

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS  
**MD Anderson**  
~~Cancer Center~~

Making Cancer History®



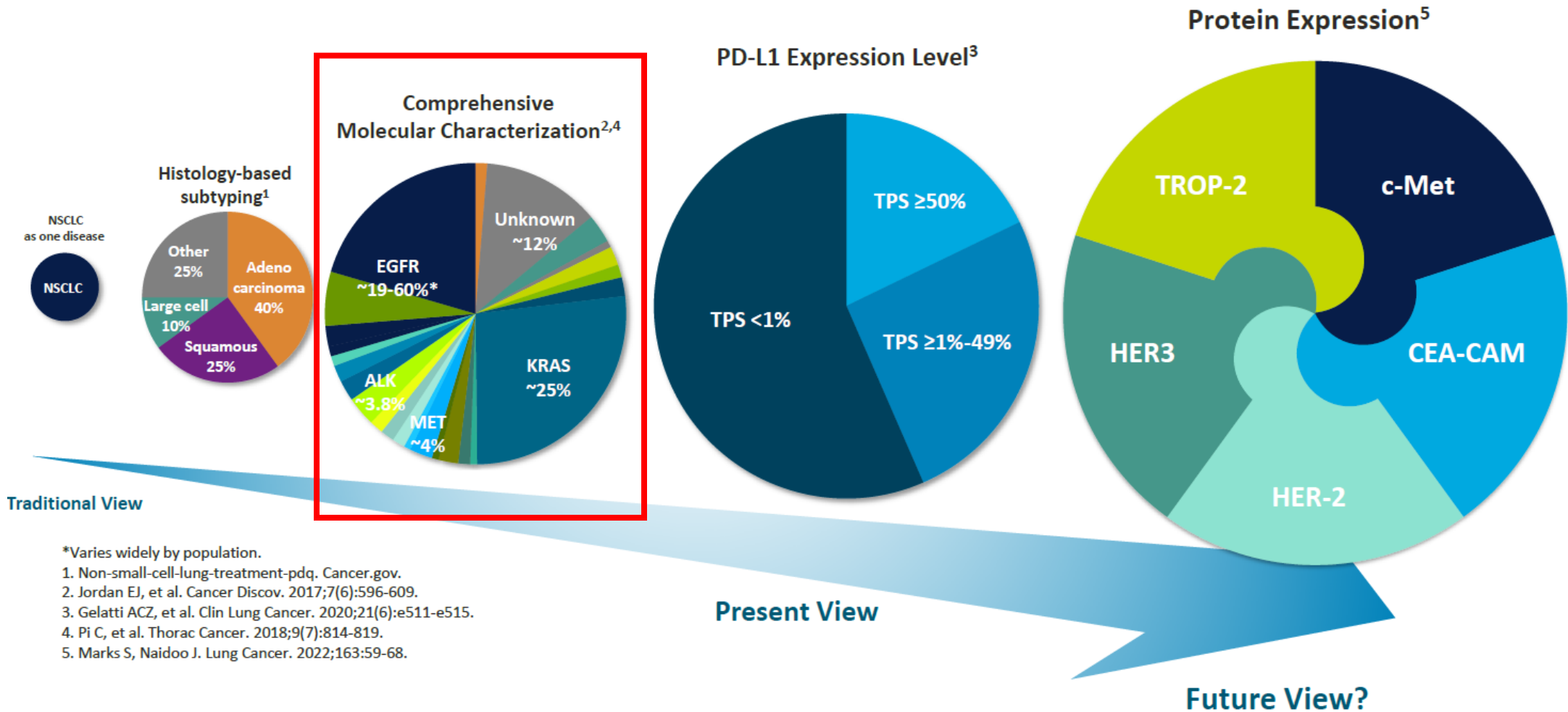
## **Challenges in Pathology: Biomarkers**

*19th Annual New Orleans Summer Cancer Meeting, New Orleans, July 19<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>, 2024*

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*Professor and Chair, Department of Translational Molecular Pathology  
The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, Houston, TX*

# Paradigms in Lung Cancer Molecular Pathology - 2024



\*Varies widely by population.

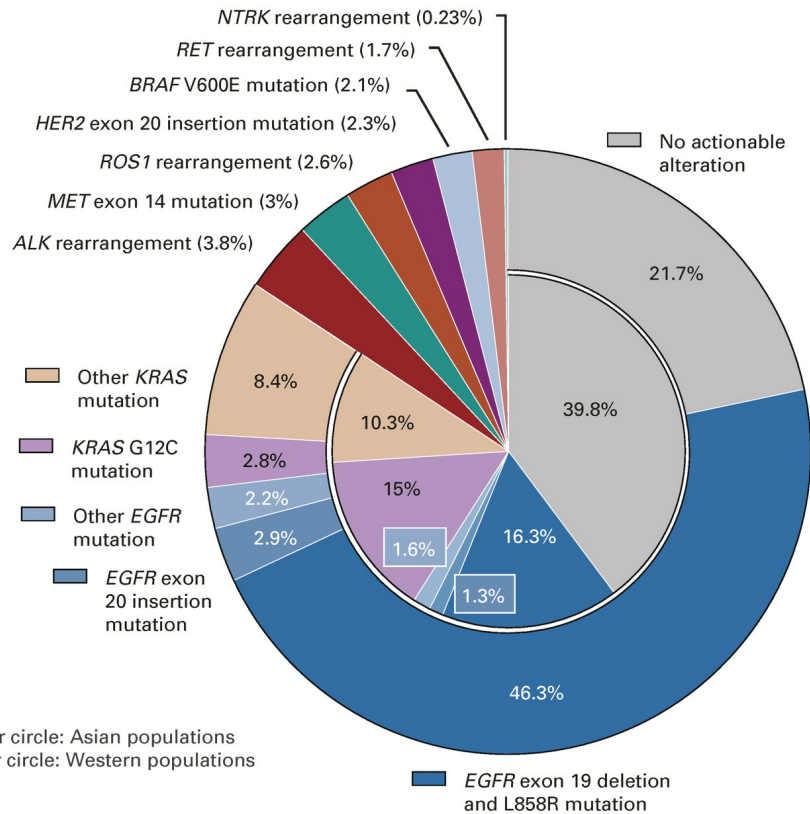
1. Non-small-cell-lung-treatment-pdq. Cancer.gov.
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4. Pi C, et al. Thorac Cancer. 2018;9(7):814-819.
5. Marks S, Naidoo J. Lung Cancer. 2022;163:59-68.

Present View

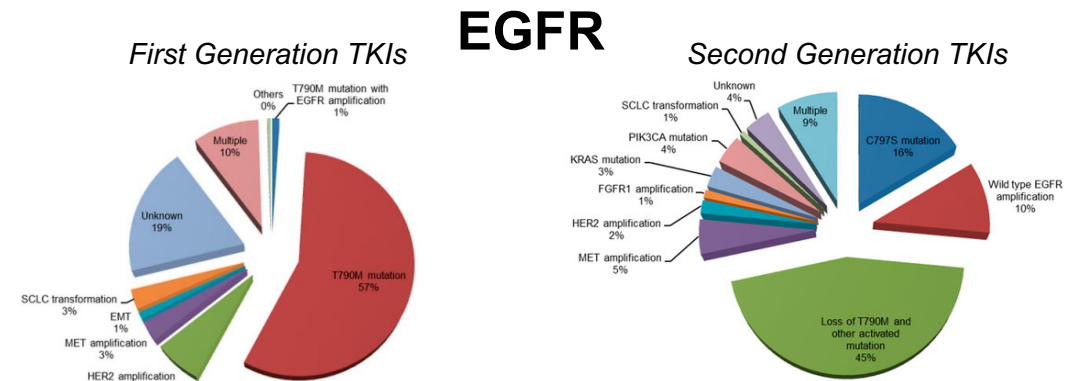
Future View?

Slide (modified) courtesy of Dr. David Planchard, Institute Gustav Roussy

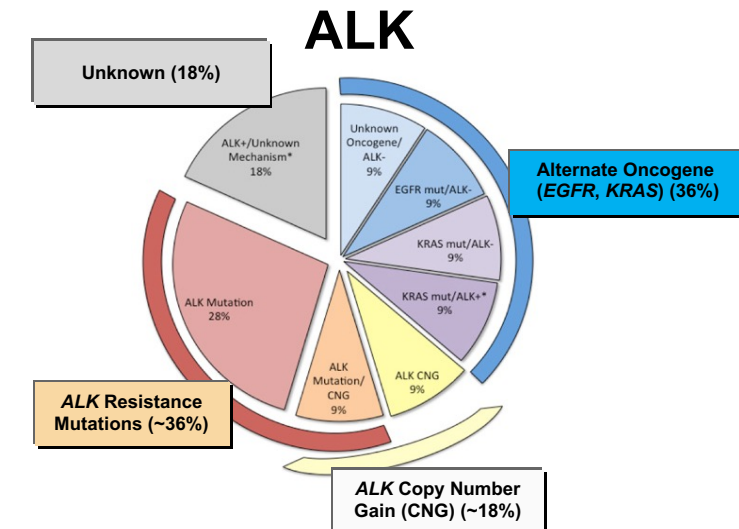
# Genomic Abnormalities in Lung Adenocarcinoma



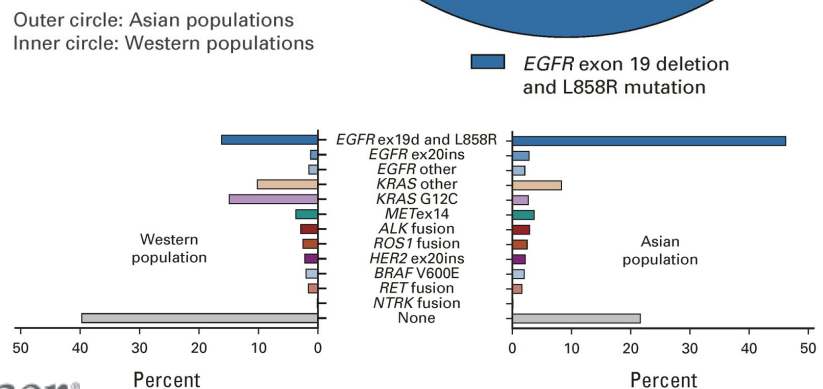
## Mechanisms of Resistance



Nagano T, et al. *Cells*. 2018;7:212.



Doebbele RC, et al. *Clin Cancer Res*. 2012;18:1472



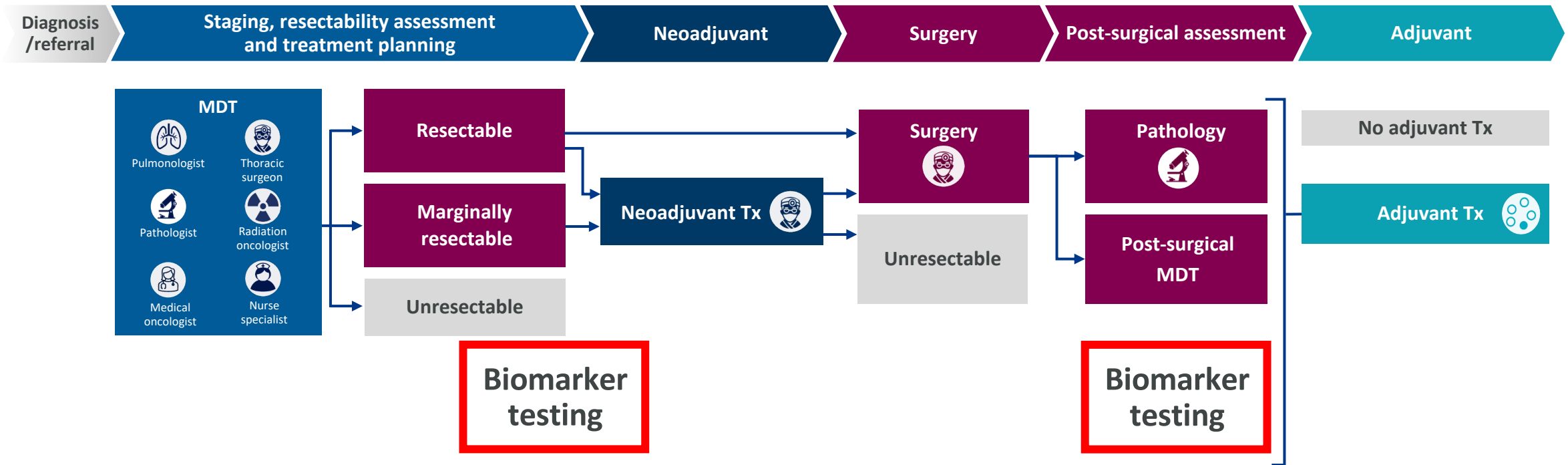
A. Tan, *J Clin Oncol*, 2022

# Evolution and Expanding List of Guideline Recommendations for Genomic Testing in Advanced Stage NSCLC

“The NCCN NSCLC Guidelines Panel strongly endorses **broader molecular profiling** with the goal of identifying rare driver mutations for which effective drugs may already be available, or to appropriately counsel patients regarding the availability of clinical trials. **Broad molecular profiling** is a key component of the improvement of care of patients with NSCLC).”

Genomic alteration (i.e., driver event)	Available targeted agents with activity against driver event in lung cancer
<i>EGFR</i> mutations	Osimertinib, erlotinib, gefitinib, afatinib, dacomitinib
<i>ALK</i> rearrangements	Alectinib, brigatinib, ceritinib, crizotinib, lorlatinib
<i>ROS1</i> rearrangements	Crizotinib, ceritinib, entrectinib
<i>BRAF</i> V600E mutations	Dabrafenib + trametinib, vemurafenib
<i>HER2</i> mutations	Ado-trastuzumab emtansine, afatinib, trastuzumab deruxtecan
<i>MET</i> amplification/mutation	Crizotinib, capmatinib
<i>RET</i> rearrangements	Cabozantinib, vandetanib, selpercatinib, pralsetinib
<i>NTRK</i> rearrangements	Entrectinib, larotrectinib,
<i>EGFR Ex20ins</i>	<i>Amivantamab</i>
<i>KRAS G12C</i>	<i>Sotorasib</i>

# Biomarker Testing for Resectable NSCLC Helps to Inform Treatment Decisions



To guide neoadjuvant treatment decisions biomarker testing will need to be performed on the diagnostic biopsy sample

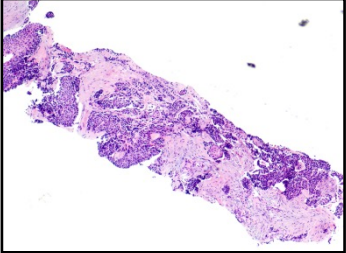
MDT, multidisciplinary team; NSCLC, non-small cell lung cancer; Tx, treatment  
 Remon J, et al. *Ann Oncol* 2021;32:1637–42

# Diagnostic Algorithm for Lung Cancer Diagnosis 2024

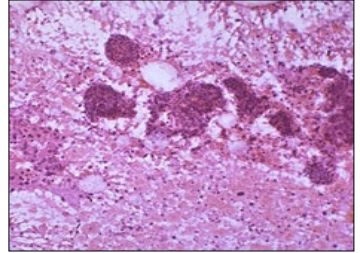
cfDNA Testing  
(Liquid Biopsy)



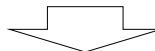
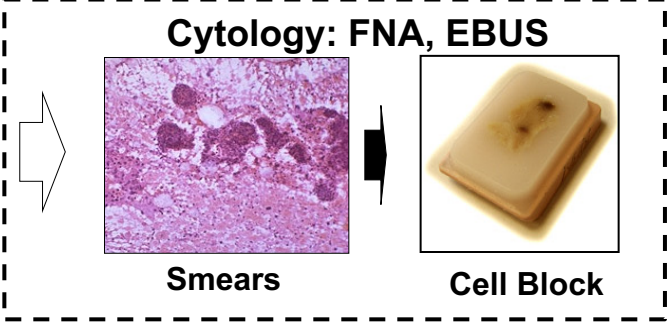
Blood



Biopsy

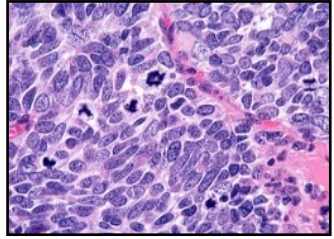


Cytology



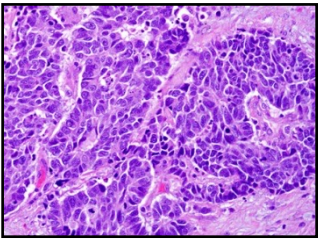
**NSCLC**

**SCLC**



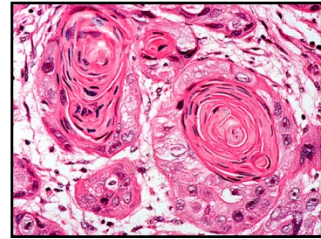
Morphology

**LCNEC**



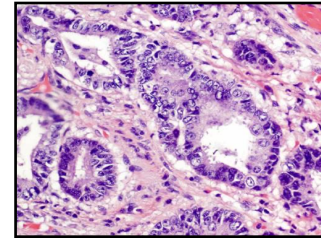
Morphology  
IHC NE (+)

**Squamous**



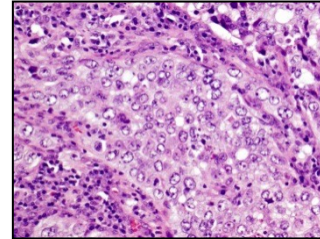
Morphology  
IHC p63/p40 (+)

**Adenoca**



Morphology  
IHC TTF1 (+)

**NSCLC-NOS**



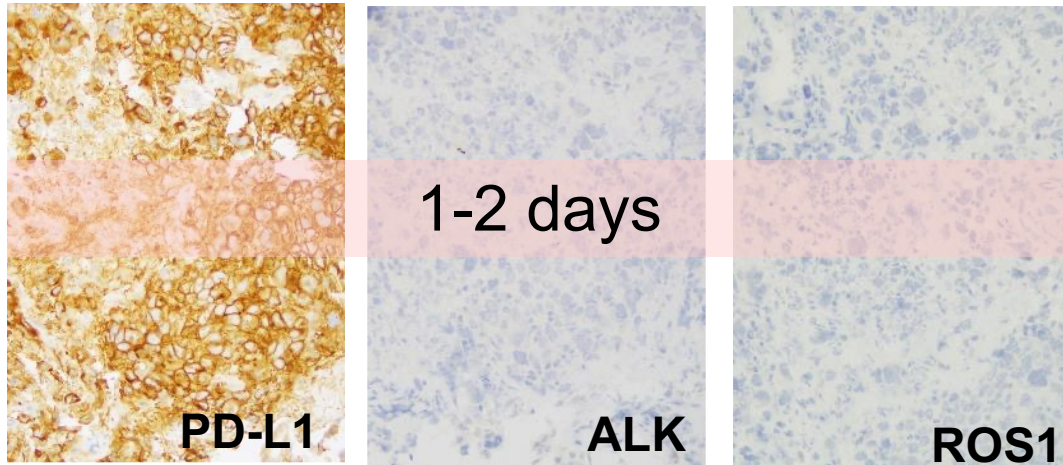
Morphology  
IHC (-)

*EGFR (incl. Exon 20), BRAF, KRASG12C, and HER2 mutations; MET ex14 splicing mutations; ALK, ROS1, NTRK, RET and NRG1 fusions*

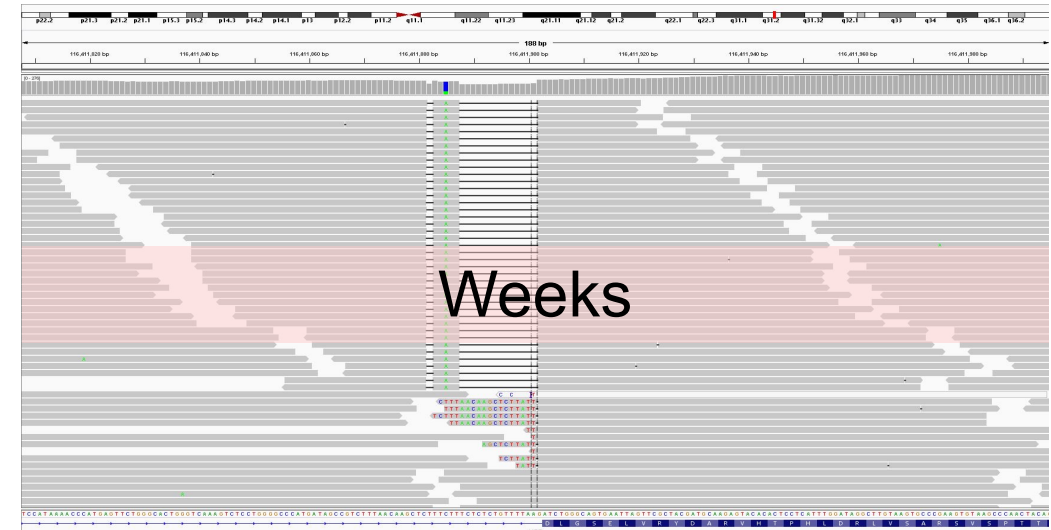
PD-L1 IHC

# NSCLC Biomarker Testing → Tricky Timing

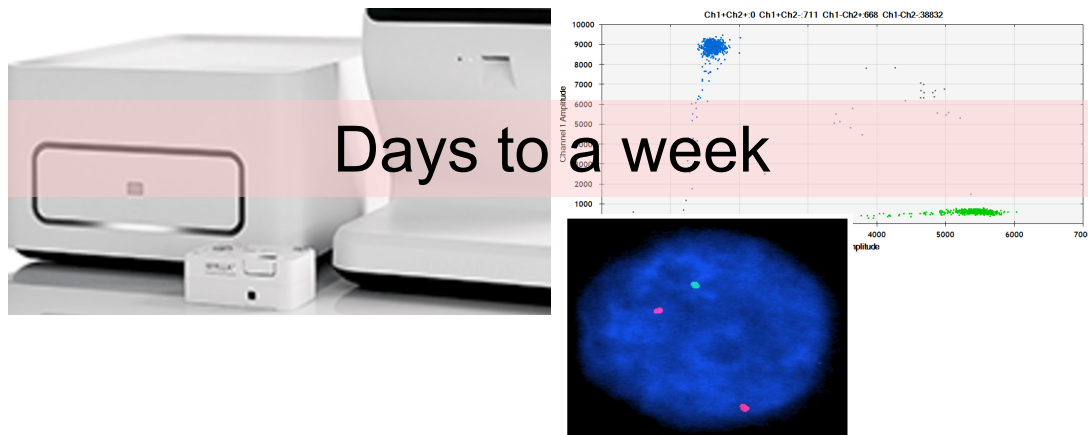
## Immunohistochemistry



## Next Generation of Sequencing (NGS)



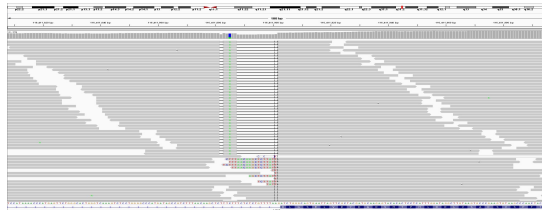
## PCR-based Assay and FISH



# Gene Fusion Detection: DNA vs RNA NGS

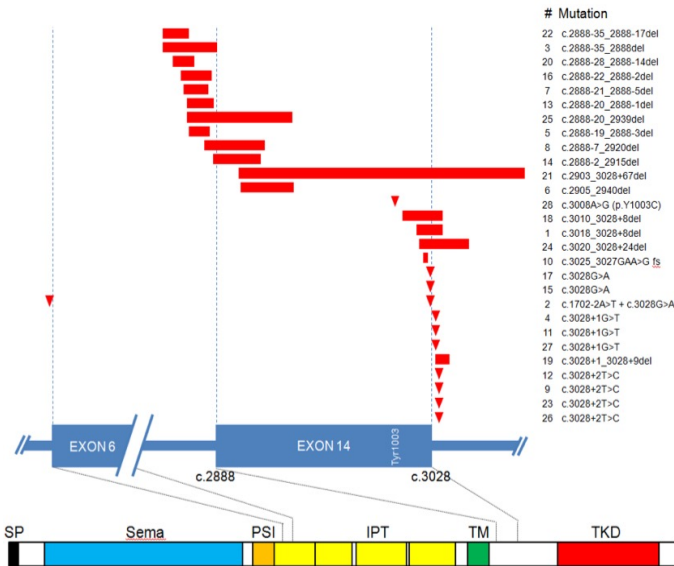
## MET Exon 14 Skipping

Next Generation of Sequencing (NGS) on DNA



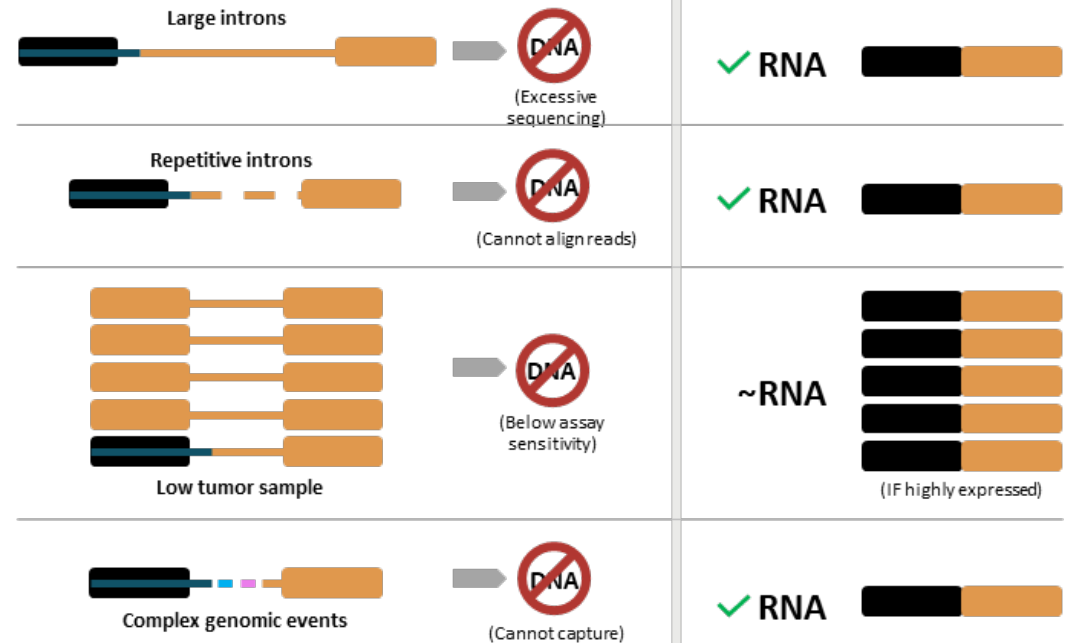
MET p.D963\_splice

## Additional Fusion Variants Detected Using RNA-based NGS



RNA-based NGS can detect fusion missed by DNA-based NGS: *ALK, ROS1, RET, NTRK, NRG1*

## DNA-Based vs RNA-Based NGS for Fusions<sup>6</sup>





# Practical Points for Lung Cancer Biomarker Testing

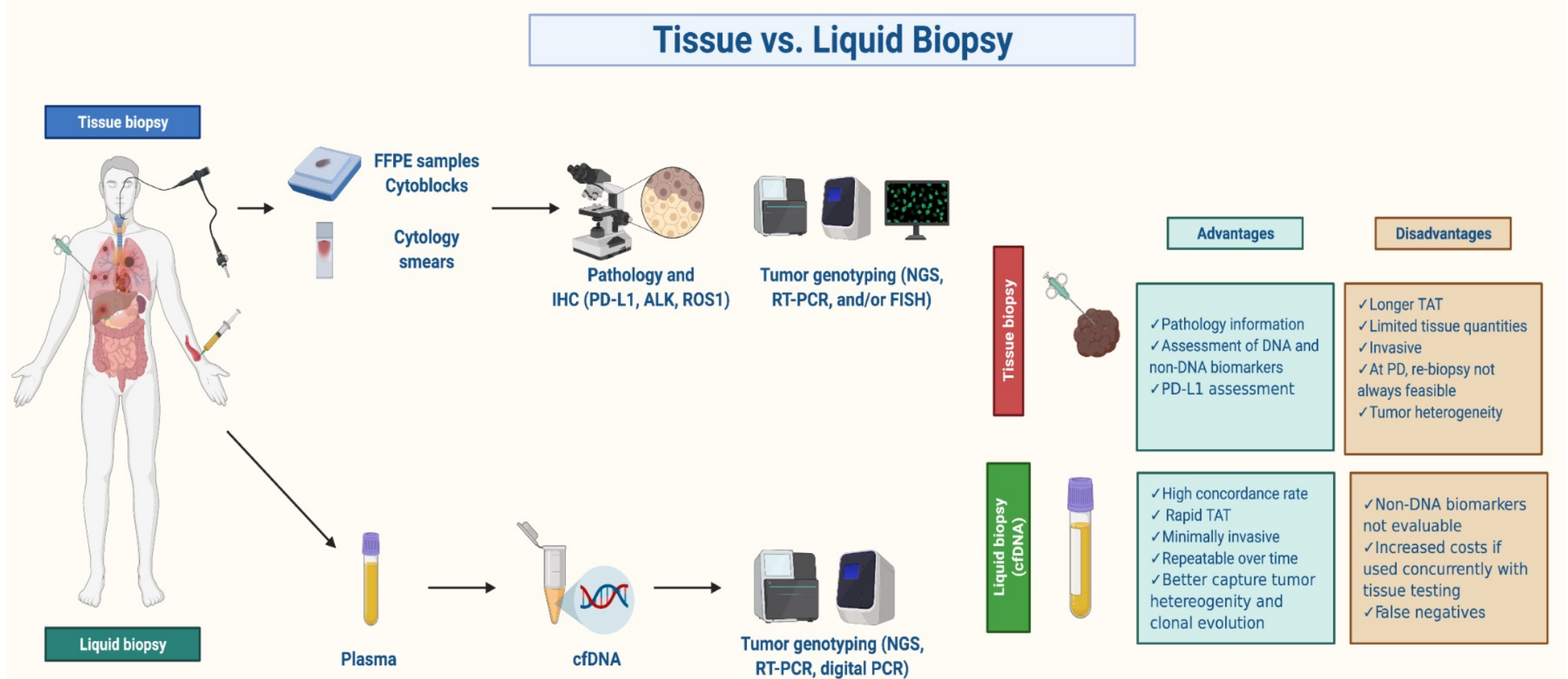
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- **Type of sample:** tissue, cytology (FNA), blood
- **Stage of the disease**
- **Molecular testing assays:**
  - IHC: PDL-1 and ALK/ROS1 (surrogates)
  - FISH: *ALK*, *ROS1*, and *NTRK* fusions
  - NGS or d/qPCR panels: *EGFR*, *MET ex14*, and *BRAF* mutations, plus *ALK*, *ROS1*, and *NTRK* fusions.
- **Tissue turn around times (TATs):**
  - TAT1: Biopsy collection to pathology diagnosis (~2 days)
  - TAT2: Pathology diagnosis to molecular diagnostic lab (~1 – 7 days)
  - TAT3: Molecular diagnostic lab to molecular report (NGS panels, 10 days)
- **Blood TATs:**
  - TAT1: Blood collection to molecular diagnostic lab (~1 – 2 days)
  - TAT2: Molecular diagnostic lab to molecular report (NGS panels, 10 days)

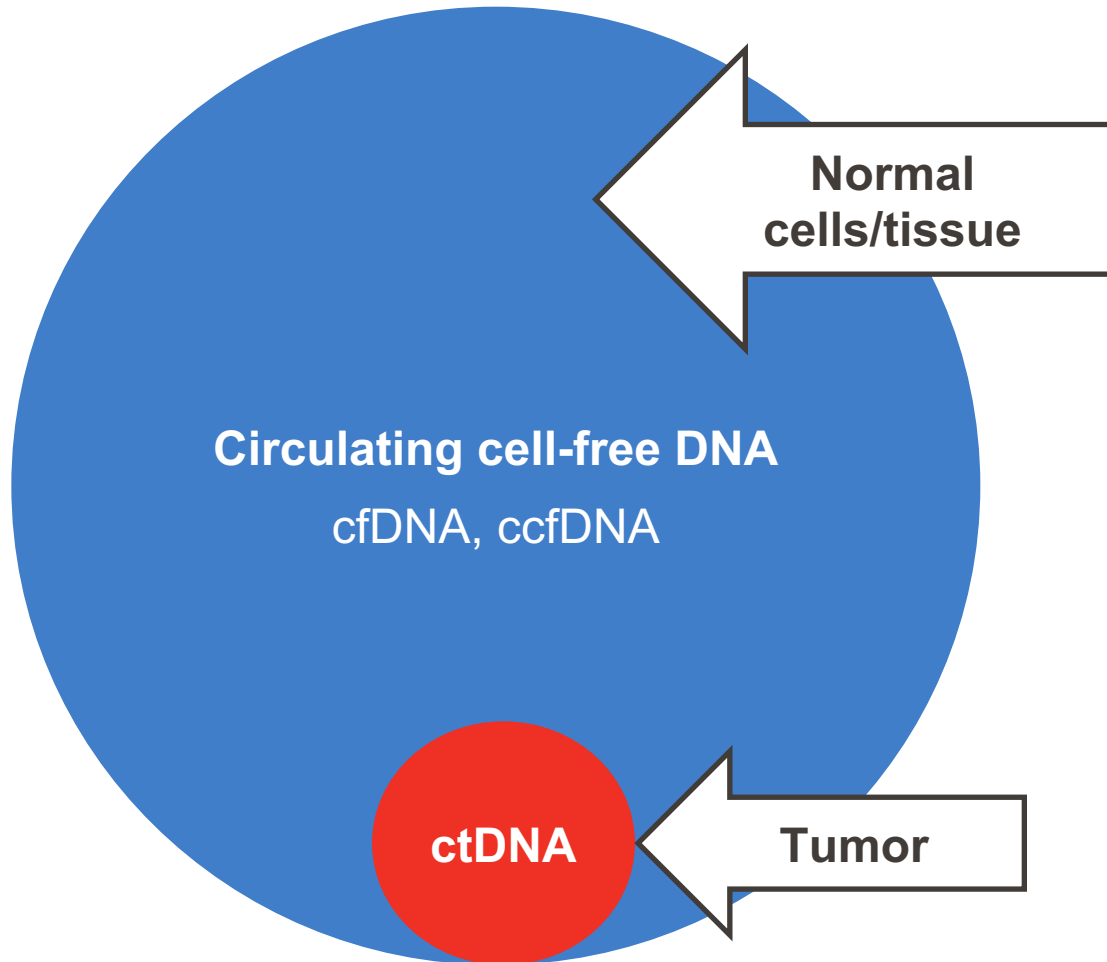
# Key Quality Metrics to Guide Quality Improvement on NSCLC Biomarker Testing

Proposed Quality Metric	90% Compliance Goal
Pathology diagnostic TAT (i.e., time from specimen received in pathology to final pathologic diagnosis)	≤ 3 working days
Biomarker Test Order TAT (i.e., time from final pathologic diagnosis to biomarker test ordered)	≤ 2 working days
Pathology biomarker TAT (i.e., time from final pathologic diagnosis and/or biomarker test ordered to specimen sent to molecular lab) for eligible patients	≤ 3 working days
Molecular biomarker TAT (i.e., time from specimen received in molecular testing laboratory to reporting of all biomarker results) for eligible patients	≤ 10 working days
Overall biomarker TAT (i.e., time from final pathologic diagnosis rendered to reporting of all biomarker results) for eligible patients	≤ 14 working days

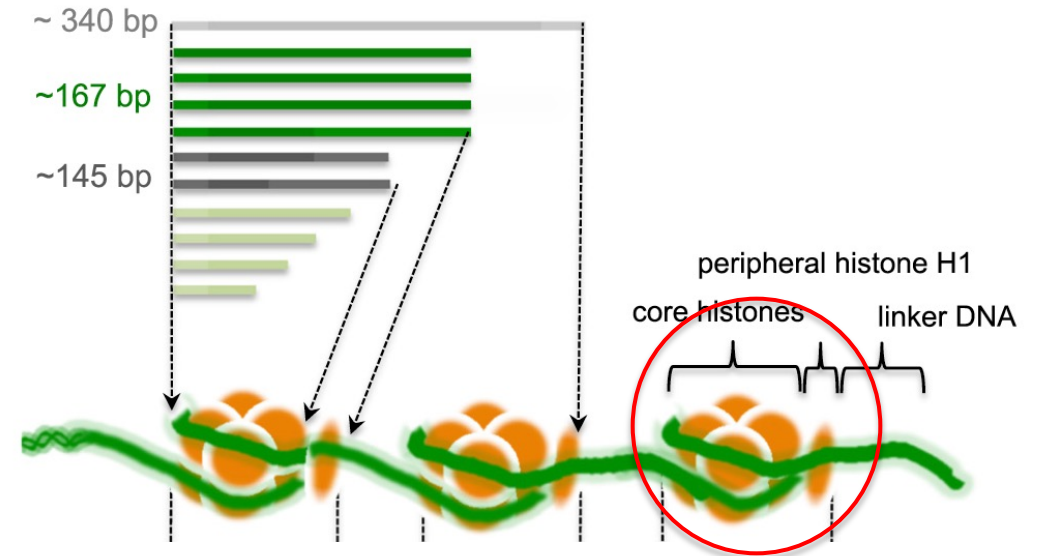
# Tissue vs. Liquid Biopsy for Molecular Profiling



# Characteristics and Terminology for Circulating Tumor DNA (ctDNA)



*167 bp fragments of DNA, a nucleosome*



The linker DNA between nucleosomes is cleaved leaving 167 bp cell-free DNA fragments (145 bp plus a ~20 bp segment wrapping histone H1). Originally described by Wyllie in 1980.

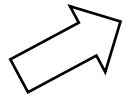
# cfDNA Genotyping Analysis

## Pre-analytical Issues



Plasma

- Amount of blood/plasma
- Type of tubes
- Time for processing



## Next Generation of Sequencing (NGS)



Large/  
Intermediate  
Panels

- **1% VAF: ~100** tumor genomic equivalents (typical detection limit of most ctDNA assays)
- **0.01% VAF: ~1** tumor genomic equivalent  
*VAF = variant allele frequency*

## PCR-base Methods



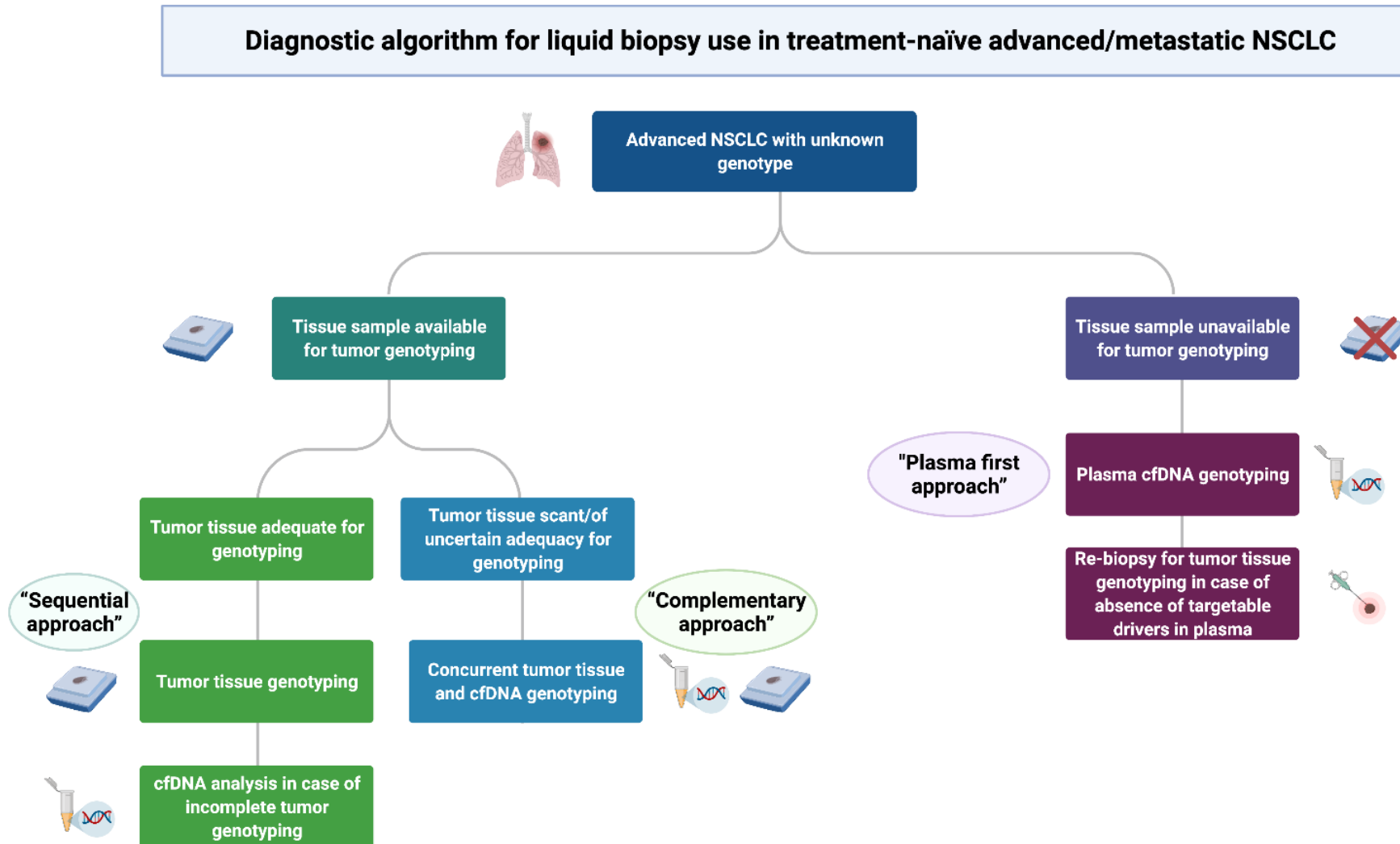
Digital Droplet  
(dd)PCR



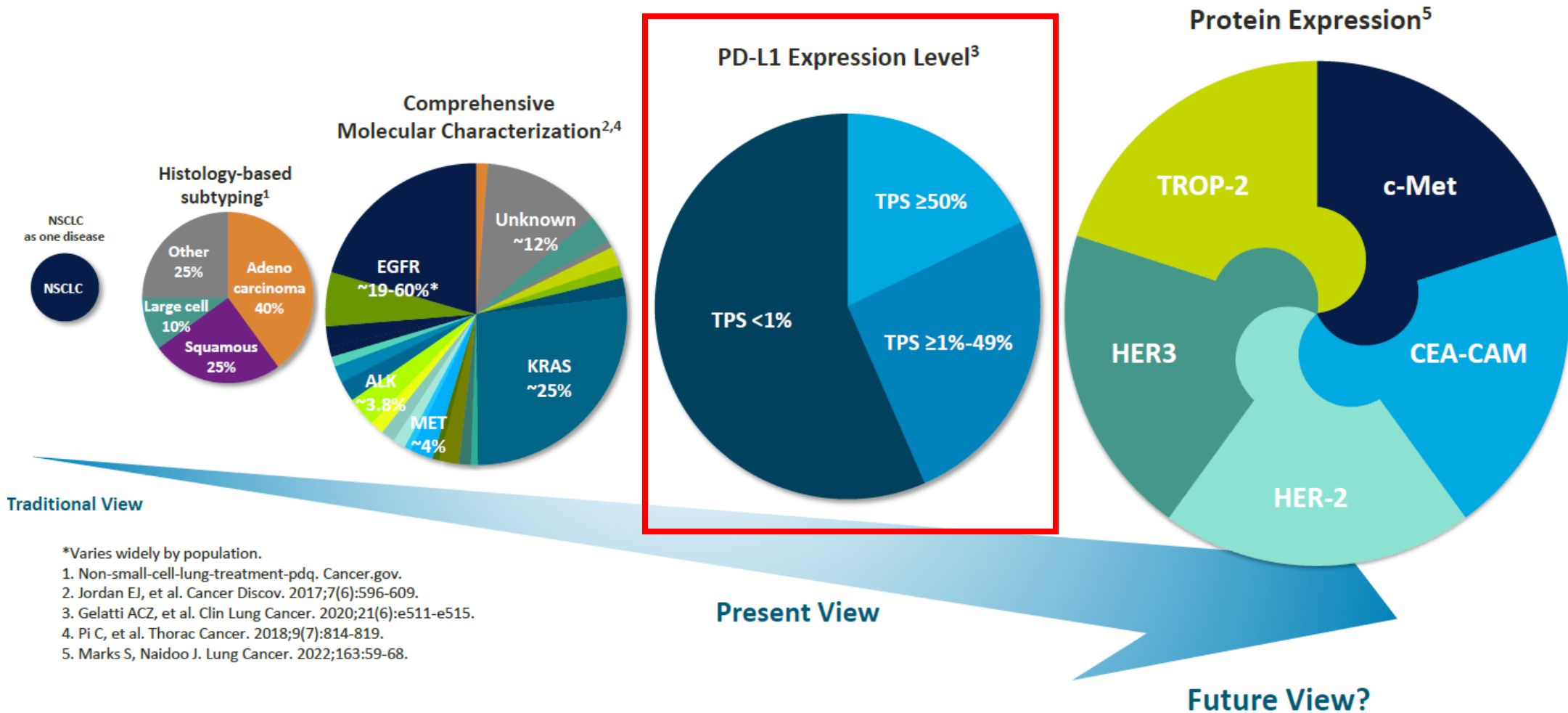
qPCR

Small Panels/  
Single Genes

# Tissue vs. Liquid Biopsy for Molecular Profiling



# Paradigms in Lung Cancer Molecular Pathology - 2024



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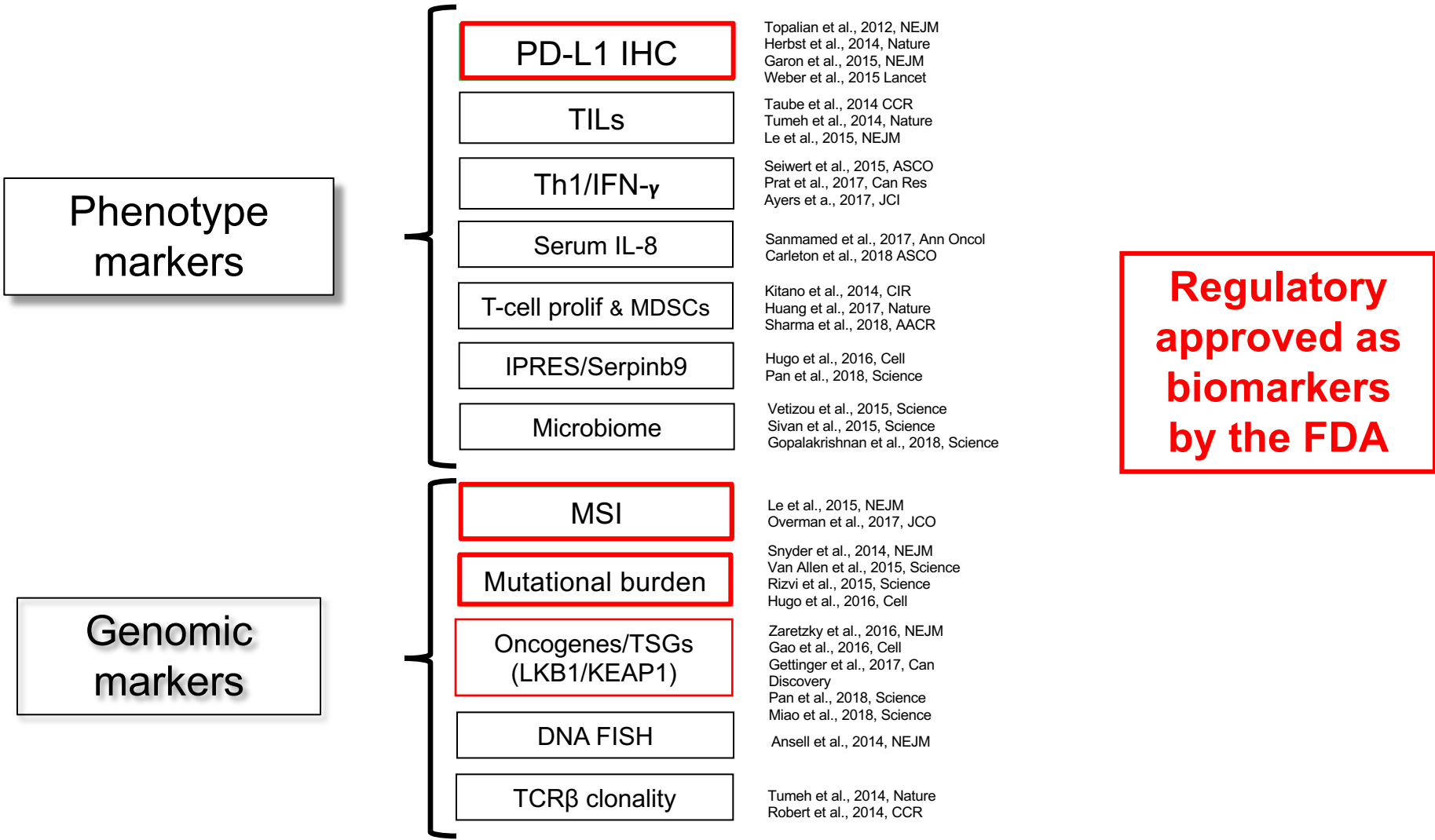
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Present View

Future View?

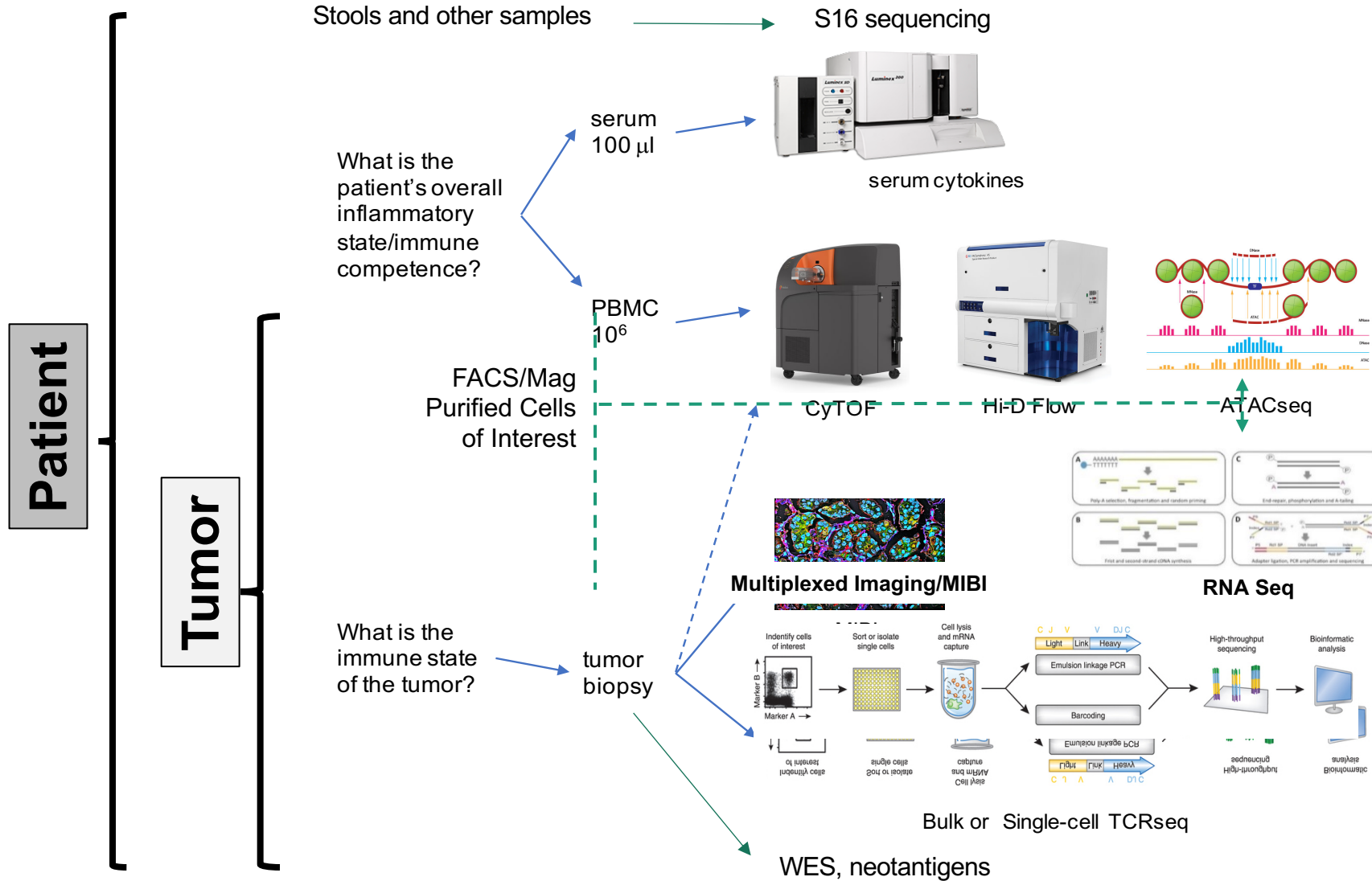
Slide (modified) courtesy of Dr. David Planchard, Institute Gustav Roussy

# Developing Markers for Immunotherapy



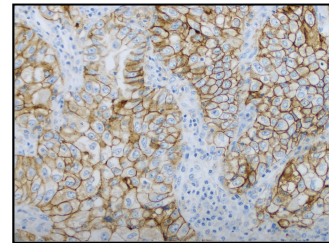
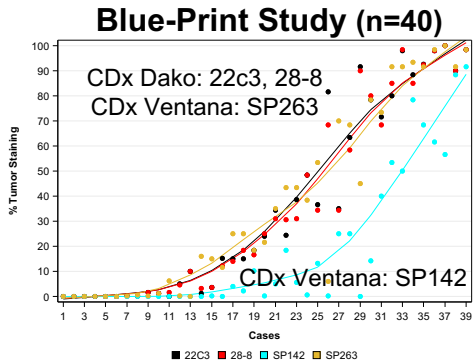


# Immune-profiling Workflows



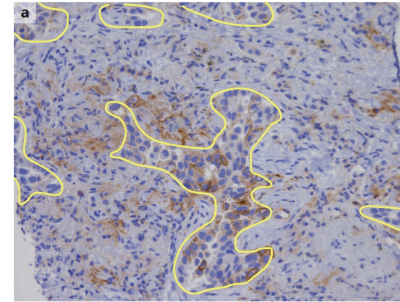
# IMT Biomarkers in Lung Cancer: PDL-1 IHC

## Several Antibodies



22C3 PharmDx

## Several Scoring Systems



$$\text{TPS (\%)} = \frac{\text{Number of PD-L1-stained tumour cells}}{\text{Total number of viable tumour cells}} \times 100\% \text{ (for 22C3 or SP263)}$$

$$\text{TC (\%)} = \frac{\text{Number of PD-L1-stained tumour cells}}{\text{Total number of viable tumour cells}} \times 100\% \text{ (for SP142)}$$

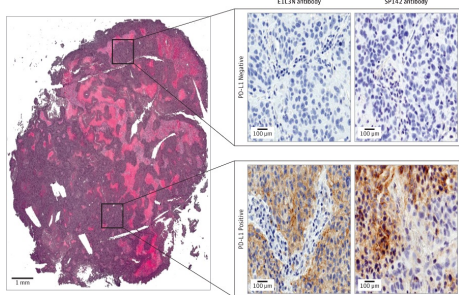
Malignant Cells

$$\text{IC (\%)} = \frac{\text{Area of tumour infiltrated by PD-L1-stained immune cells}}{\text{Total tumour area}} \times 100\% \text{ (for SP142)}$$

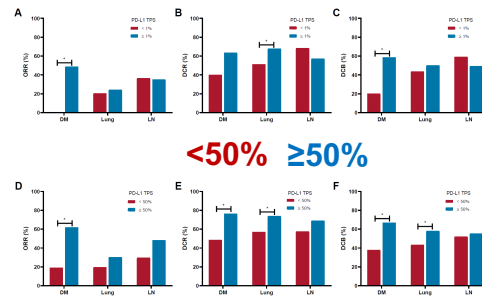
Immune Cells

## Heterogeneity

### Intra-tumoral



### Inter-tumoral



## It is an imperfect biomarker, but not too bad after all:

- Standard test for advanced metastatic NSCLC treated with single agent pembrolizumab (TPS  $\geq 50\%$ ), atezolizumab (TC  $> 50\%$  or IC  $> 10\%$ ), and cemiplimab (TPS  $\geq 50\%$ ).
  - For lower expressors: single agent anti-PD-L1/PD-1 treatment is less effective.
  - In tumors with TPS  $\geq 50\%$ : it seems that chemotherapy does not add benefit (pooled analysis from FDA 12)
- Combination therapy: Ipilimumab + nivolumab in patients with TPS  $\geq 1\%$
- Good turn around time!
- Being explored as biomarker for IO combinations (anti-PD-L1/PD-1 + TIGT3, +LAG-3)

L. Pai-Scherf et al, *Oncologist*, 2017

R. Herbst et al, *N Engl J Med*, 2020

M.D. Hellmann et al, *N Engl J Med*, 2019

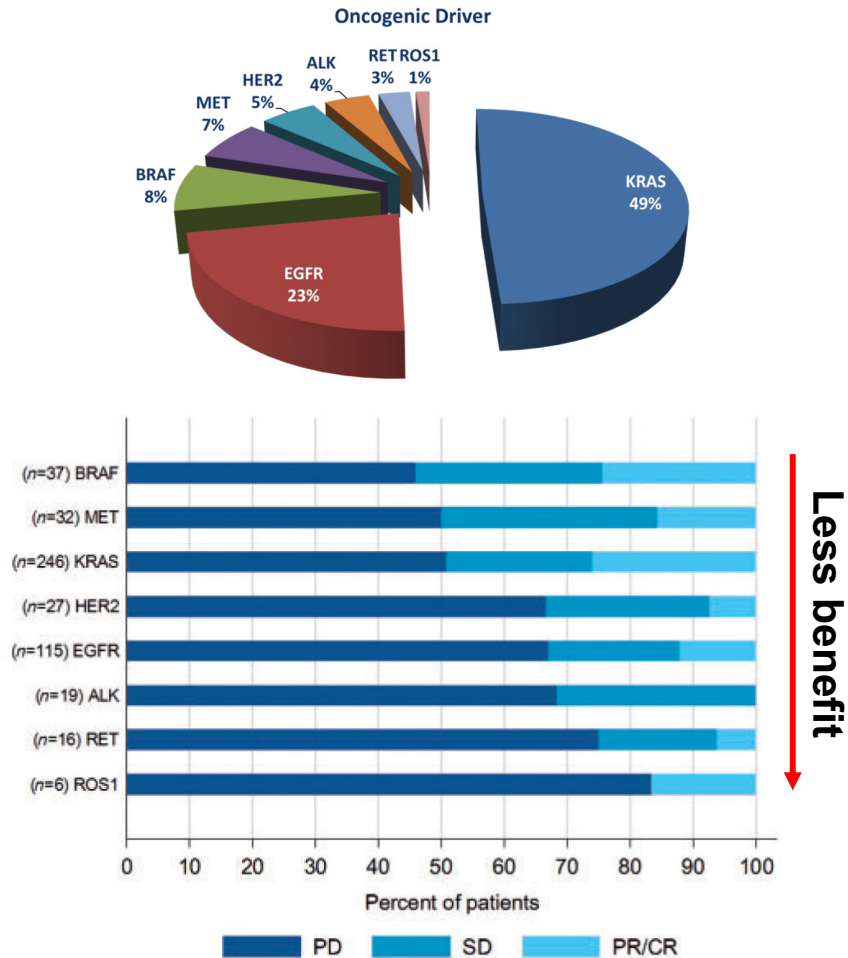
O. Akinboro et al, *J Clin Oncol Suppl*, 2021

A. Sezer et al, *Lancet*, 2021

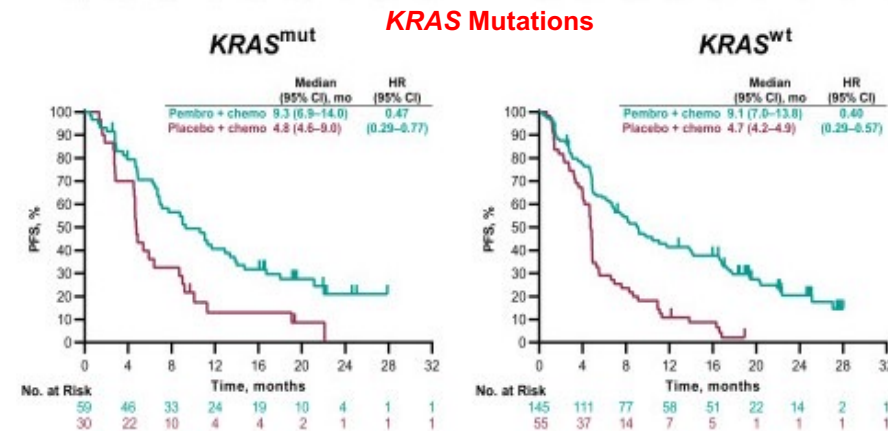
H. Safa et al, *Targeted Oncology*, 2023

Hirsch FR, et al. *J Thorac Oncol*. 2017;12(2):208-222 McLaughlin J, et al. *JAMA Oncol*. 2016;2(1):46-54. Hong L, et al. *J Thorac Oncol*. 2020;15(9):1449-1459. Doroshov DB, et al. *Nat Rev Clin Oncol*. 2021;18(6):345-362.

# IMT Biomarkers in Lung Cancer: Oncogenes



## Anti-PDL-1 (Pembro) + Chemotherapy (Keynote 189-407)



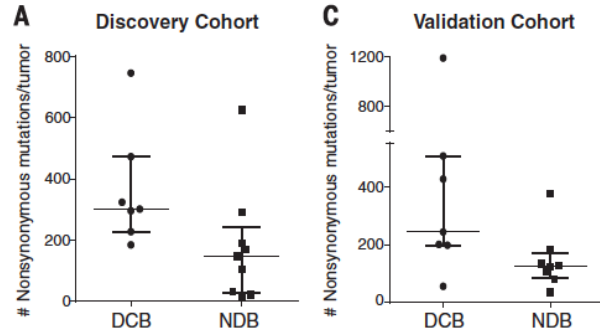
### Immune checkpoint inhibitors and Oncogene Status:

- No benefit in *EGFR* and *ALK* mutant tumors.
- Benefit on patients with some degree of smoking history and with *BRAF*, *KRAS* and *MET* ex14 mutations.
- The association between *KRAS* mutations and survival outcomes becomes lost in the context of chemo + ICI therapy (Keynote 189 and 407).
- *KRAS* mutant tumors typically correlate with inflammatory phenotype (TILs, TMB, PD-L1 IHC)
- Single-gene biomarkers *STK11* and *KEAP1* associate with worse outcomes in ICI...*but not in all cohorts.*

# IMT Biomarkers in Lung Cancer: TMB

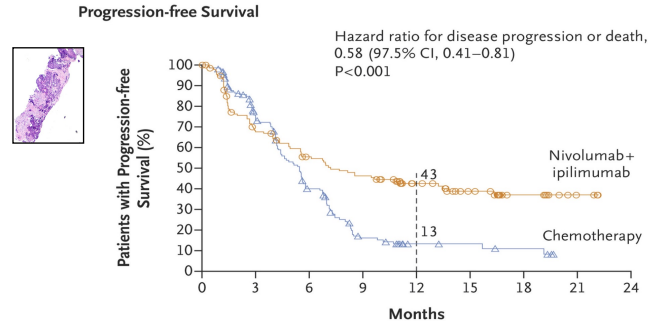
## Anti-PD-1 (Nivolumab)

WES, cut off  $\geq 178$  mutations



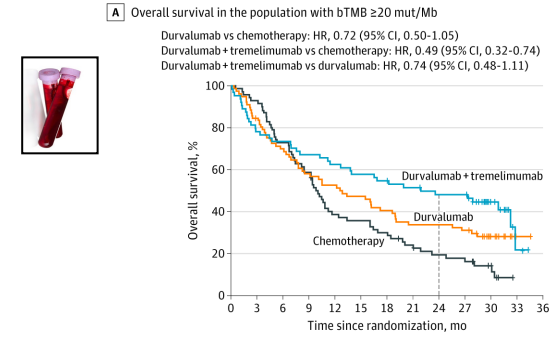
## Anti-PD-1+CTLA-4 (Nivolumab + Ipilimumab; CheckMate 227)

Tissue NGS panel, cut off  $>10$  mutations



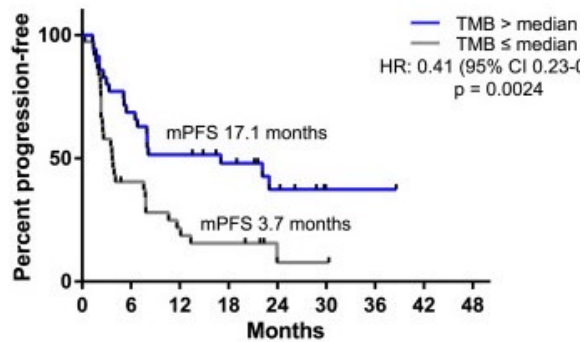
## Anti-PDL-1+CTLA-4 (Durvalumab + Tremelimumab; MYSTIC)

Blood NGS panel, cut off  $\geq 20$  mutations



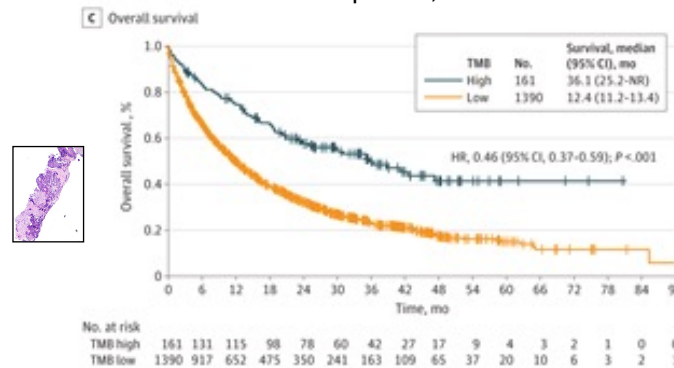
## Anti-PD-1+CTLA-4 (Nivolumab + Ipilimumab; CheckMate 012)

WES, cut off  $\geq 158$  mutations (median)



## Anti-PD-1/PD-L1 (Multicenter)

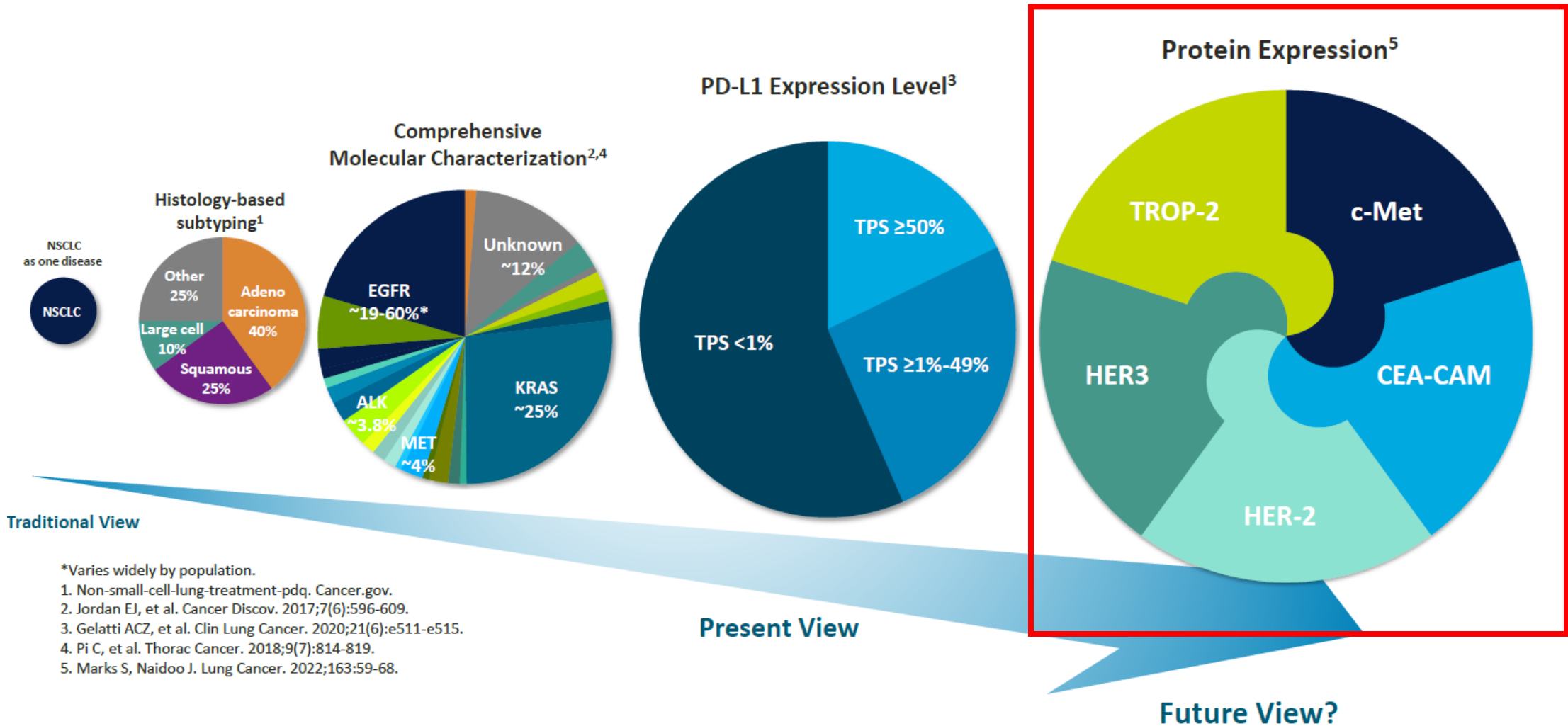
Tissues NGS panels,  $>19$  mutations



## It is another (more) imperfect biomarker:

- **Several methodologies and samples:**
  - Tissue: WES ( $\geq 243, 178, 158, 75$  mts); NGS panels  $>10, >19$  mts).
  - Blood: NGS panels ( $\geq 20, 16$  mts).
- **Tissue TMB:**
  - No predictive value in patients treated with ICI + chemo.
- **Blood TMB:**
  - Not predictive value on single anti-PDL-1 (B-FAST, B-FIRST).
  - It has been suggested to be a prognostic biomarkers.
- **FDA approved tissue TMB (2021) for solid tumors** (Keynote 158; no NSCLC case was included)

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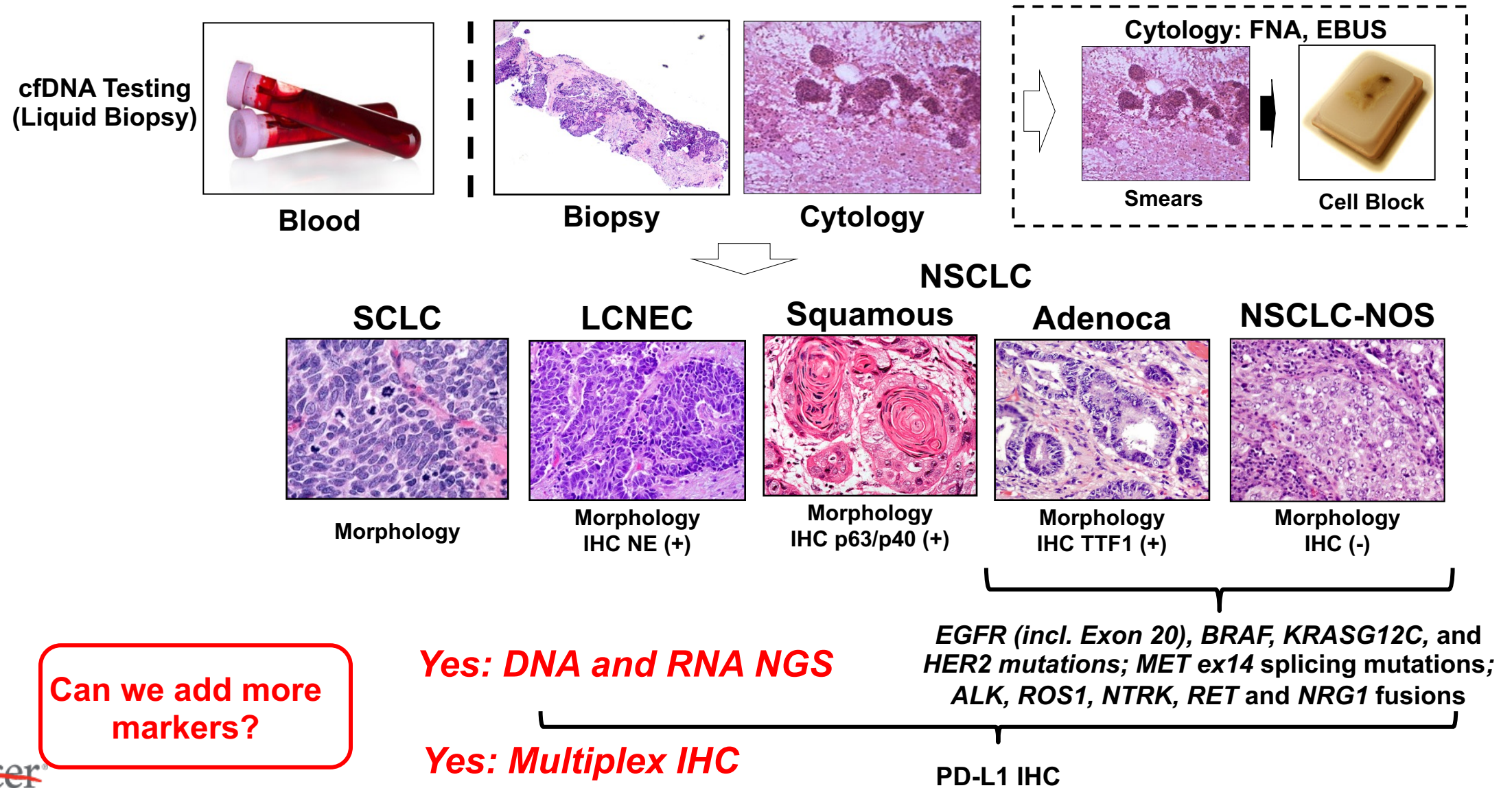
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Present View

Future View?

Slide (modified) courtesy of Dr. David Planchard, Institute Gustav Roussy

# Diagnostic Algorithm for Lung Cancer Diagnosis



***Thanks***