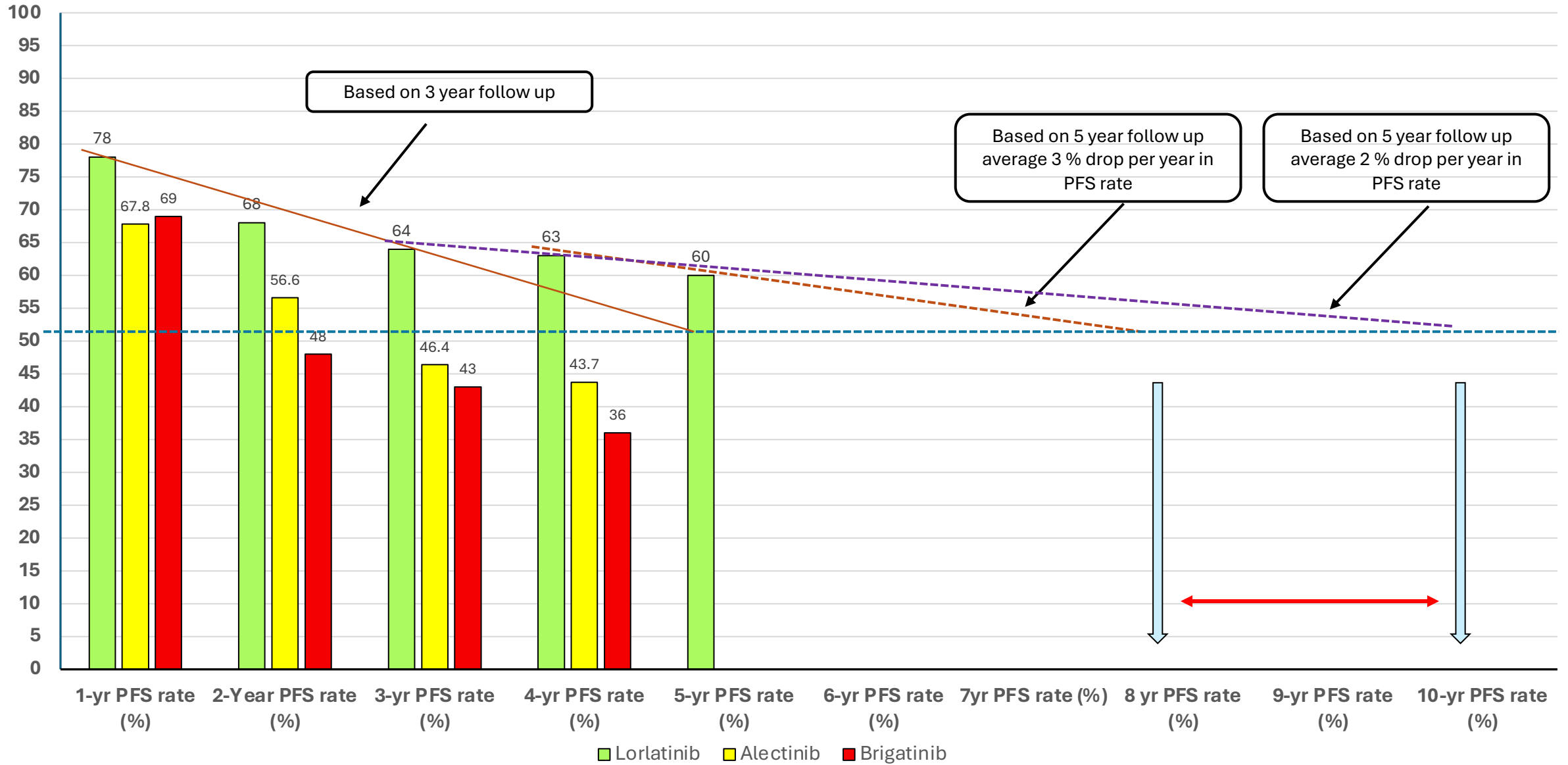


Solomon NEJM 2014; Soria TLO 2017; Peters NEJM 2017; Wu JTO 2018; Camidge NEJM 2018; Zhou TLRM 2019; Shaw NEJM 2020; Horn JAMA Oncol 2021; Yang Signal Transduct Target Ther 2023; Yang Shi TJO 2024 ; Solomon JCO 2024

# Timeline on the accrual of Phase 3 ALK TKI trials



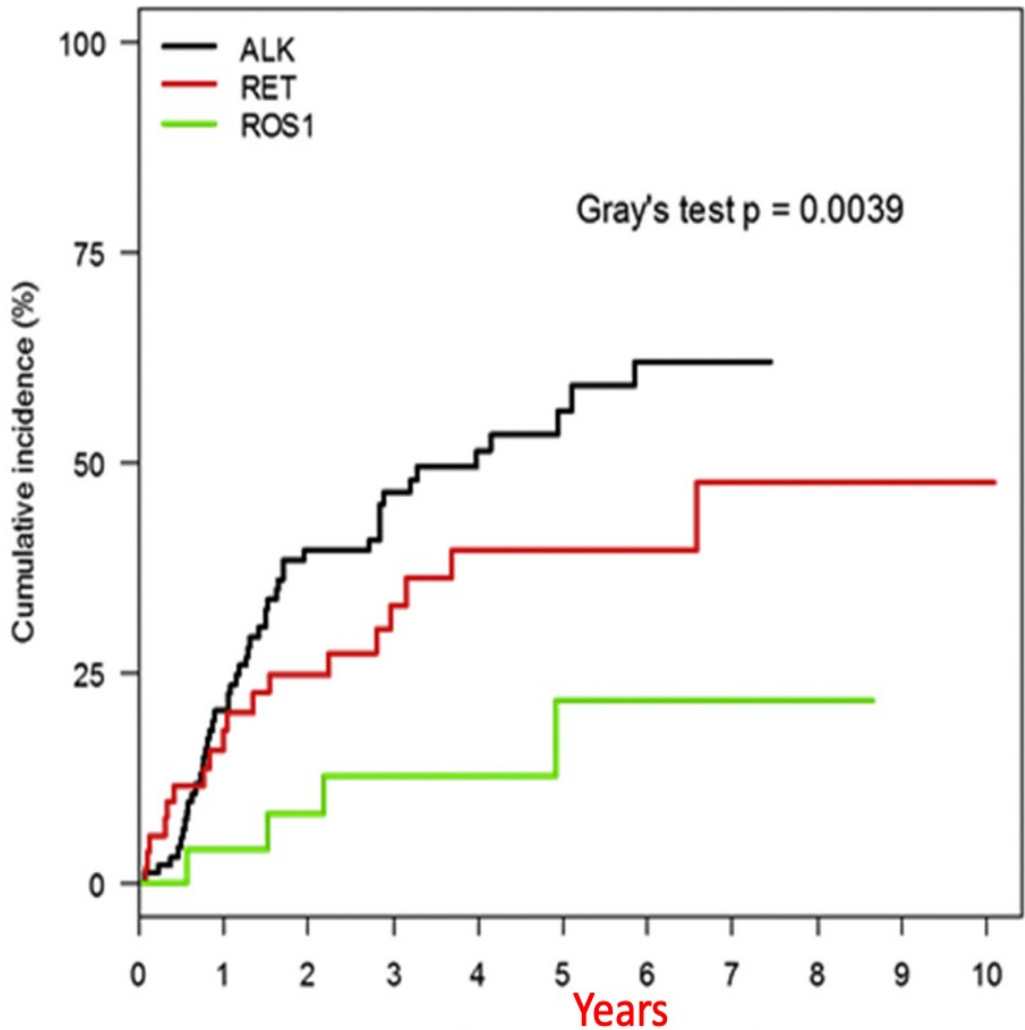
# Projection of 50% PFS of lorlatinib for CROWN (~ median PFS of lorlatinib)



Camidge J Thorac Oncol. 2019 Jul;14(7):1233-1243; Camidge J Thorac Oncol. 2021 Dec;16(12):2091-2108; Solomon Lancet Respir Med. 2023 Apr;11(4):354-366; Solomon JCO 2024

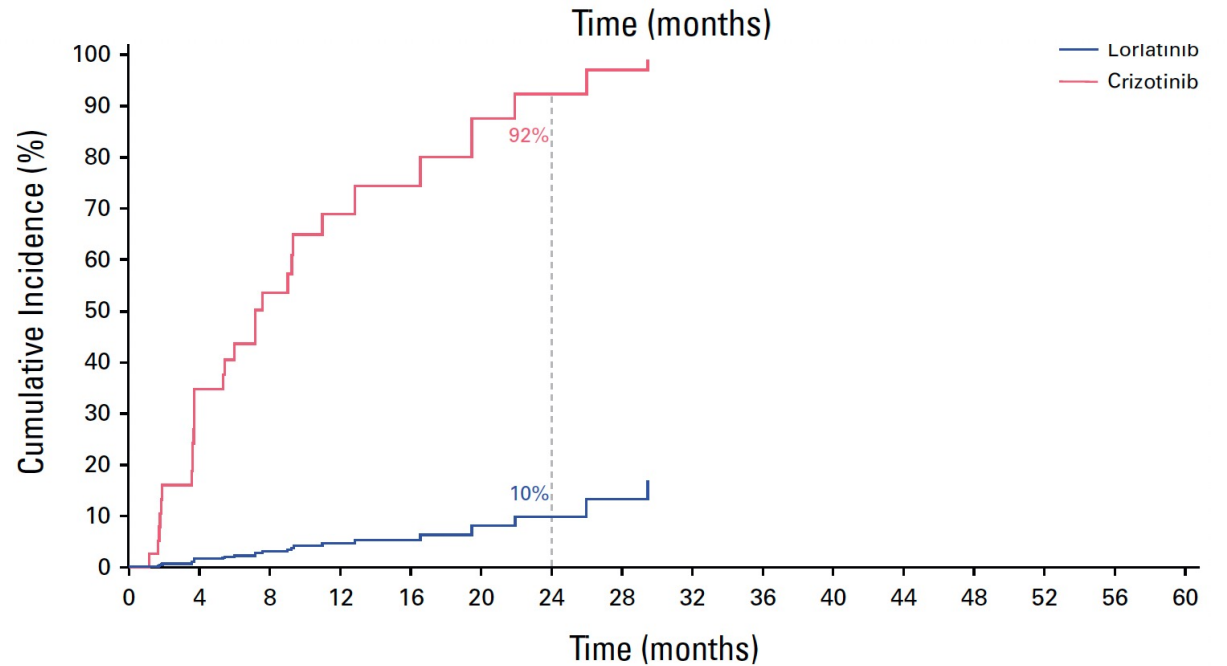
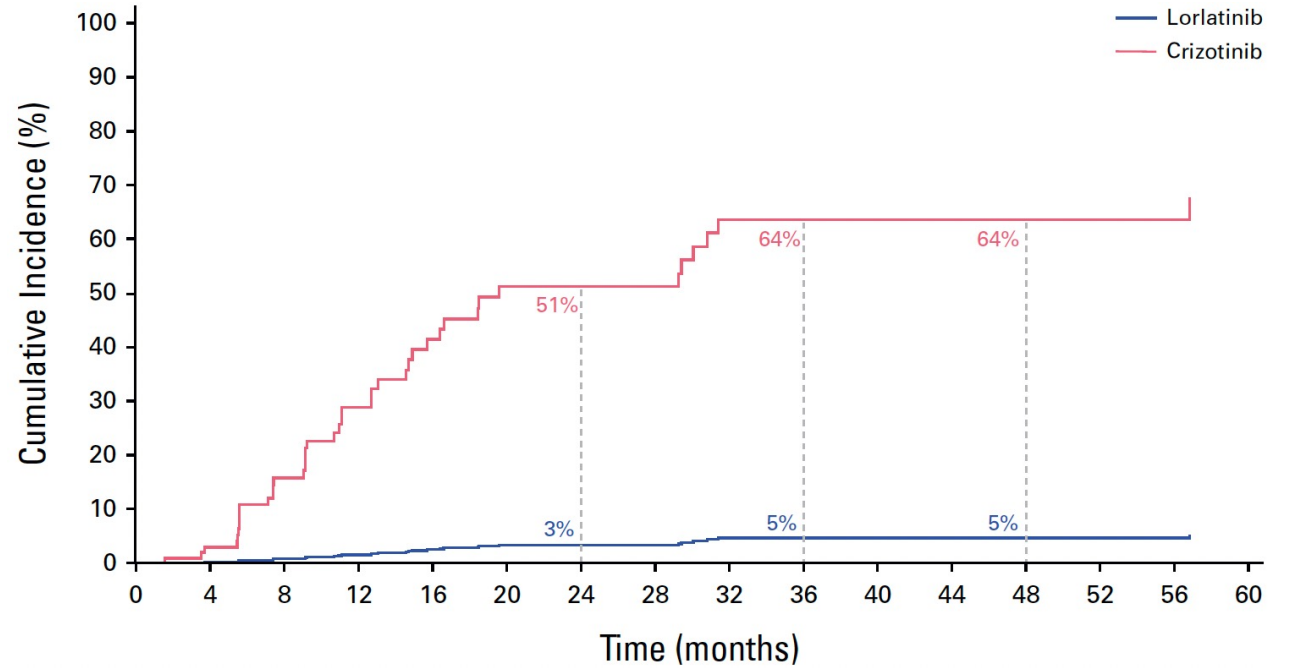
# Lorlatinib changed the natural history of advanced ALK+ NSCLC

Solomon JCO 2024

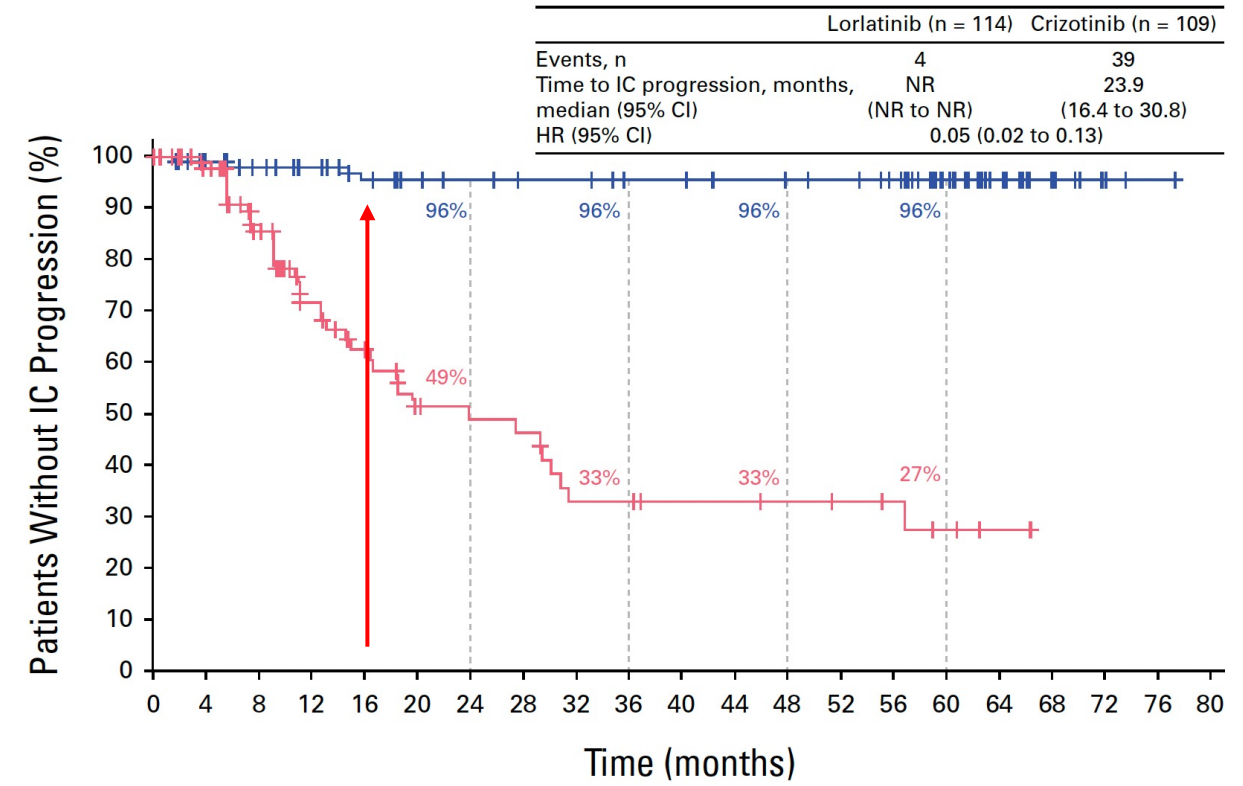
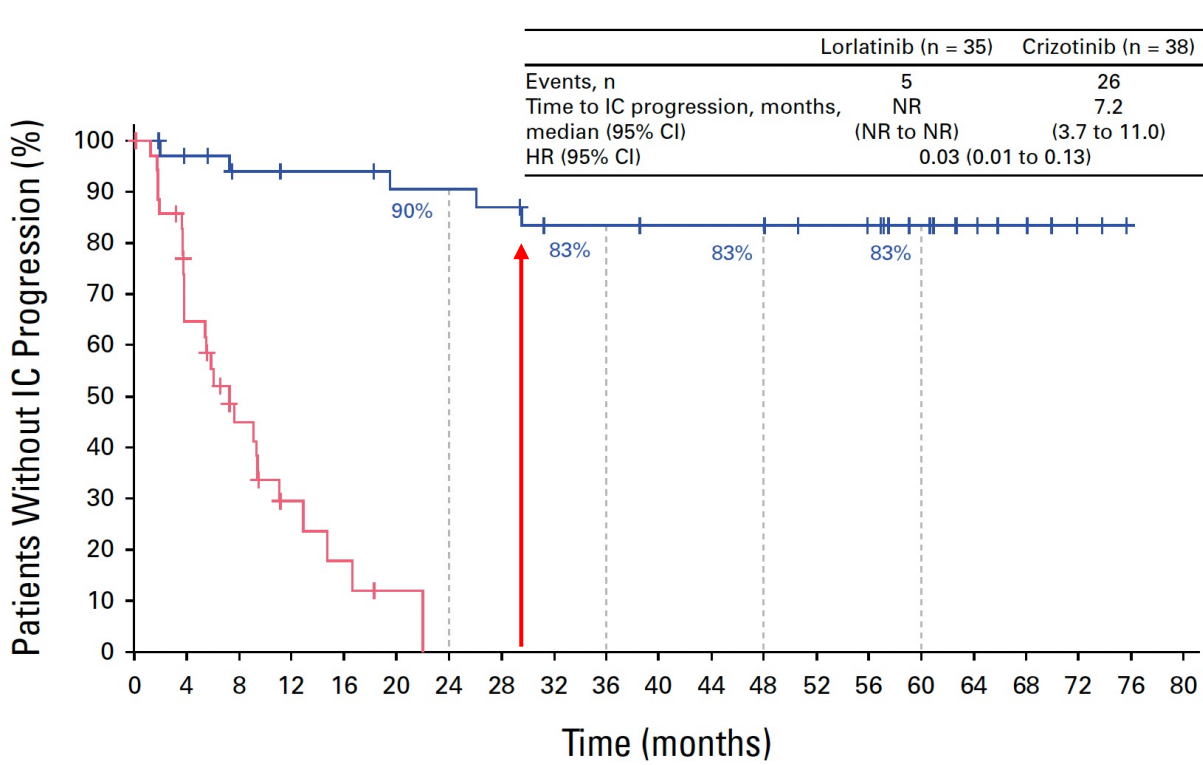


No. at risk	Year since metastatic diagnosis						
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
ALK:	98	44	20	7	2	0	0
RET:	54	25	13	9	3	2	1
ROS1:	29	17	7	3	2	1	0

Drilon, Lin et al, J Thorac Oncol 2018; 13: 1595-1601

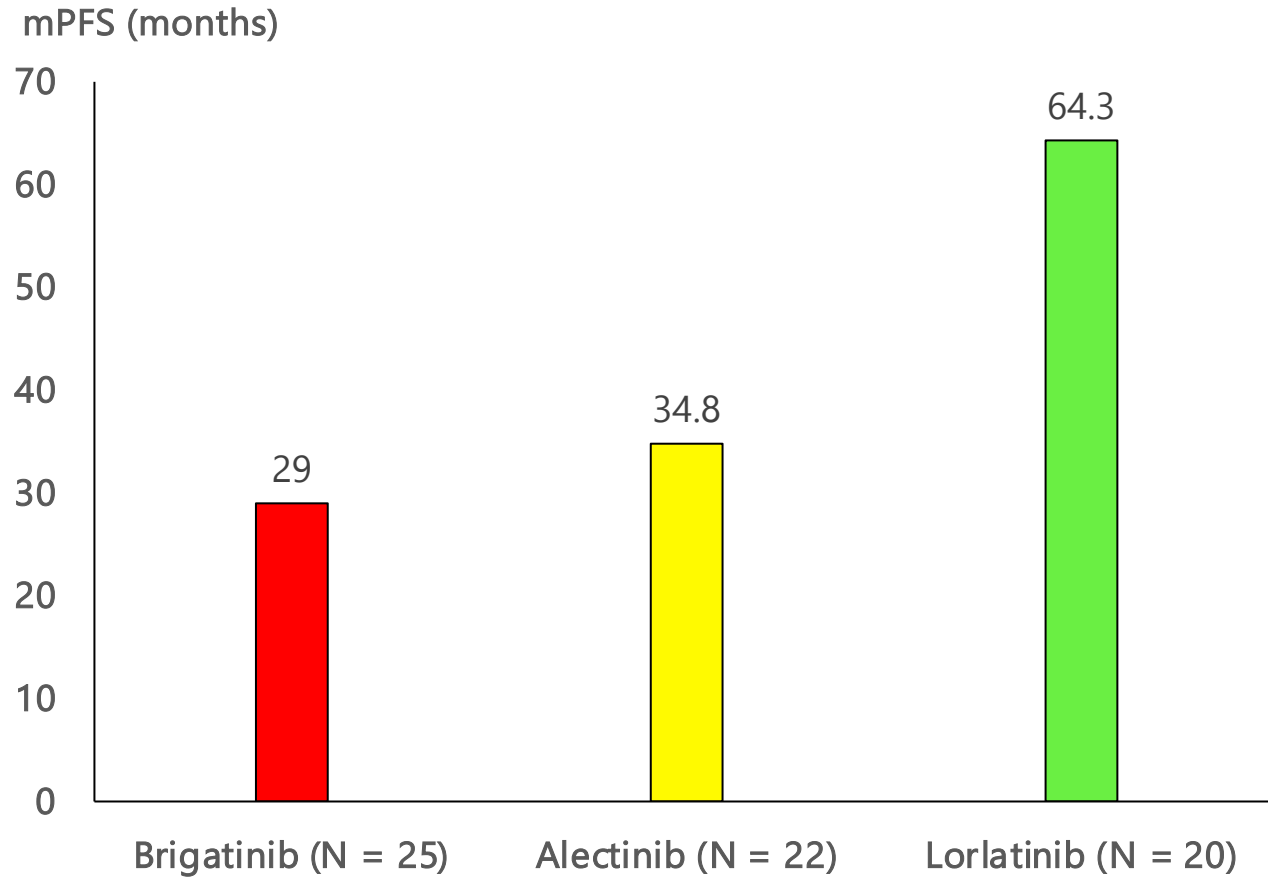


# Lorlatinib prevent late relapse in the CNS

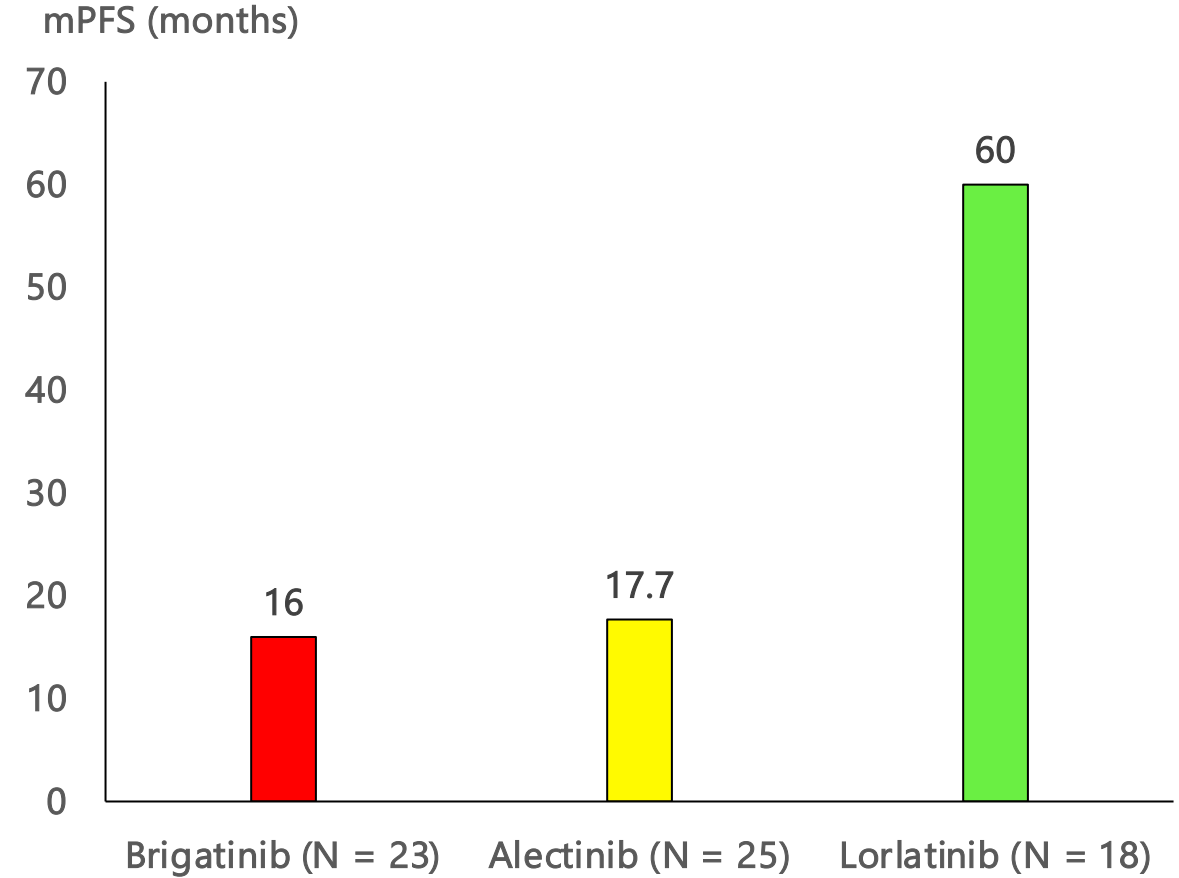


# Median PFS of EML4-ALK variants (v1 vs, v3) from ctDNA from ALEX, ALTA-1L, and CROWN

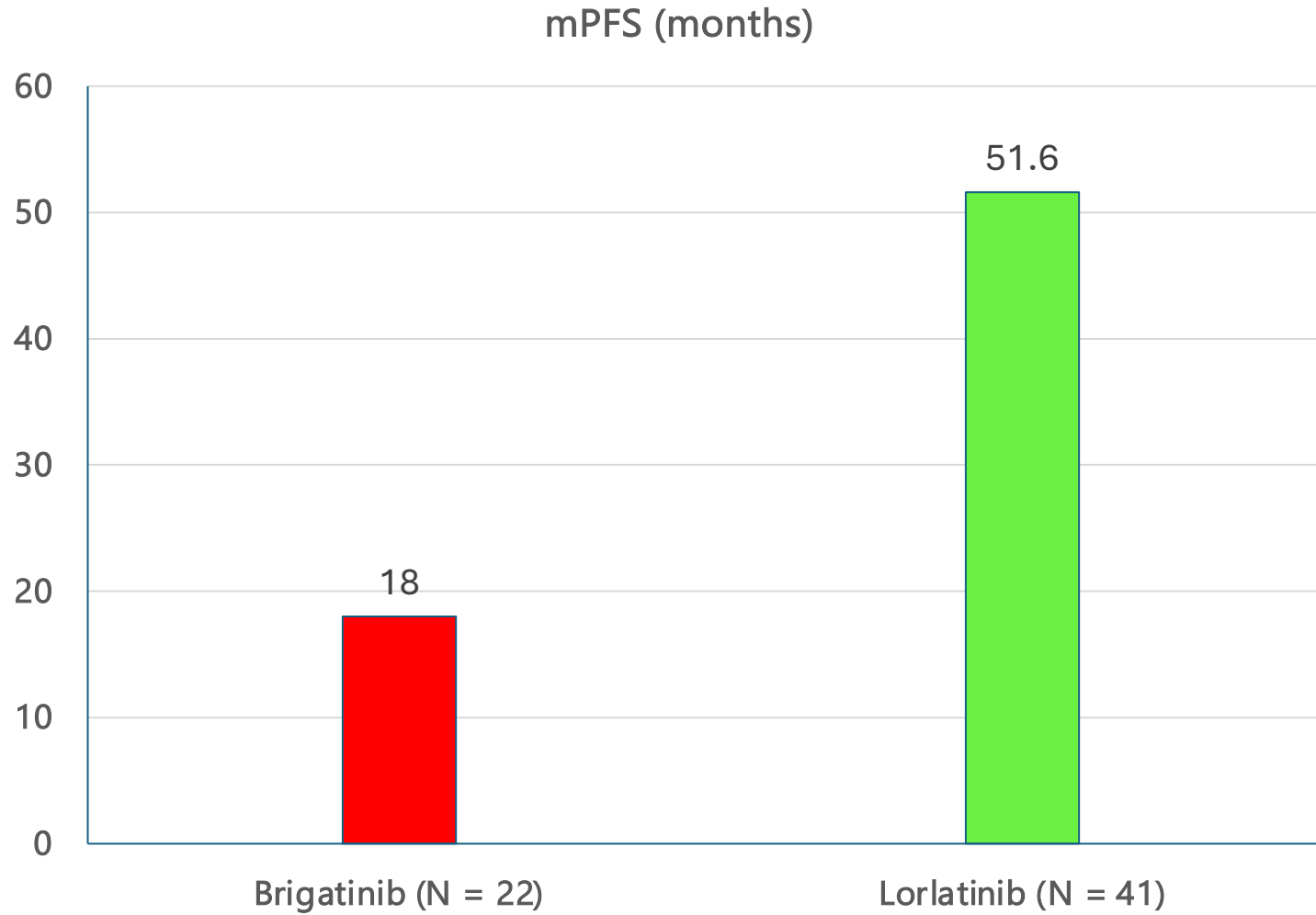
## *EML4-ALK v1*



## *EML4-ALK v3*



# Median PFS of EML4-ALK variants (v1 vs, v3) from ctDNA from ALEX, ALTA-1L, and CROWN



## Mean and Median Relative Dose Intensity (RDI) of ALK TKIs from phase 3 trials

	<b>ASCEND-4</b>	<b>ALEX</b>	<b>CROWN</b>
ALK TKI	Ceritinib	Alectinib	Lorlatinib
N	189	152	149
Median follow up time	19.7 months (all patients)	18.6 months (range: 0.5 – 29.0)	60.2m (95%CI: 57.4 – 61.9)
Median Duration of Treatment	66.4 weeks (IQR 30.0–83.7)	17.9 months (range: 0 – 29)	57.0 months (IQR: 13.9 – 63.3)
Does interruption (%)	80% (interruption + reduction)	22.4%	62%
Dose reduction (%)		16.4%	23%
Dose discontinuation (%)	5.3% (10/189)	13.2%	11%
Relative median dose intensity	78.4% (IQR: 63.2 – 97.5)	100% 27.8 months (range: 0.5–38.7)	99% (IQR: 80 – 100)
Relative mean dose intensity	Not reported	95.6±10.3%**	92%*



# Mechanism of resistance

# Principles of resistance mechanisms

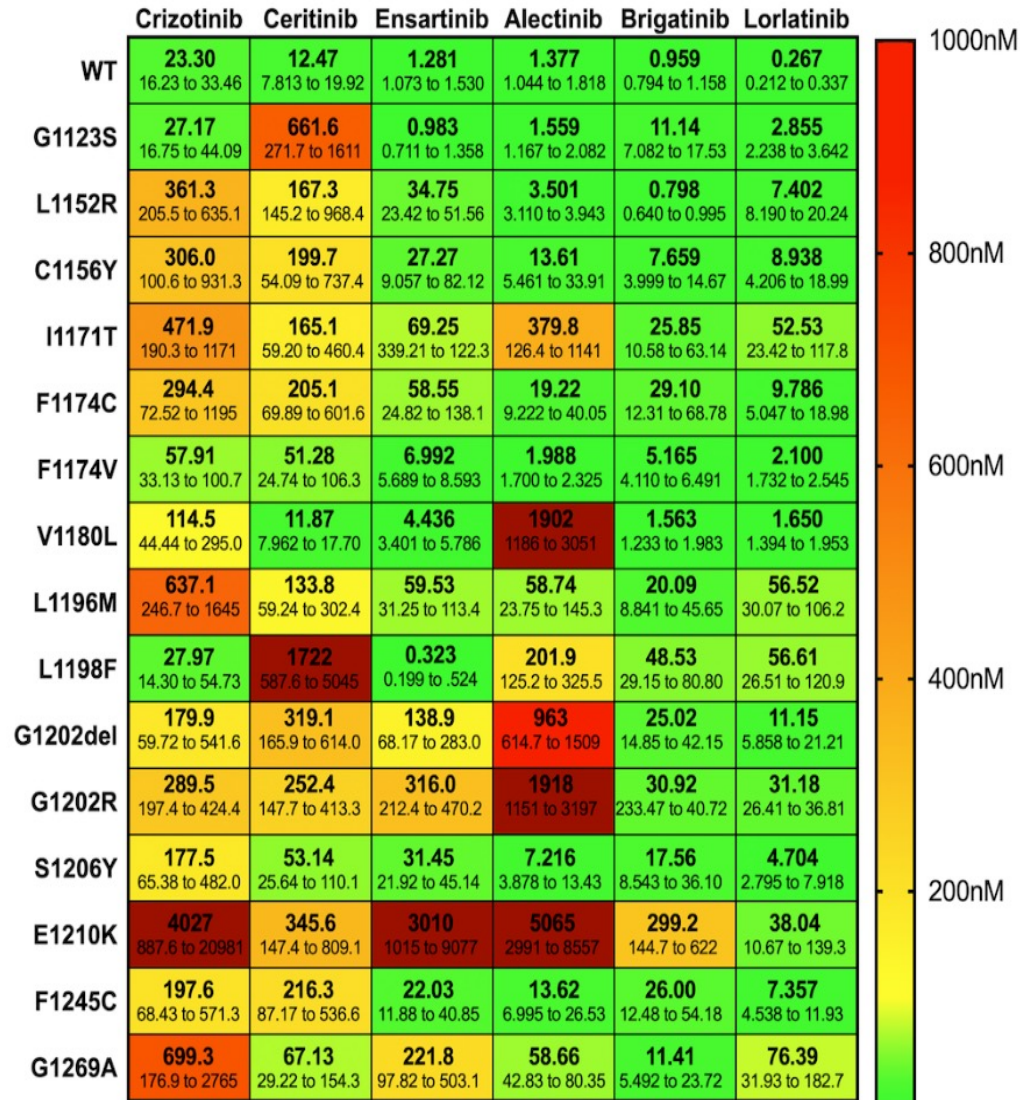
- On-target resistance
  - Sequential use of more potent ALK TKIs (but not starting with the most potent ALK TKI) leads to single and then compound mutations
  - Use of lorlatinib 1L so far no acquired resistance mutation identified
    - Though theoretical C $\beta$ 6 (central beta-sheet #6) ALK L1256F could happen but so far no reported cases
- Off-target resistance
  - MET amplification
  - Combination of ALK TKI with a MET TKI has been reported in case report format

# All 6 approved ALK TKIs heatmaps

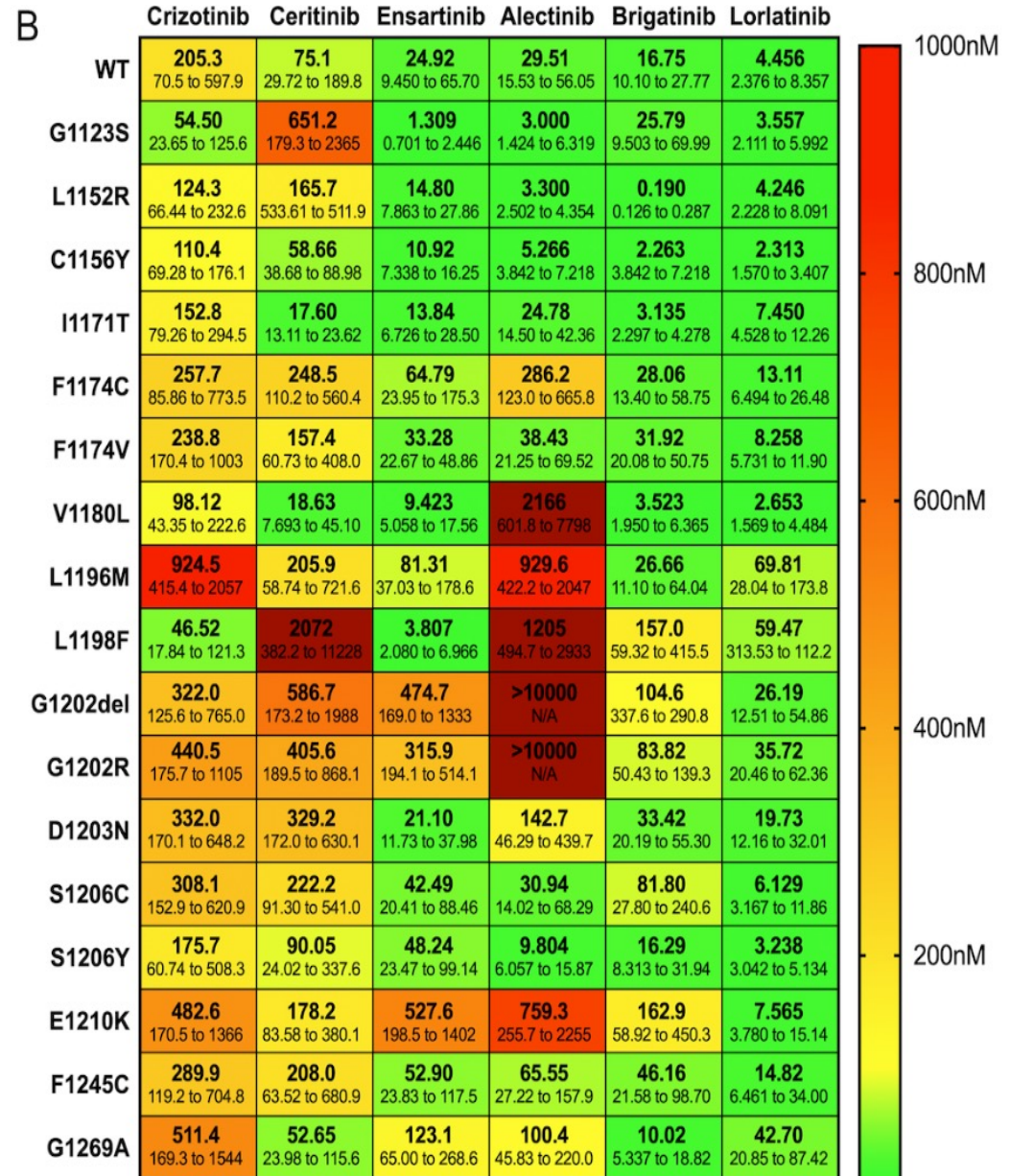
EML4-ALK Variant

EML4-ALK Variant 3

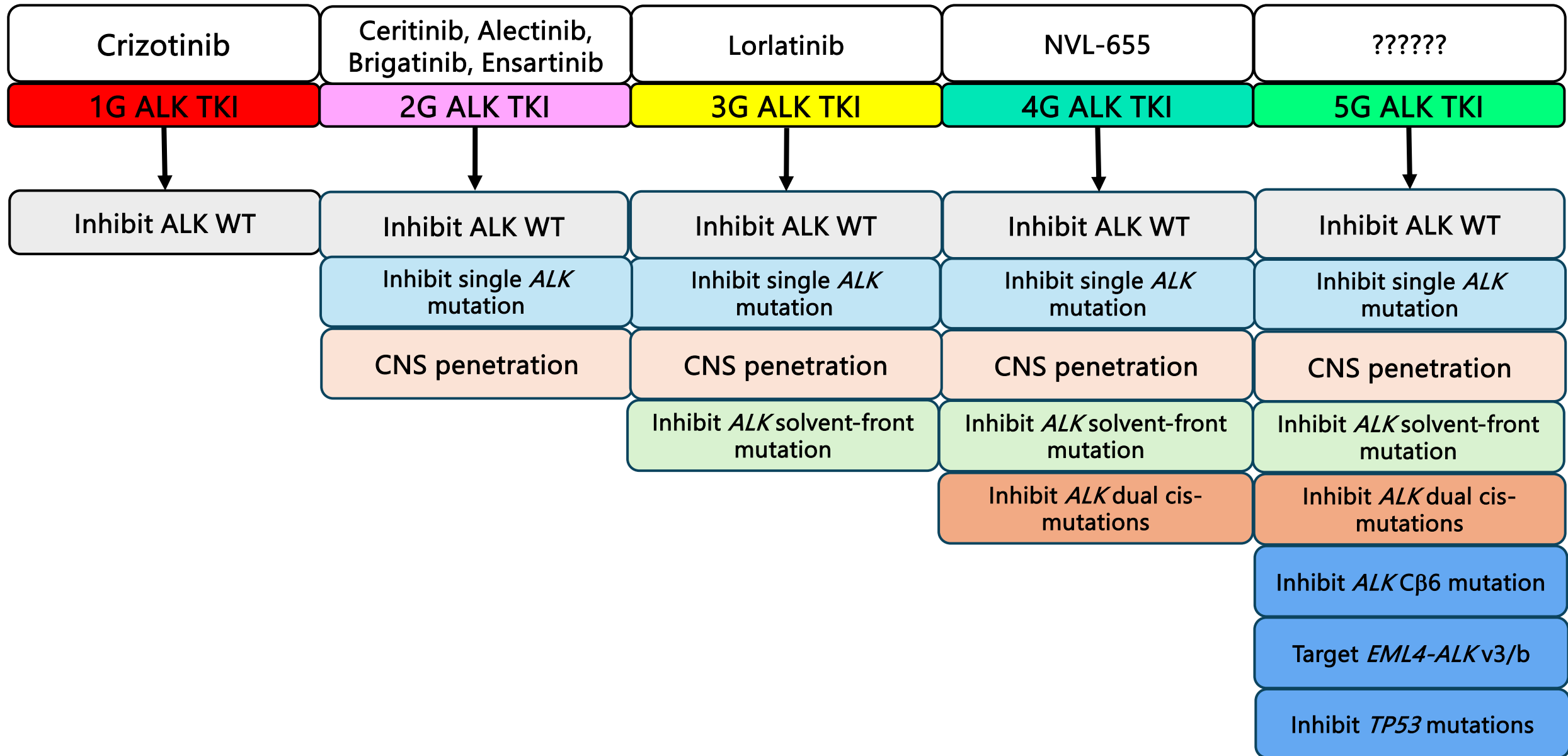
A 1



B



# Functional progression from 1G to 5G ALK TKI



To not have to deal with resistance is not to  
allow resistance to develop

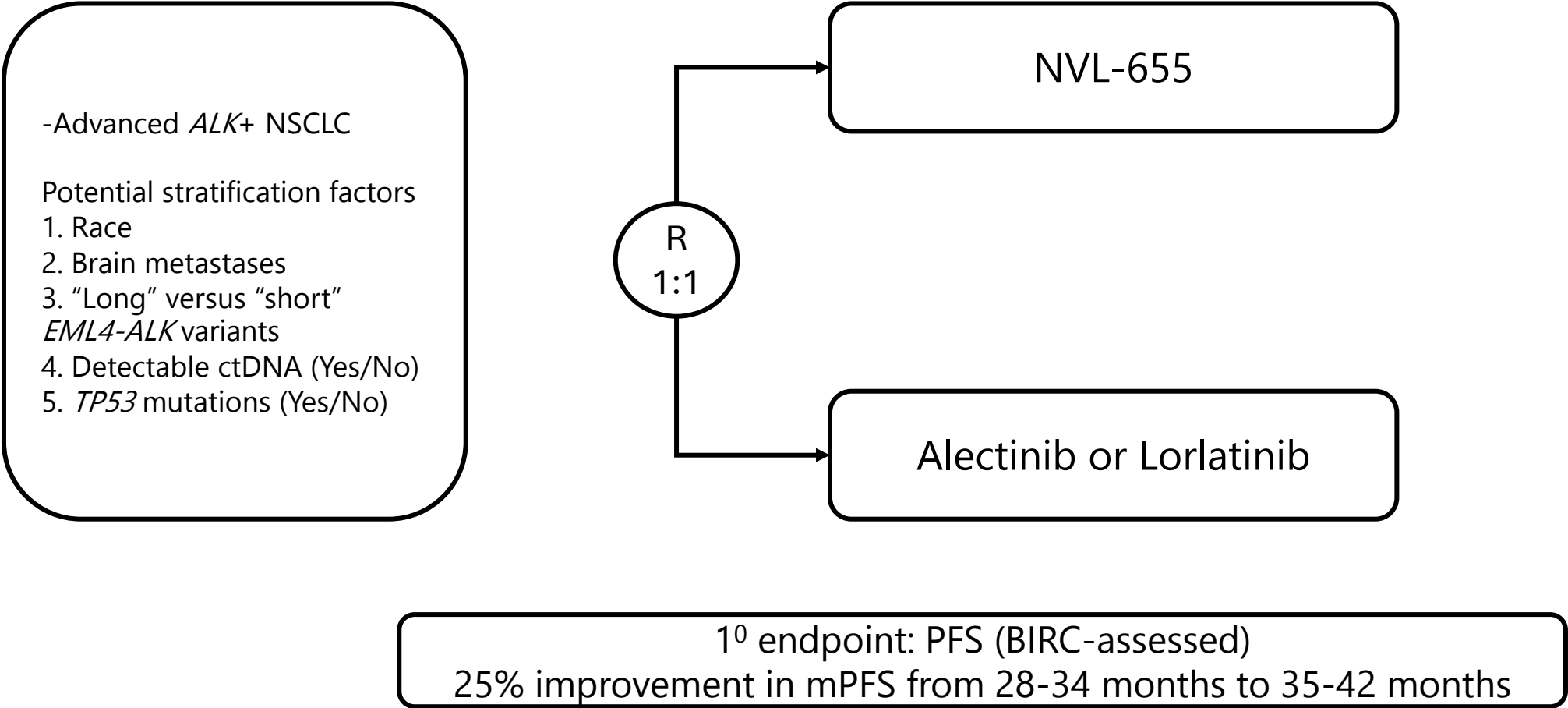
# Resistance mechanisms to lorlatinib in CROWN (N = 31)

- No acquired resistance mutations detected
- Bypass pathway (Off-target resistance mutations)
  - KRAS G12C, BRAF amplification
  - MET amplification

# Beyond Lorlatinib

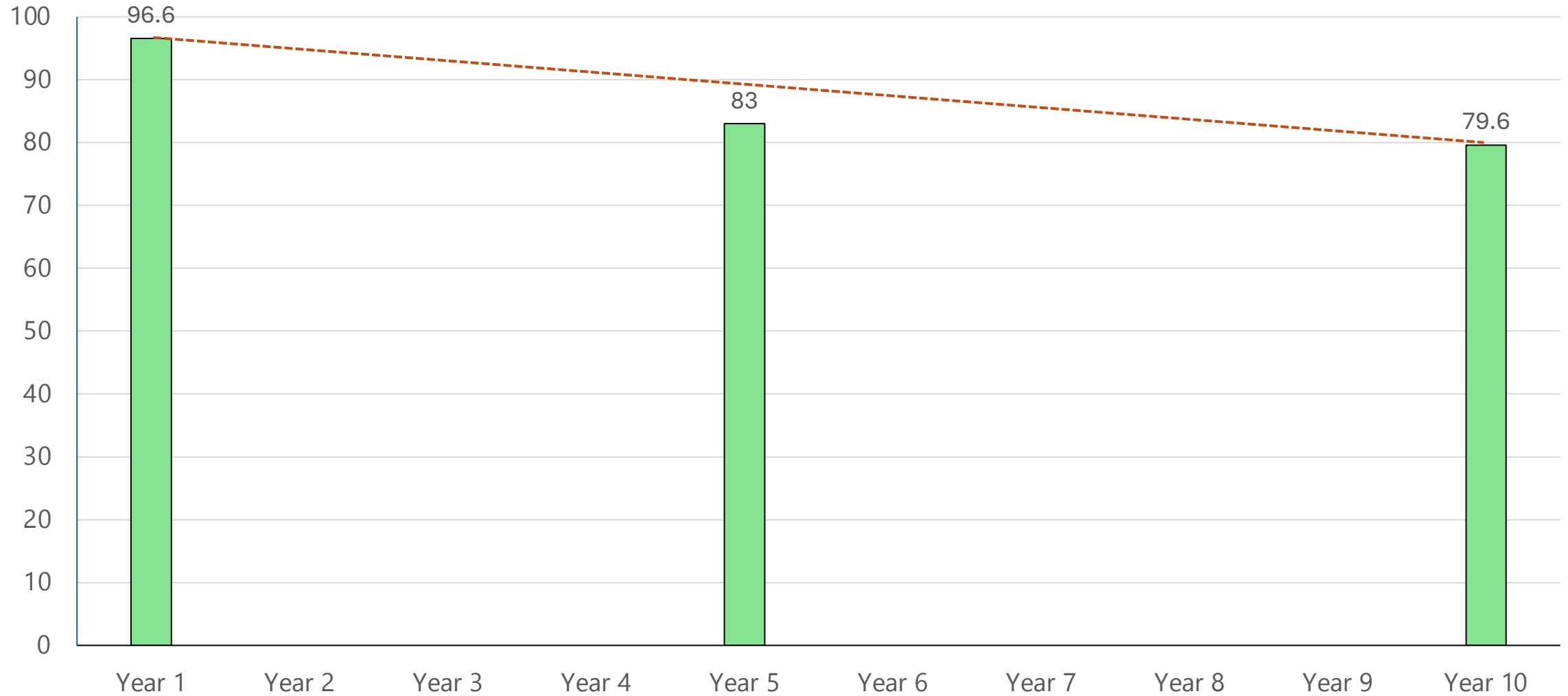
- NVL-655 (4<sup>th</sup> generation: double mutant positive)
- 5<sup>th</sup> generation (“holistic” ALK TKI)
- Given the 5-year CROWN update how to move beyond 10 year mPFS?
- Trial Design?
  - PFS as primary endpoint?
- Line of Therapy?
  - Always first-line?

# Conceptual first-line randomized phase 3 trial design of 4G ALK TKIs



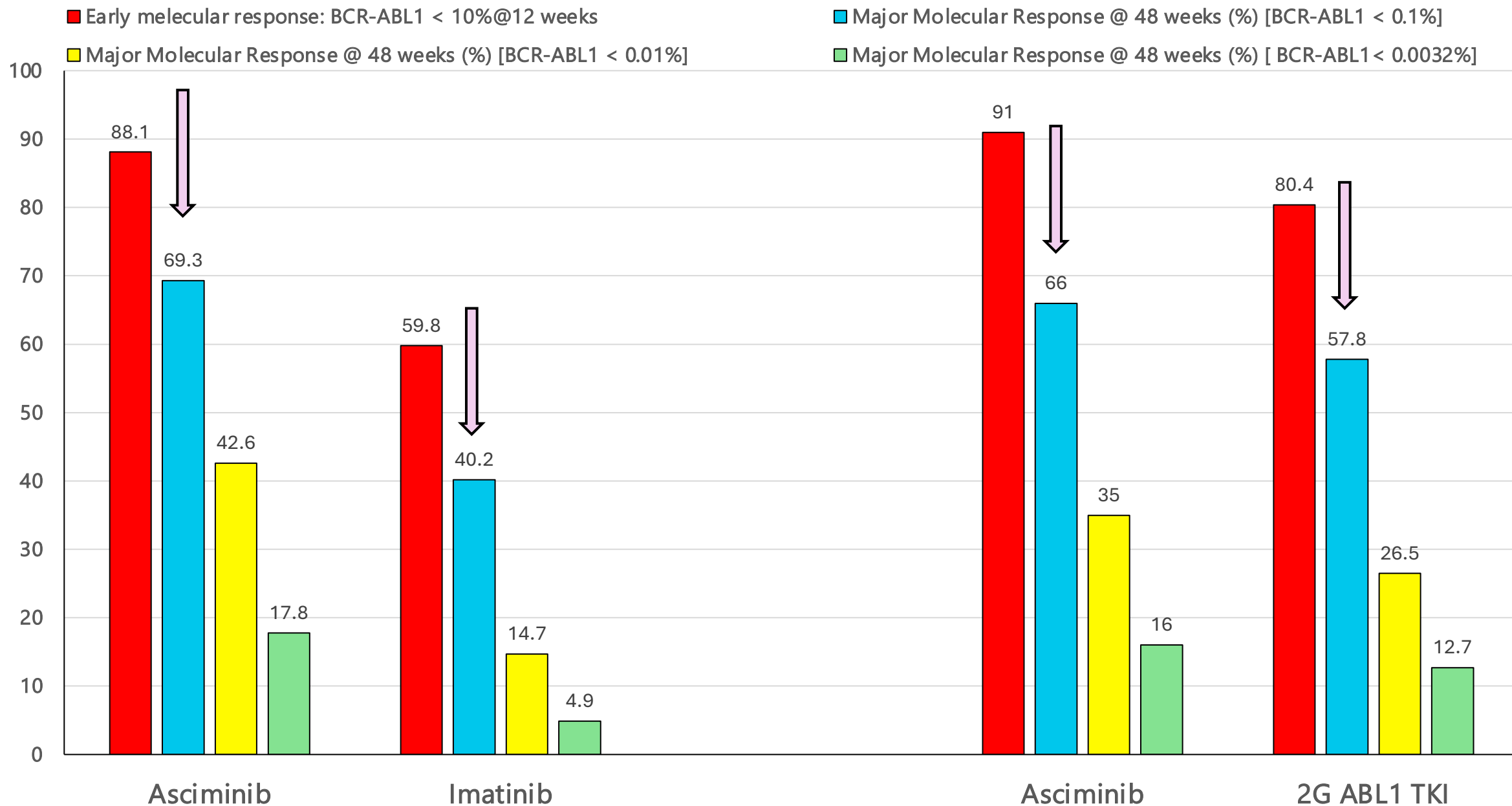


# Event-free Survival (EFS) rate of imatinib in chronic CML from the IRIS trial

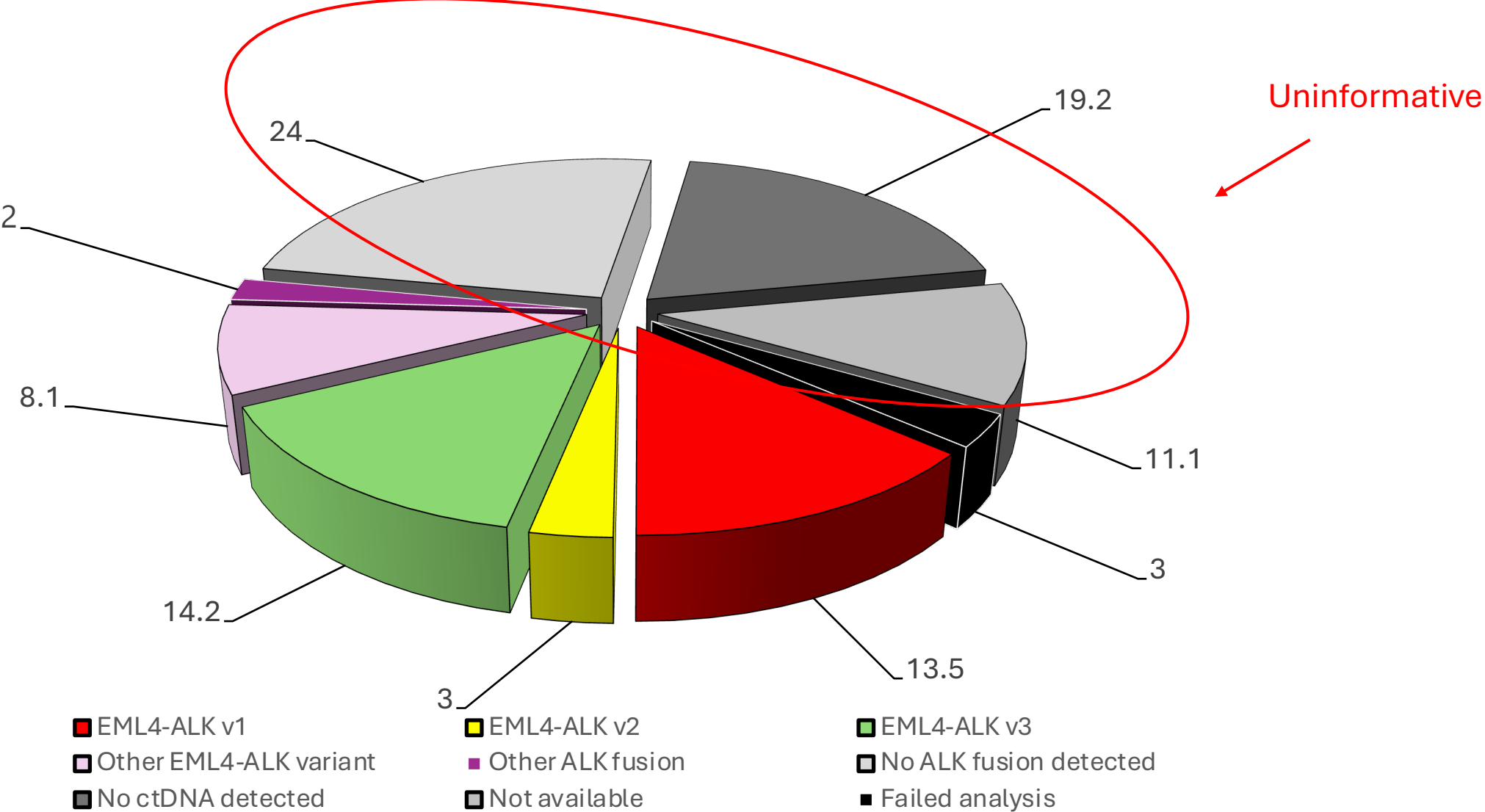


# Comparison of generation of tyrosine inhibitors against BCR-ABL1 in chronic phase CML

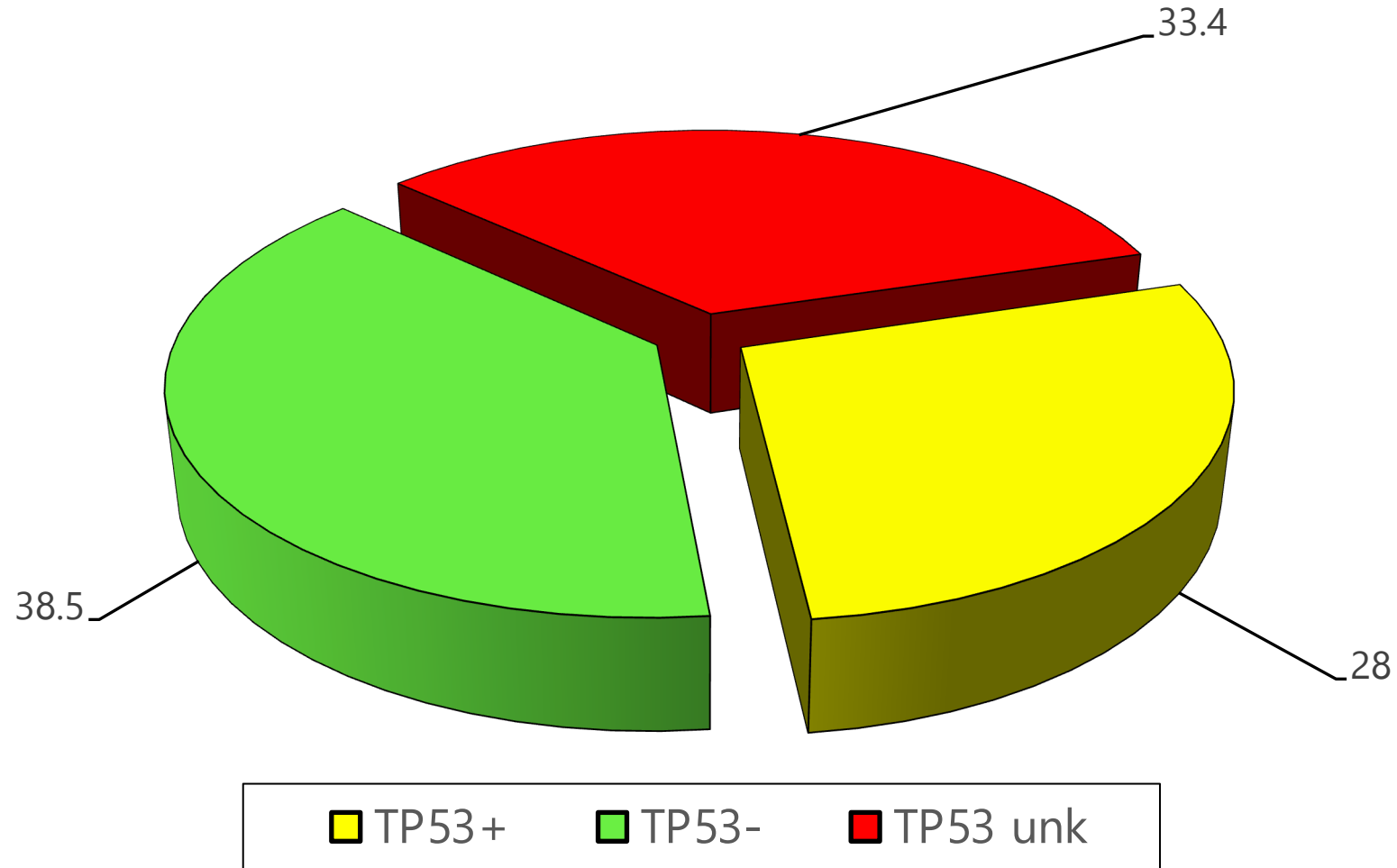
Hochhaus, NEJM 2024



# Outcome of plasma genotyping in CROWN



# Prevalence of TP53 mutation from plasma genotyping in CROWN



# ALK+ NSCLC versus Chronic phase CML

	<i>ALK+</i> NSCLC	CML
Discovery timeline	2007-EML4-ALK in NSCLC	1960-Philadelphia chromosome 1973- t(9;22) (q34.1;q11.2) 1986
Chromosomal rearrangement	inv(2)(p21;p23)	t(9;22) (q34.1;q11.2)
Major oncokinase	EML4-ALK variant 1 (E13;A20) EML4-ALK variant 3 (E6; A20)	P210 <sup>BCR-ANL1</sup> (e13/14;a2)
Minor oncokinase isoforms/variants	EML4-ALK variant 2 (E20;A20) EML4-ALK variant 5 (E2;A20)	P190 <sup>BCR-ABL1</sup> (e1;a2) P230 <sup>BCR-ABL1</sup> (e19;a2) e6a2, e8a2, e13a3, e14a3
First-generation kinase inhibitor	Crizotinib	Imatinib
Second-generation kinase inhibitor	Ceritinib, Alectinib, Brigatinib, Ensartinib, Envonalkib, Irupalikb	Dasatinib, Nilotinib, Bosulitinib
Third-generation kinase inhibitor	Lorlatinib	Ponatinib, Asciminib
High risk sub-population	EML4-ALK v3/TP53+	High Sokol score
Efficacy of 1G Inhibitor	5-yr PFS rate of 8%	10-year EFS rate of 79%
Efficacy measurement	PFS	<i>BCR-ABL1</i> <sup>IS</sup> ≤ 0.1% at 48 weeks (Major molecular response)
Biologic relevant surrogate marker	ALK fusion mRNA <i>EML4-ALK/ALK?</i>	<i>BCR-ABL1/ABL1</i> ≤ 0.1% <i>BCR-ABL1/ABL1</i> ≤ 0.01% <i>BCR-ABL1/ABL1</i> ≤ 0.0032% <i>BCR-ABL1/ABL1</i> ≤ 0.001%

## Summary (Personal)

- Lorlatinib should be the first-choice ALK TKI for advanced *ALK+* NSCLC
- It took 3 generations of ALK TKI to reach the efficacy achieved by imatinib in CML
- While there are 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> generation of ABL1 TKIs approved based on surrogate biomarkers, that is so lacking in solid tumor and in ALK+ NSCLC.
- If median PFS is the benchmark for ALK TKI beyond lorlatinib, we may have reached the zenith of ALK TKI treatment for a long while