

# Immunotherapy for Breast Cancer: Efficacy and Toxicity Considerations

Heather McArthur, MD, MPH  
Clinical Director, Breast Cancer  
Komen Distinguished Chair in Clinical Breast Cancer Research  
Associate Professor  
UT Southwestern, Dallas, TX  
[Heather.McArthur@utsouthwestern.edu](mailto:Heather.McArthur@utsouthwestern.edu)

 [@hmcarthur](https://twitter.com/hmcarthur)

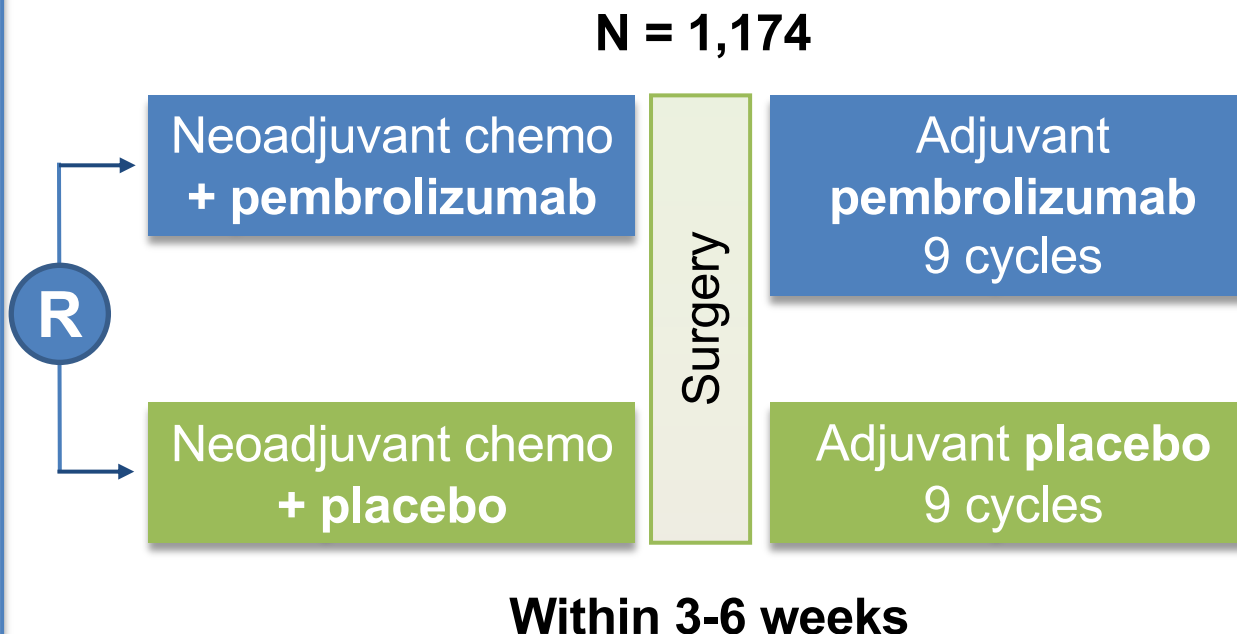
# KEYNOTE-522

## Eligibility

- Newly diagnosed TNBC (central confirmation)
- T1c N+ or T≥2 N0-2
- PD-L1+ or PD-L1-

## Stratification

- T1/T2 vs T3/T4
- N0 vs N+
- Carboplatin Q1W vs Q3W



## Primary endpoints

- pCR rate (ypT0/Tis ypN0)
- EFS

## Secondary endpoints

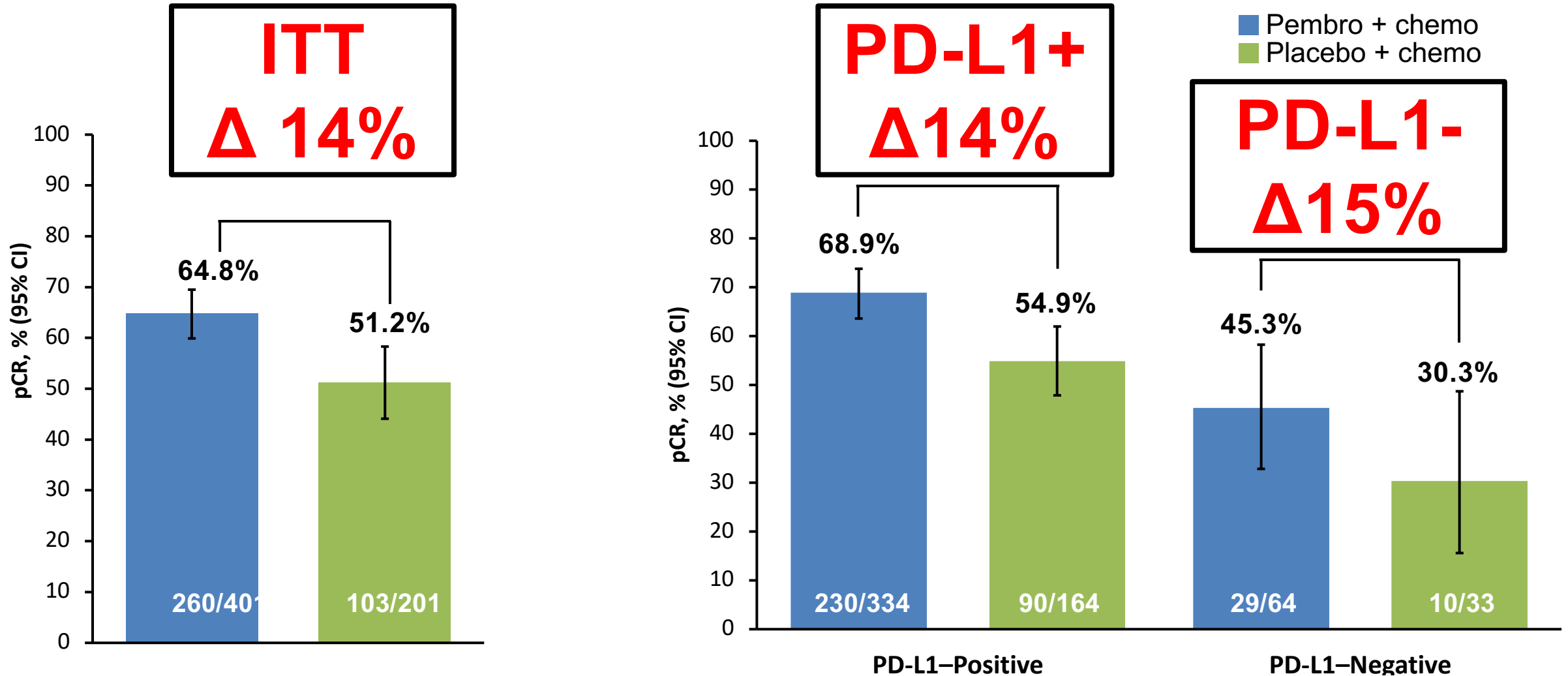
- Alternative pCR rate (ypT0 ypN0)
- pCR rate in PD-L1+
- EFS in PD-L1+
- OS

## Study Treatment

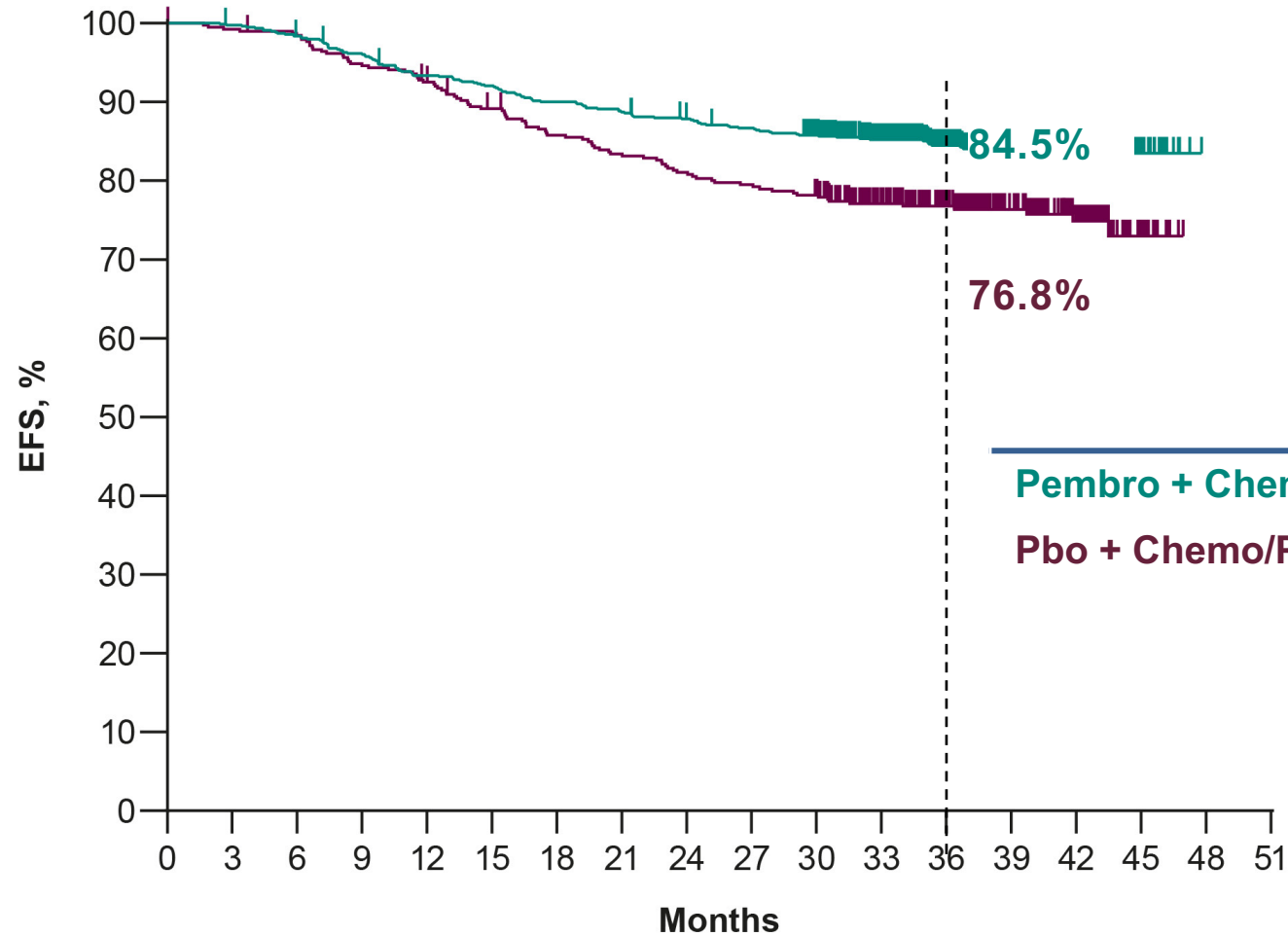


Paclitaxel 80 mg/m<sup>2</sup> IV weekly  
 Carboplatin weekly (AUC 1.5) or Q3W (AUC5)  
 Doxorubicin 60 mg/m<sup>2</sup> IV Q3W  
 (Epirubicin 90 mg/m<sup>2</sup> IV Q3W)  
 Cyclophosphamide 600 mg/m<sup>2</sup> IV Q3W  
 Pembrolizumab 200 mg IV Q3W

# KEYNOTE-522: pCR at IA1



# KEYNOTE-522: EFS update at IA4 (39.1mo)



**Δ7.7%**

	Events	HR (95% CI)	P-value
Pembro + Chemo/Pembro	15.7%	0.63 <sup>a</sup>	0.00031 <sup>b</sup>
Pbo + Chemo/Pbo	23.8%		

## No. at Risk

Pembro + Chemo/Pembro	784	781	769	751	728	718	702	692	681	671	652	551	433	303	165	28	0	0
Pbo + Chemo/Pbo	390	386	382	368	358	342	328	319	310	304	297	250	195	140	83	17	0	0

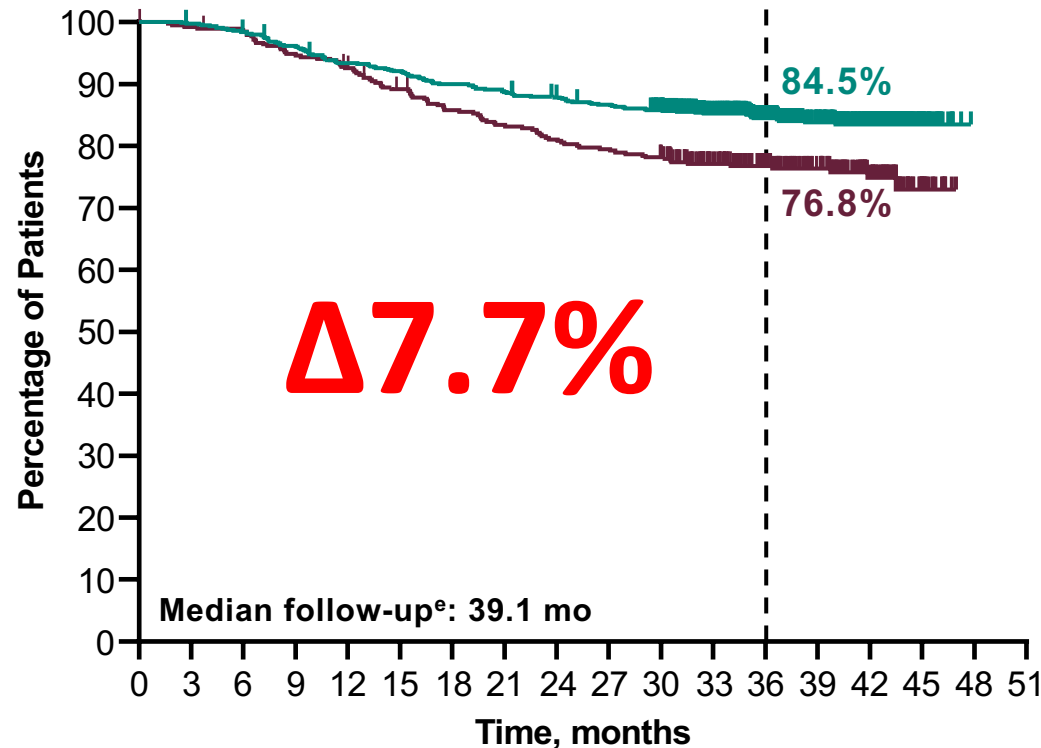
# FDA Approval

On **July 26, 2021**, the FDA approved pembrolizumab for high-risk early-stage TNBC with chemotherapy as neoadjuvant treatment and then continued as a single agent as adjuvant treatment after surgery

Based on KEYNOTE-522, the indication for palliative pembrolizumab was converted from accelerated to full approval

# EFS at IA4 and IA6

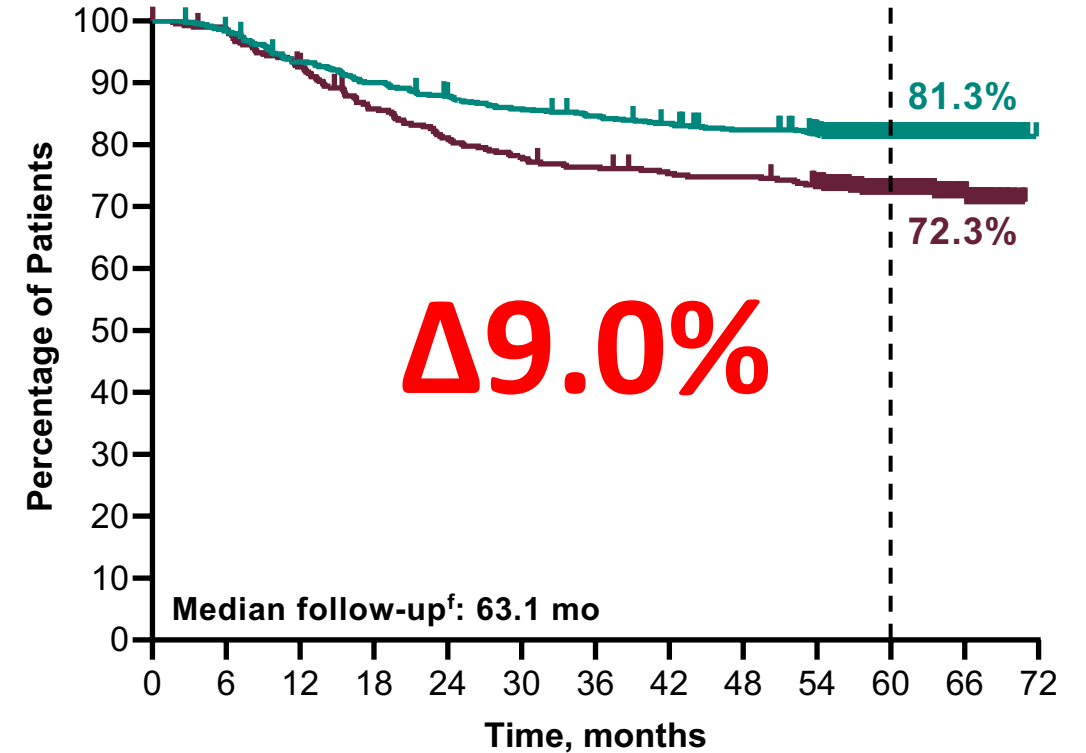
IA4 <sup>a</sup>	Events	HR (95% CI)	P value
Pembro + Chemo/Pembro	15.7%	0.63 <sup>c</sup> (0.48–0.82)	0.00031 <sup>d</sup>
Placebo + Chemo/Placebo	23.8%		



No. at risk

784 781 769 751 728 718 702 692 681 671 652 551 433 303 165 28 0 0  
 390 386 382 368 358 342 328 319 310 304 297 250 195 140 83 17 0 0

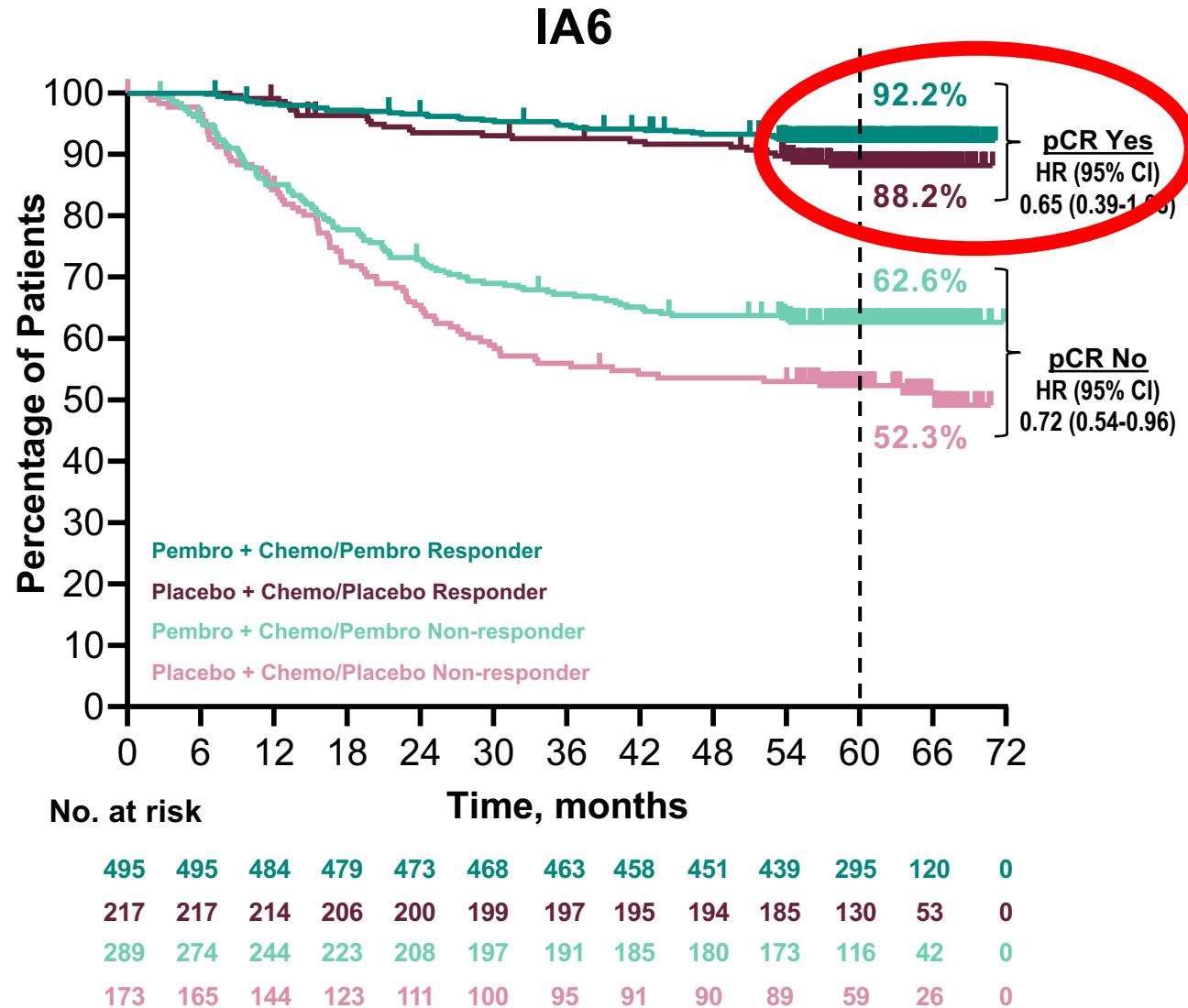
IA6 <sup>b</sup>	Events	HR (95% CI)
Pembro + Chemo/Pembro	18.5%	0.63 <sup>c</sup> (0.49–0.81)
Placebo + Chemo/Placebo	27.7%	



No. at risk

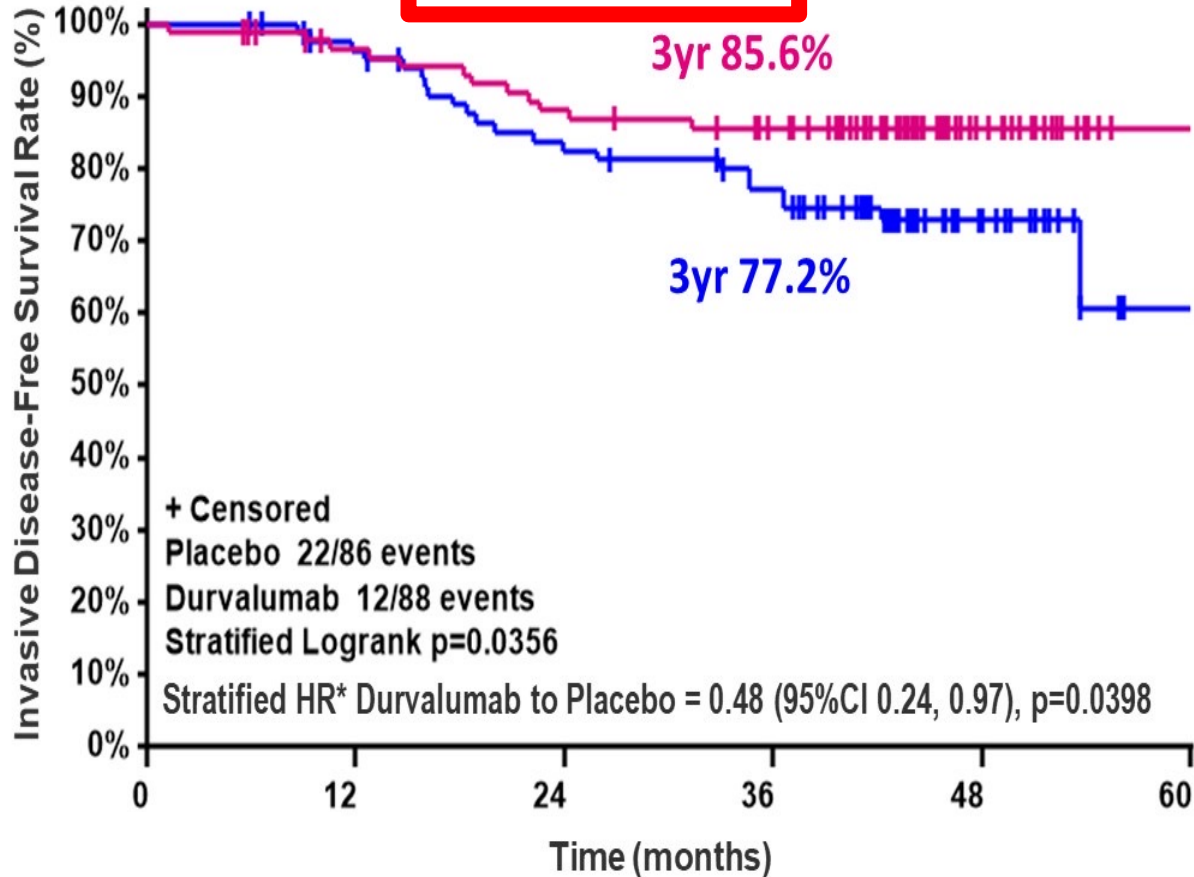
784 769 728 702 681 665 654 643 631 612 411 162 0  
 390 382 358 329 311 299 292 286 284 274 189 79 0

# Which subset derives benefit?

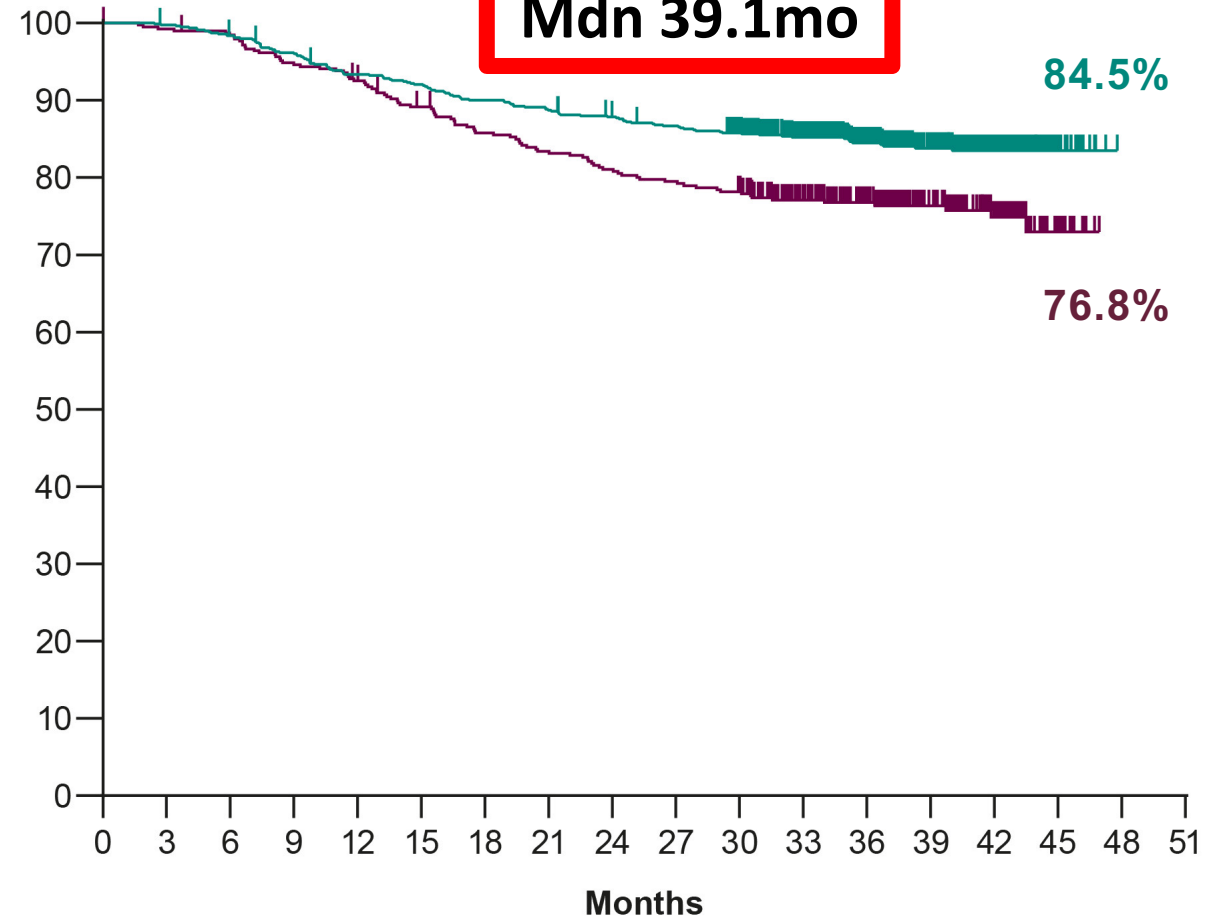


# Is the benefit of IO conferred with neoadjuvant administration?

**GeparNuevo**  
Mdn 43.7mo



**KEYNOTE-522**  
Mdn 39.1mo





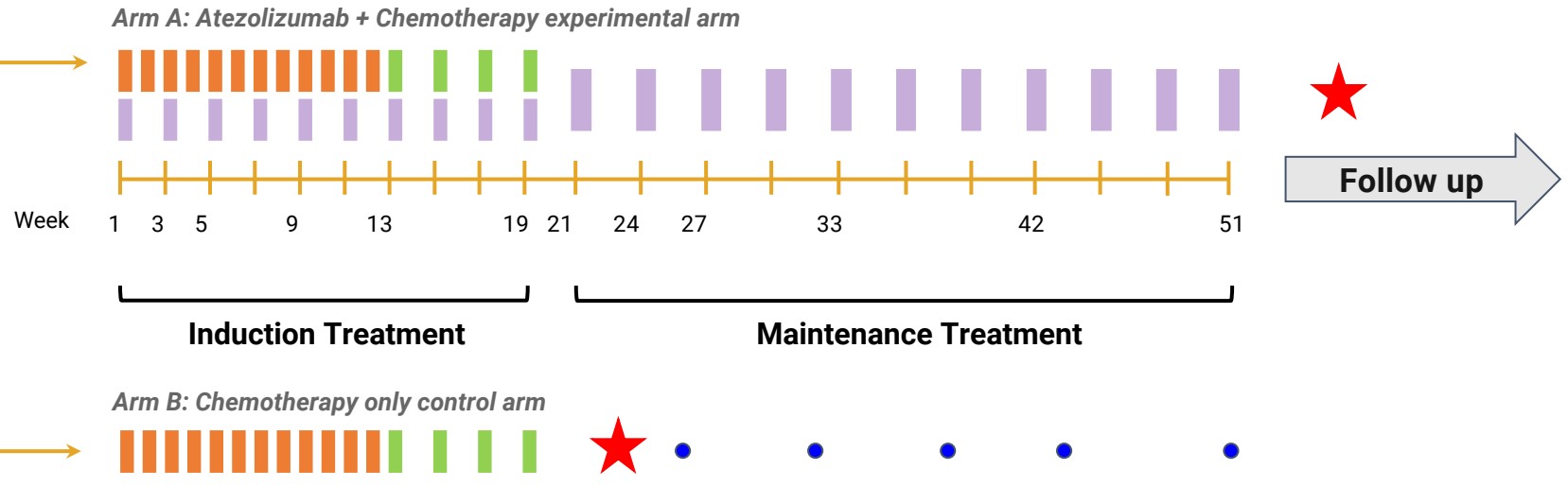
# ALEXANDRA/IMpassion030 phase 3 Open-label Study Design

SURGERY

**Early TNBC**

- Stage II-III
- At least 50% node-positive
- N=2300

(R)



**Stratification factors:**

**Axillary nodal status**  
(0 vs. 1-3 vs. ≥ 4 positive lymph nodes)

**Surgery**  
(breast conserving vs. mastectomy)

**Tumor PD-L1 status**  
(IC0 vs. IC1/2/3)

- Paclitaxel qw for 12 weeks
- ddAC/EC q2w for 4 doses supported with G-CSF/GM-CSF
- Atezolizumab
  - Induction: 840 mg q2w for up to 10 doses
  - Maintenance: 1200 mg q3w to complete 1 year
- Monitoring visit Arm B

★  
**End of 30-day safety reporting period after last study treatment**

# Statistical Considerations

## Final Analysis

### Updated Statistical Analysis Plan (SAP v3):

- Health Authority request for additional interim and futility analysis
- SAP amended to add additional interim analysis
- 2199 patients randomized at time of amendment
- Two planned interim analyses at 62% and 80% information (242 and 312 iDFS events)
- **Futility boundary at a Hazard Ratio (HR) > 1**
- Final analysis at 390 iDFS events
  - Two-sided, stratified log-rank test with alpha 0.05, power 80%, hazard ratio 0.75, ITT population

### Final Analysis using SAP v3:

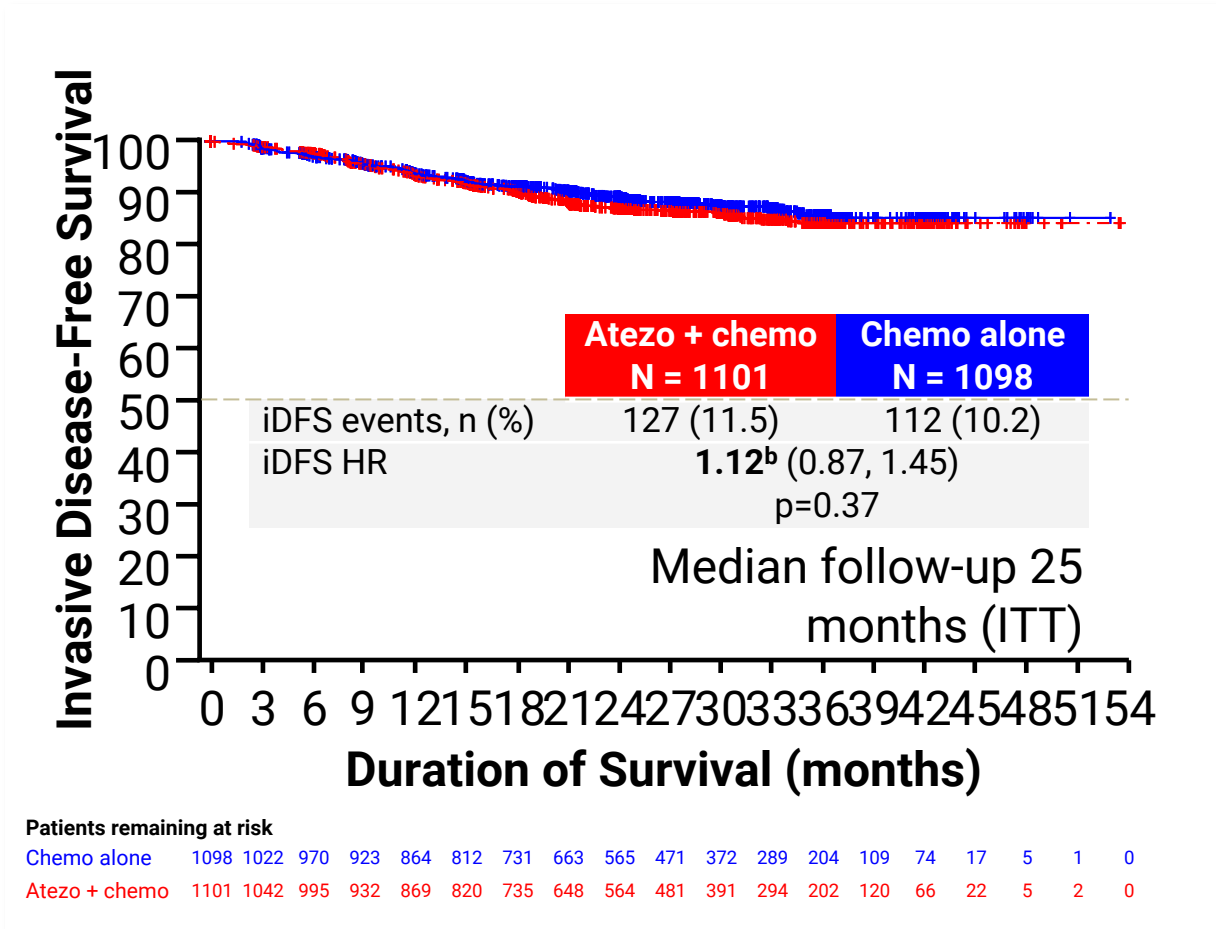
- Futility boundary crossed at Interim Analysis
- 2199 patients randomized
- **266 iDFS events** (lower than pre-planned)
- Overall alpha remains at 0.05 (type-1 error control)
- Significance boundary calculated taking into account;
  - **Interim Analysis at 239 iDFS events** *and*
  - **Final Analysis at 266 iDFS events**
- Final significance boundary for iDFS (2-sided) 0.04988

- 18 Aug 2023: Data cut off at Last Patient Last Visit (LPLV)
- 20 Nov 2023: Final database snapshot; database locked

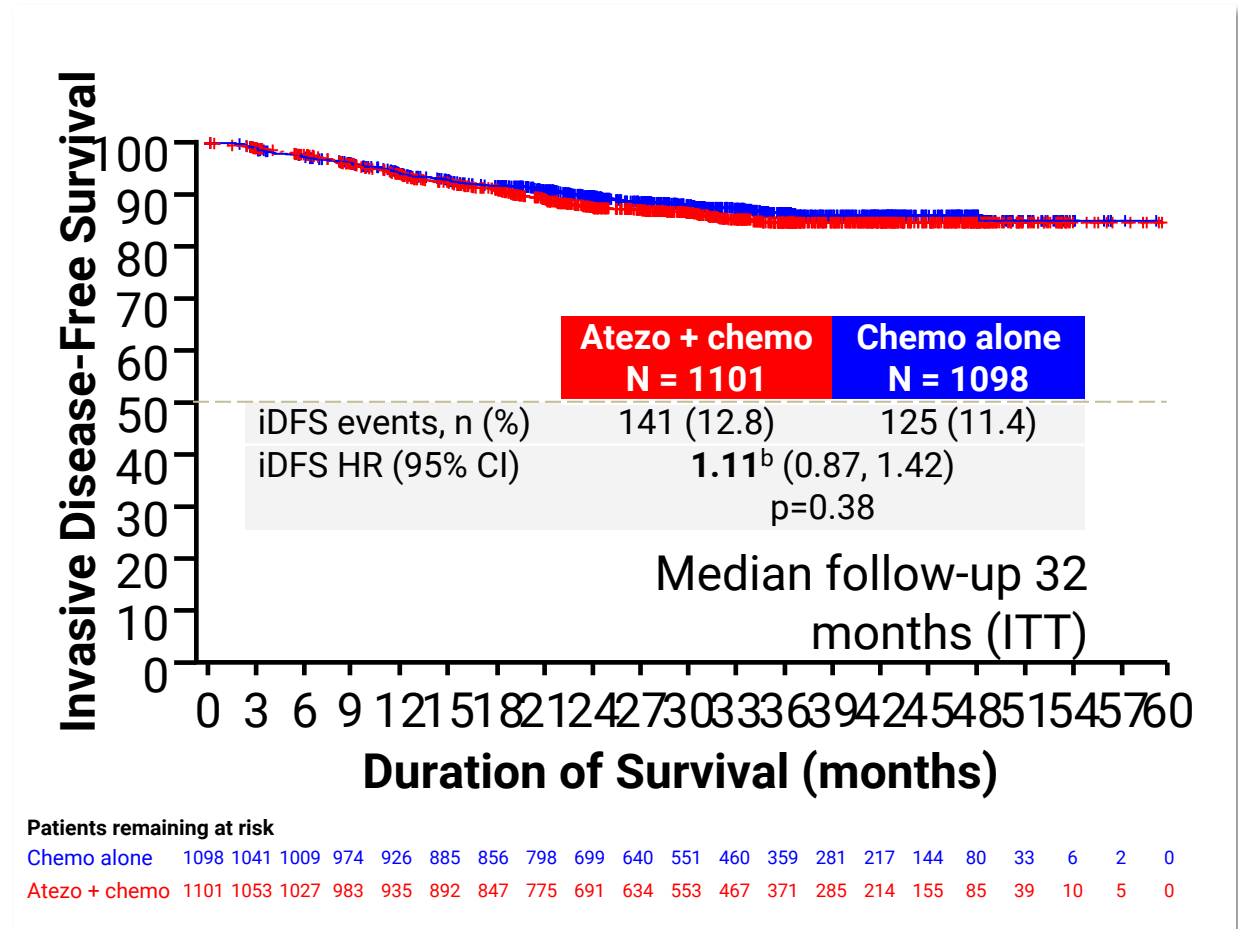
# iDFS IA and Final Analysis

Primary Efficacy Endpoint (ITT population)

## Interim Analysis<sup>a</sup>



## Final Analysis



iDFS: defined as the interval from randomization until date of first occurrence of an iDFS event

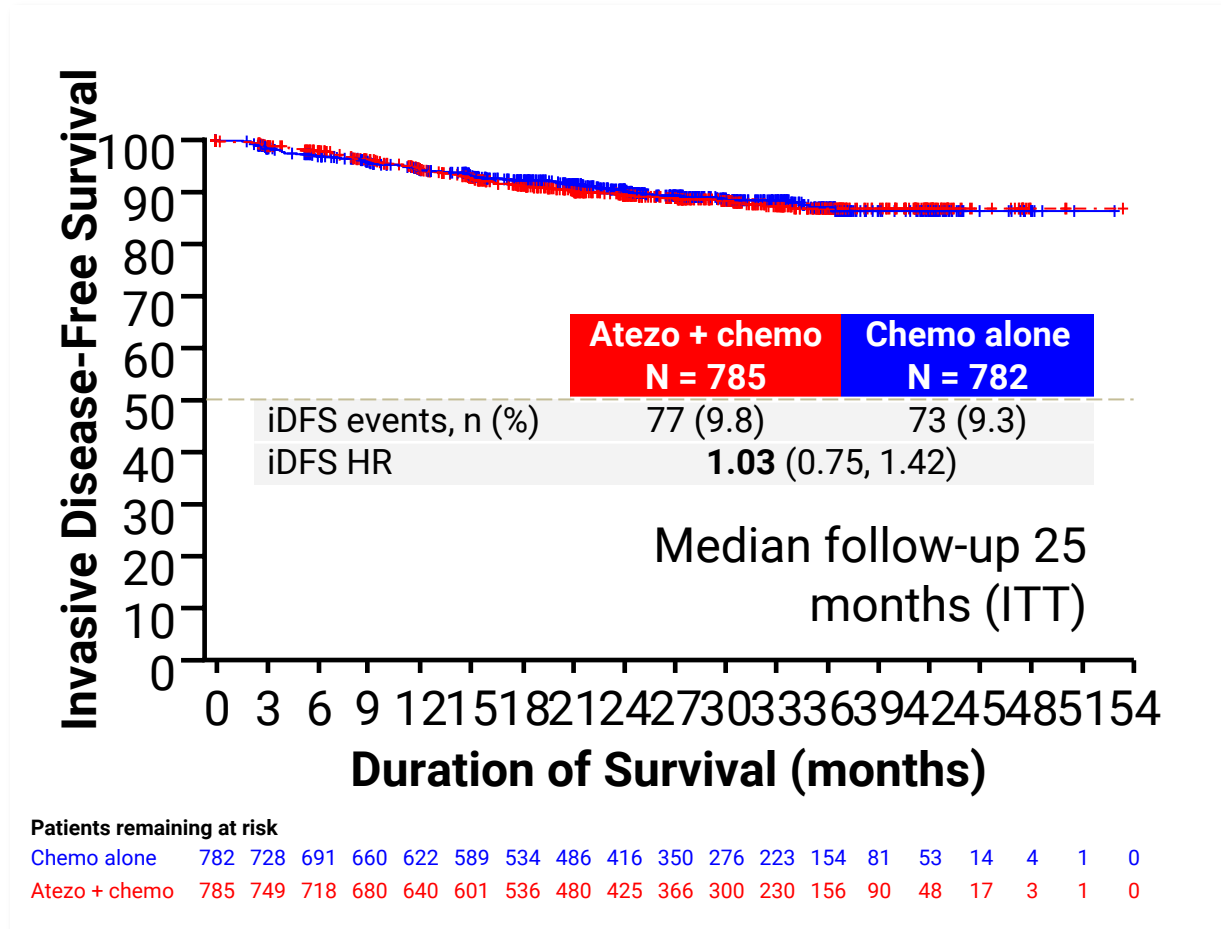
<sup>a</sup>IA results previously presented at SABACs 2023 (database of 17 Feb 2023, not cleaned)

<sup>b</sup>Stratified by PD-L1 status, Surgery, and Axillary Nodal Status

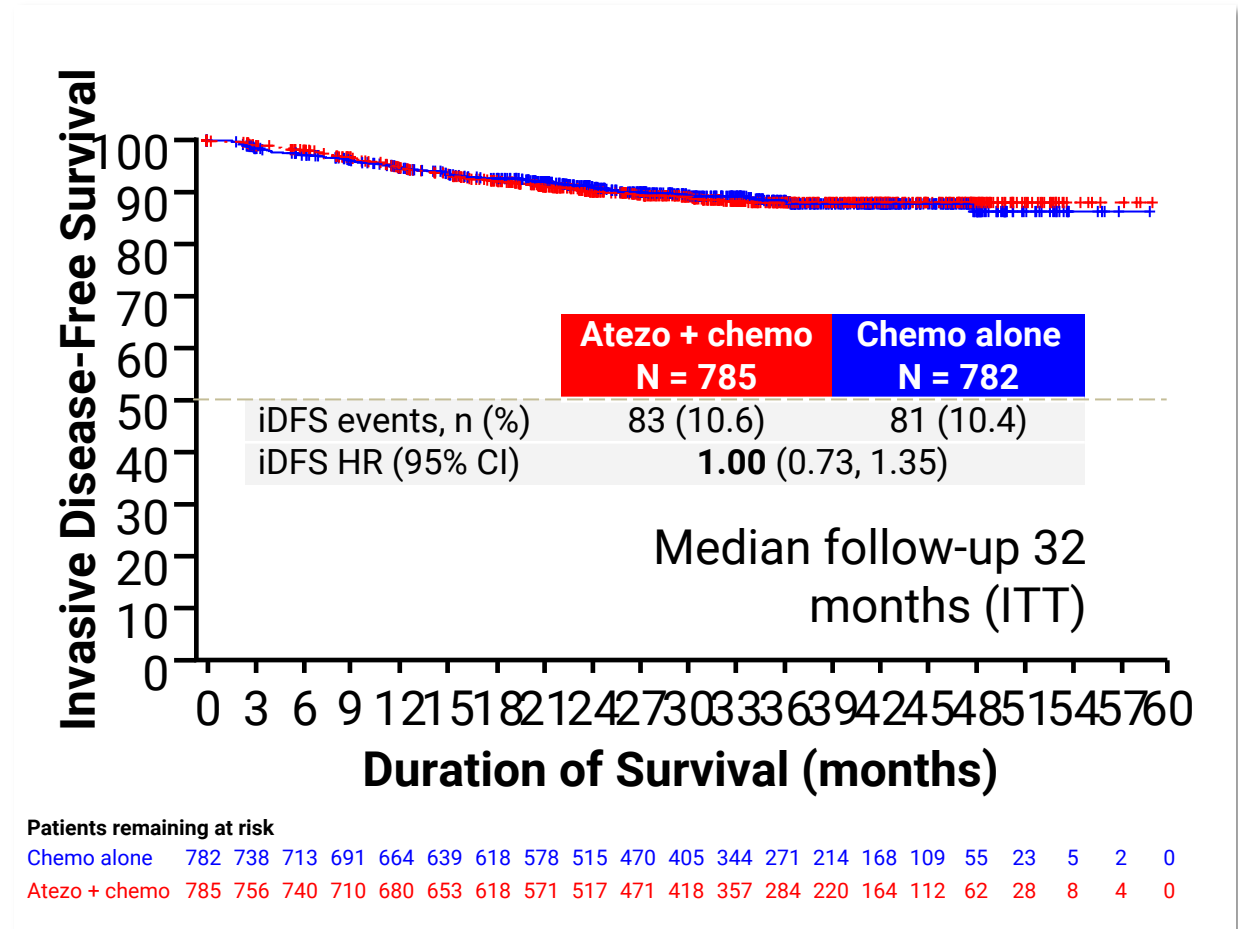
# iDFS PDL1+ IA and Final Analysis

Secondary Endpoint (ITT population)

## Interim Analysis<sup>a</sup>



## Final Analysis



<sup>a</sup>IA results previously presented at SABCS 2023 (database of 17 Feb 2023, not cleaned)

# A-BRAVE Trial - Study Design

Investigator-driven study, sponsored by University of Padova.  
Drug supply and Grant support by Merck KGaA.



## High Risk TNBC patients who completed locoregional and systemic treatment with curative intent

Key eligibility criteria:

- Age  $\geq 18$  years
- ECOG PS 0-1
- TNBC (ER & PgR  $< 10\%$ , HER2 0-1+ or 2+ FISH-)^
- Anthracycline and taxane (neo)-adjuvant ChemoRx
- Tissue samples for central PD-L1 assessment
- Randomization  $< 10$  weeks from last chemo or surgery

- **Stratum A (Adjuvant):** pT2N1, pT3-4 N0-3, pN2-3 anyT#
- **Stratum B (Post-neoadjuvant):** residual invasive carcinoma in the breast and/or axillary lymph nodes<sup>§\*</sup>

R 1:1  
N=477

**Avelumab**  
10mg/kg, iv, q 2 weeks for 52 weeks

**Observation**

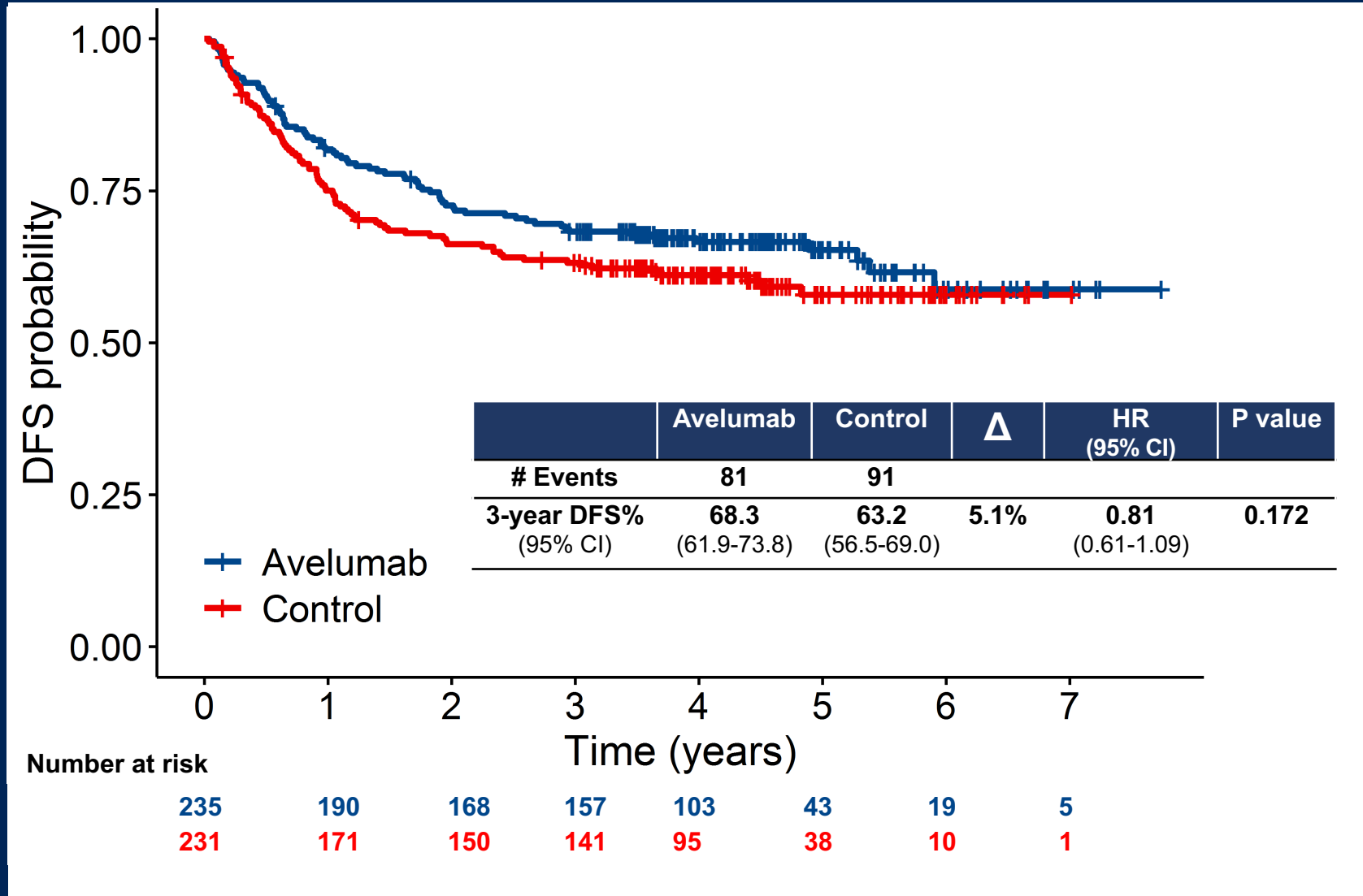
In case of ER 1-9%, adjuvant HT allowed at discretion of treating physicians.  
Whenever indicated, radiotherapy allowed concomitantly with avelumab.

^for patients in the neoadjuvant stratum, TN status required in the preoperative and in the post-surgical specimen  
# trial initially limited to pN $\geq 2$ ; protocol amendment in 10/2017 to include patents with pT2N1 and pT3-4 N0-3 disease stage  
§ excluding ypT1micN0, ypT1micN0i+, ypT0N0i+  
\* **After amendment on 06/2018, patients in stratum B were allowed to receive additional post-operative chemotherapy and were randomized at completion of treatment.**  
Randomization balanced for Stratum A and Stratum B.

EUDRACT 2016-000189-45; NCT 02926196

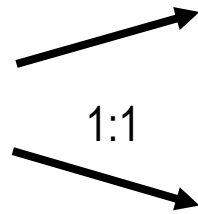
# A-BRAVE Trial - Disease-Free Survival, ITT (co-primary end point)

median FUp: 52.1 months (95% CI: 49.8- 53.8)



# SWOG 1418/NRG BR006

TNBC with  $\geq 1$  cm residual  
invasive breast cancer or any +  
LN after neoadjuvant  
chemotherapy  
N = 100



Pembrolizumab 200 mg IV q 3 weeks x 1y

Observation

- **Registration:**
  - Central PD-L1 testing
- **Stratification:**
  - Nodal stage ypNo vs ypN+
  - Residual tumor  $\geq 2$  vs  $< 2$ cm
  - PD-L1 pos vs neg
  - Prior adjuvant chemo yes vs no

- **Hypothesis:**
  - Pembrolizumab reduces IDFS by 33% c/w observation alone
- **Primary Endpoint:**
  - Invasive DFS in PD-L1-positive and overall cohort
- **Secondary Endpoints:**
  - Toxicity
  - OS
  - DRFS
  - QOL (PROMIS, PRO-CTCAE forms, inflammatory markers)
  - Tissue banking

**NAC + pembrolizumab  
in high risk (including T1b/c?!) early TNBC**

Surgery

pCR

No pCR

SOC adjuvant  
pembro

Suspected or confirmed  
gBRCA mutation

Future enrollment in planned  
trials of adjuvant  
pembro vs. not

Yes

No

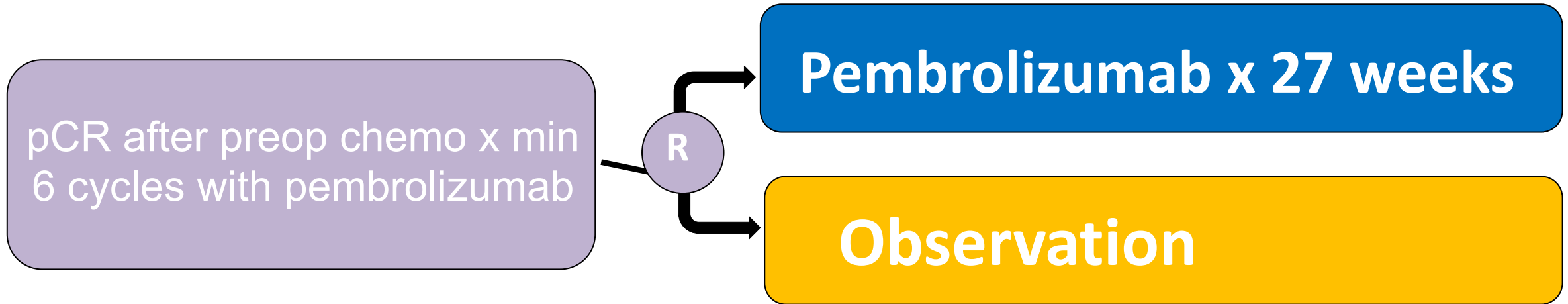
Consider concurrent  
or sequential  
olaparib with pembro

Consider  
concurrent  
capecitabine

**Consider concurrent pembro with radiation**



# OptimelCE-PCR study: For patients with pCR



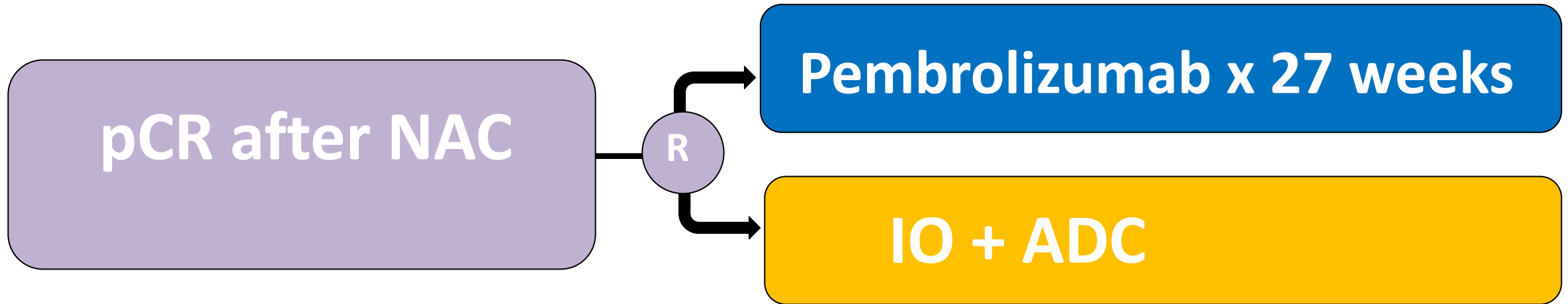
N = 1956 (56month accrual estimated)

Stratification Factors:

- Baseline nodal status
- Receipt of anthracycline chemotherapy: yes vs no

1<sup>o</sup>Endpoints: RFS and QOL at 27weeks

# Planned study for patients w/o pCR



Adjuvant ADC combinations:

- Sacituzumab govitecan (Alliance) + pembro vs TPC
- DatoDXd (SWOG) +/- durvalumab vs TPC
- Sac-TMT (MK-2870/SKB264) +/- pembro (planned)

# TB04 Study Design: Ph3 Dato-DXd + Durva in Neoadjuvant/Adjuvant TNBC

Neoadjuvant

Surgery

Adjuvant

## Key Eligibility Criteria

- Histologically confirmed Stage II or III unilateral or bilateral primary invasive breast cancer.
- TNBC (ER and PR < 1%) or hormone receptor-low breast cancer (ER and/or PR 1% to < 10%, neither hormone receptor may be ≥ 10%), and HER2-negative.
- No evidence of distant disease.
- No prior surgery, radiation, or systemic anticancer therapy.
- ECOG PS 0 or 1.
- Adequate hematologic and organ function.

## Stratification factors:

- Lymph node status (positive versus negative)
- Tumour stage (cT1 to cT2 versus cT3 to cT4)
- Hormone receptor status (hormone receptor-negative [ER and PR < 1%] versus hormone receptor-low (ER and/or PR 1% to < 10%, neither hormone receptor may be ≥ 10%])
- Geographic region (US/Canada/Europe/Australia versus Rest of World).

1:1

### Experimental Arm

Dato-DXd + durvalumab  
Q3W x 8 (24 weeks)

### Control Arm

Pembrolizumab +  
carboplatin + paclitaxel  
Q3W x 4 (12 weeks)

Pembrolizumab +  
doxorubicin or epirubicin  
+ cyclophosphamide  
Q3W x 4 (12 weeks)

Durvalumab  
x 9 cycles  
+/- chemotherapy  
**a, b, c**

Pembrolizumab  
x 9 cycles  
+/- chemotherapy  
**a, c, d**

Dual primary endpoints:  
pCR and EFS

Secondary endpoints:  
OS, DDFS, safety and tolerability, PROs, PK, immunogenicity

Exploratory endpoints include but are not limited to:  
TROP2, PD-L1

**a.** Endocrine therapy is permitted for participants with hormone receptor-low tumours. No adjuvant CDK4/6 inhibitor (eg, abemaciclib, ribociclib).

**b.** Adjuvant chemotherapy may be given in combination with durvalumab for participants with residual disease.

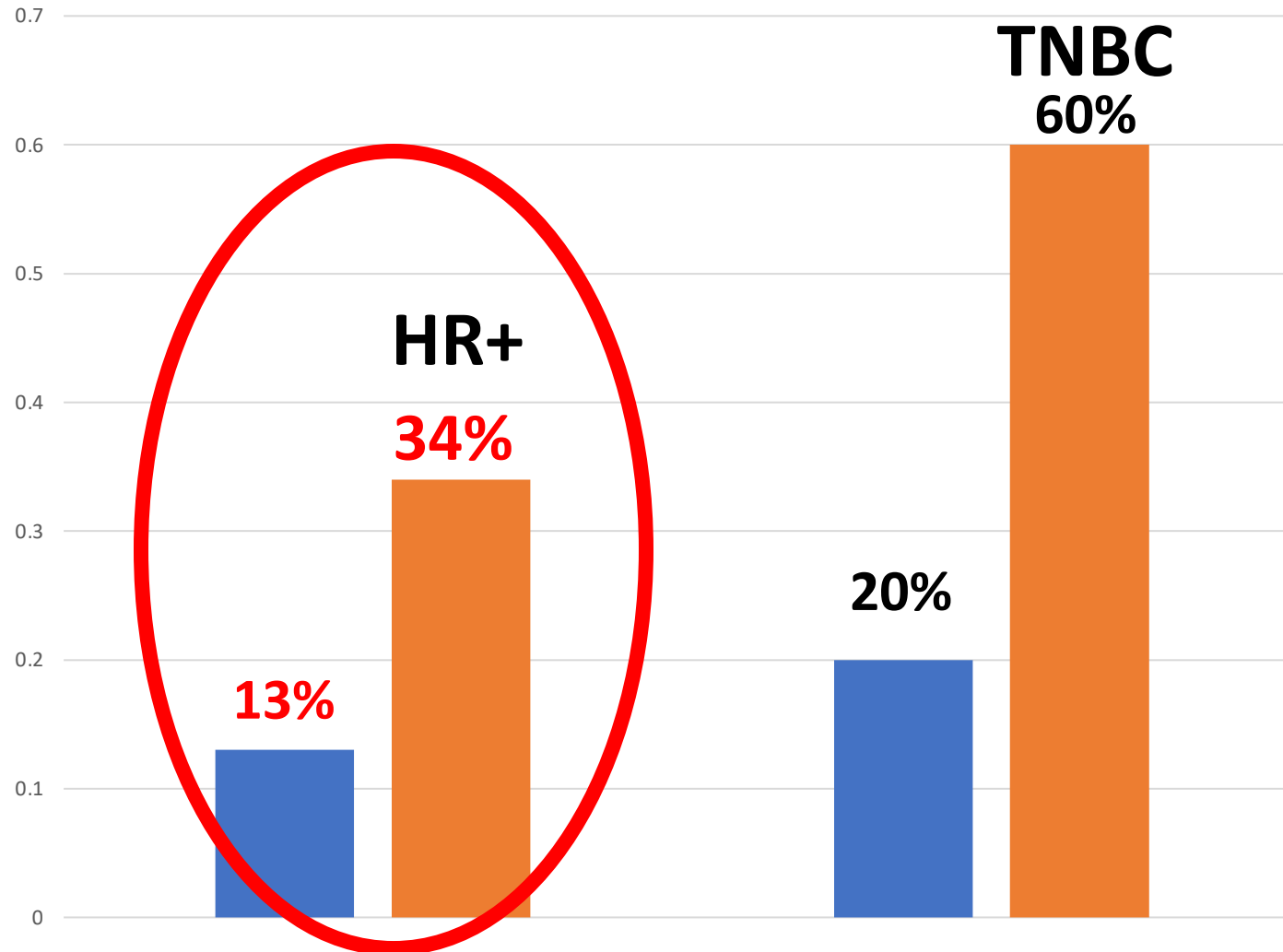
Chemotherapy options at discretion of investigator, either: doxorubicin/epirubicin + cyclophosphamide, followed by paclitaxel + carboplatin; doxorubicin/epirubicin + cyclophosphamide followed by paclitaxel; carboplatin + paclitaxel; capecitabine.

**c.** Olaparib may be administered to participants who are gBRCA-positive with residual disease.

**d.** Adjuvant capecitabine may be given in combination with pembrolizumab for participants with residual disease, at the discretion of investigator.

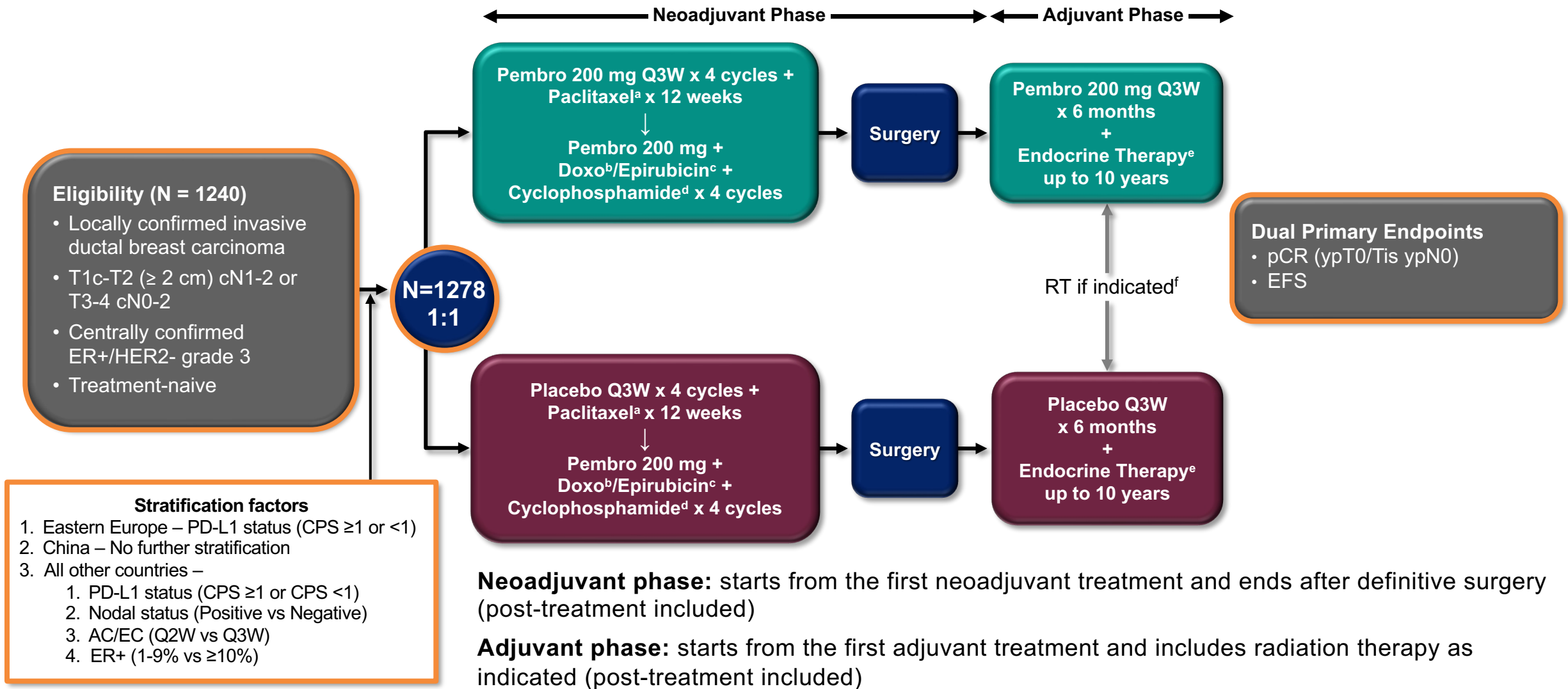
**Is there a Role for Immune  
Therapy in EARLY STAGE  
HIGH RISK ER+ Breast Cancer?**

# Estimated pCR Rates from ISPY2



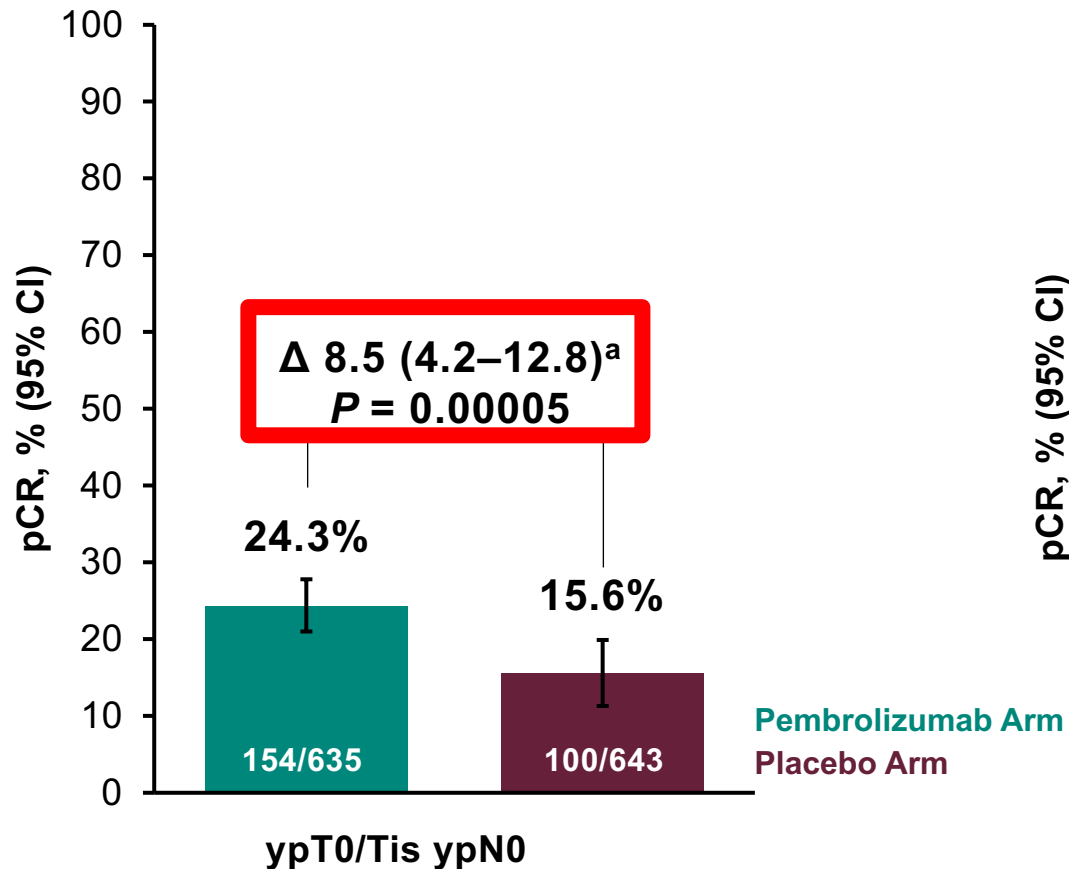
**Pembro graduates in all signatures  
Including ER+**

# KEYNOTE-756 Study Design (NCT03725059)

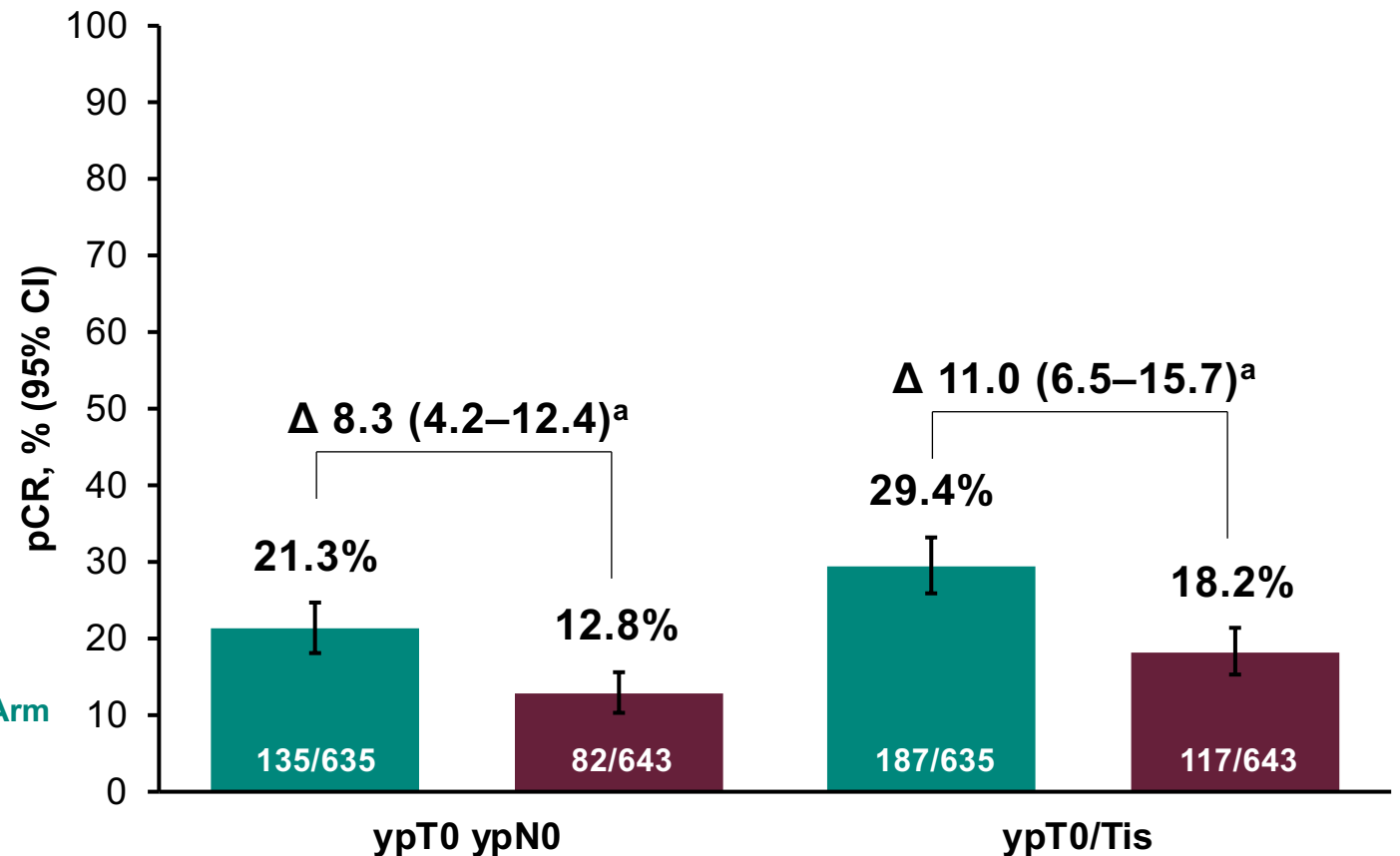


# Pathological Complete Response at IA1

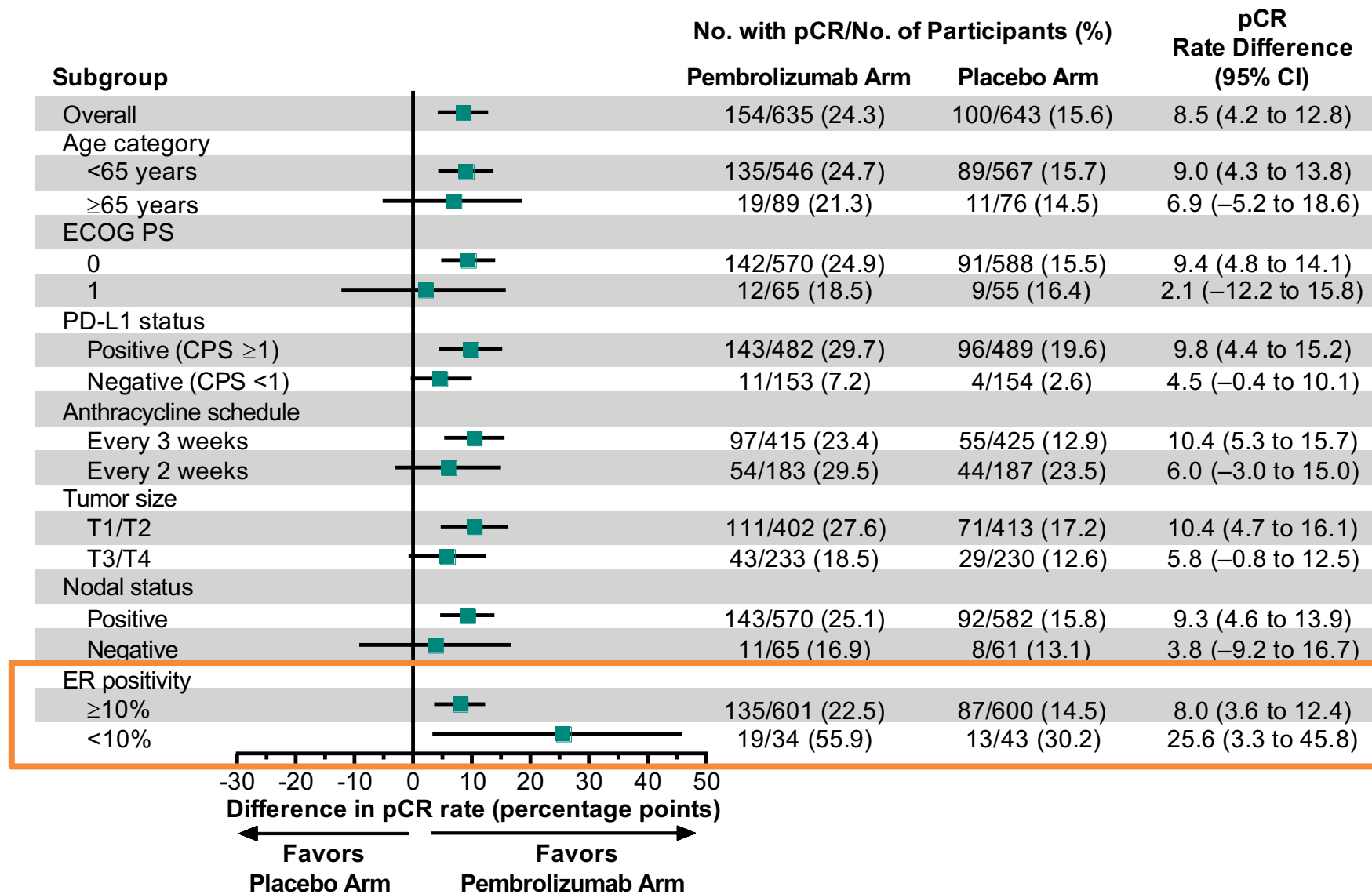
## Primary Endpoint



## Secondary Endpoints: Other pCR Definitions

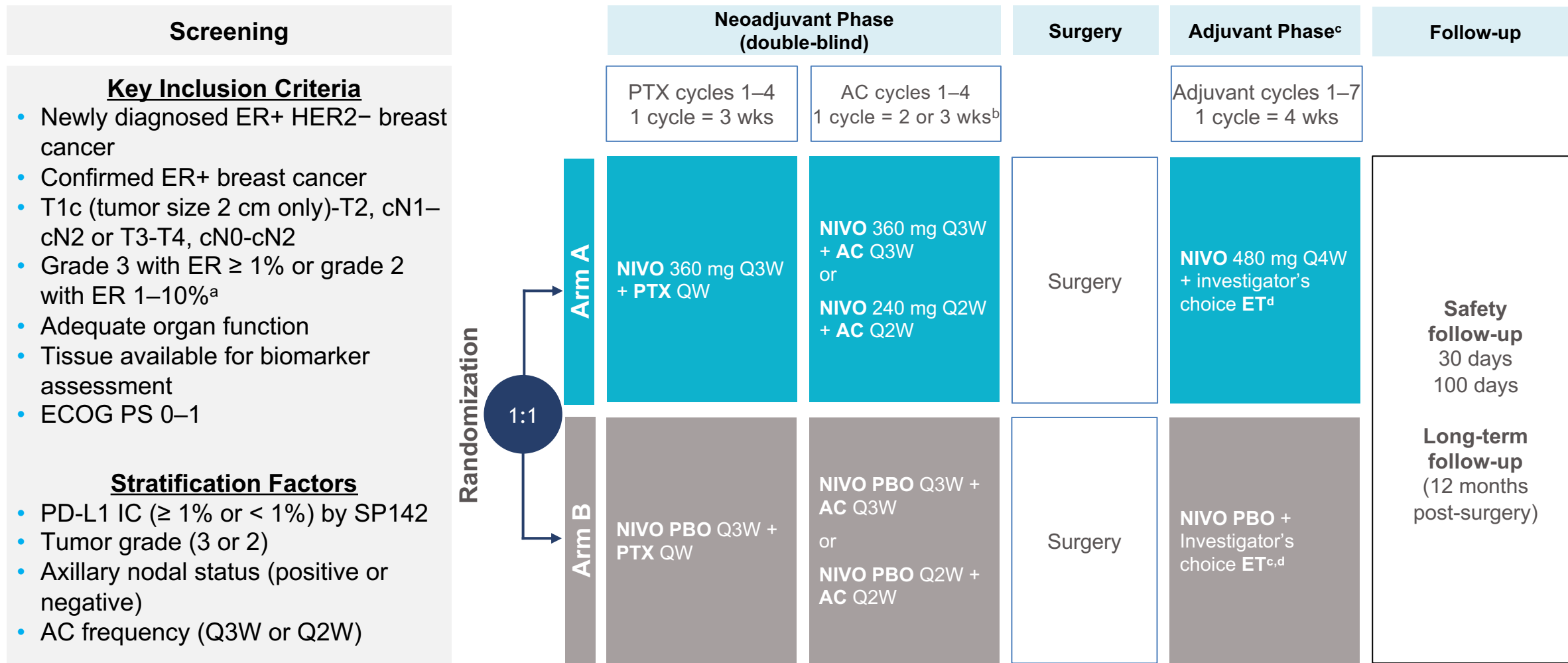


# Pathological Complete Response (ypT0/Tis ypN0) in Subgroups



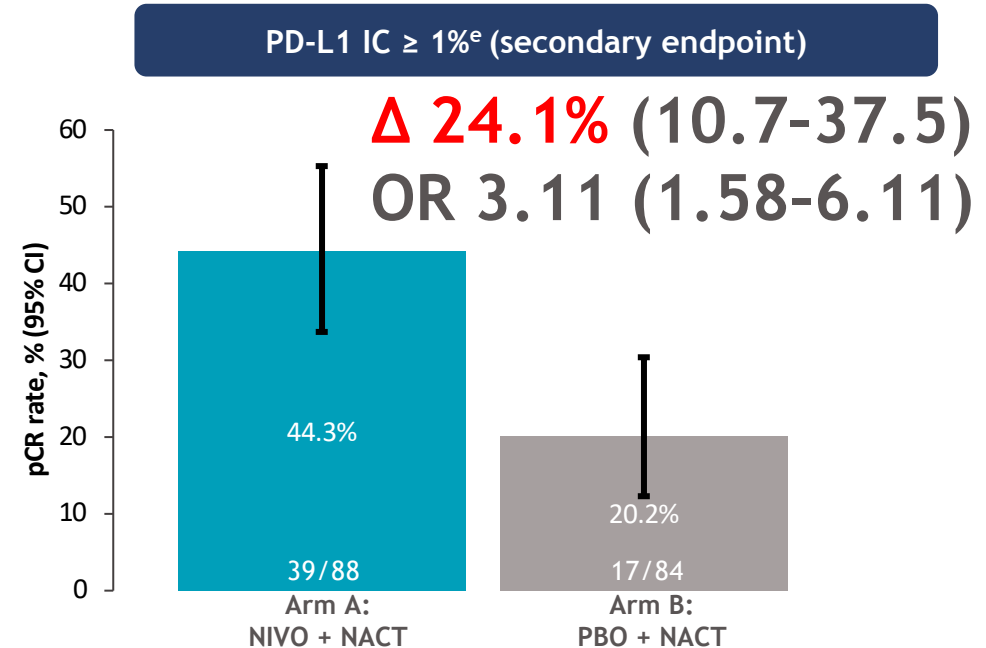
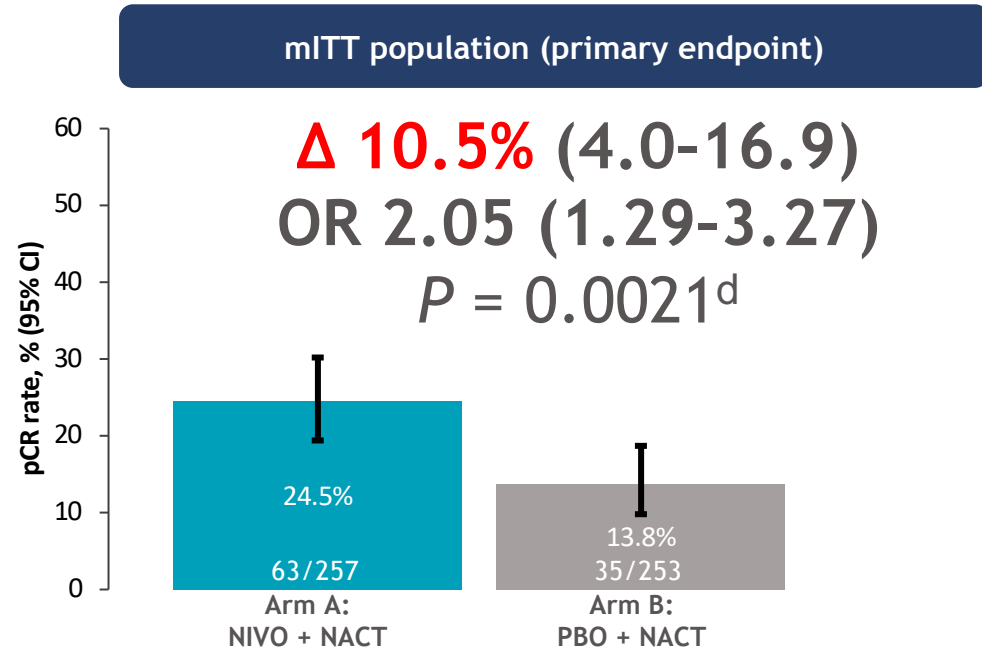


# CA209-7FL Study Design



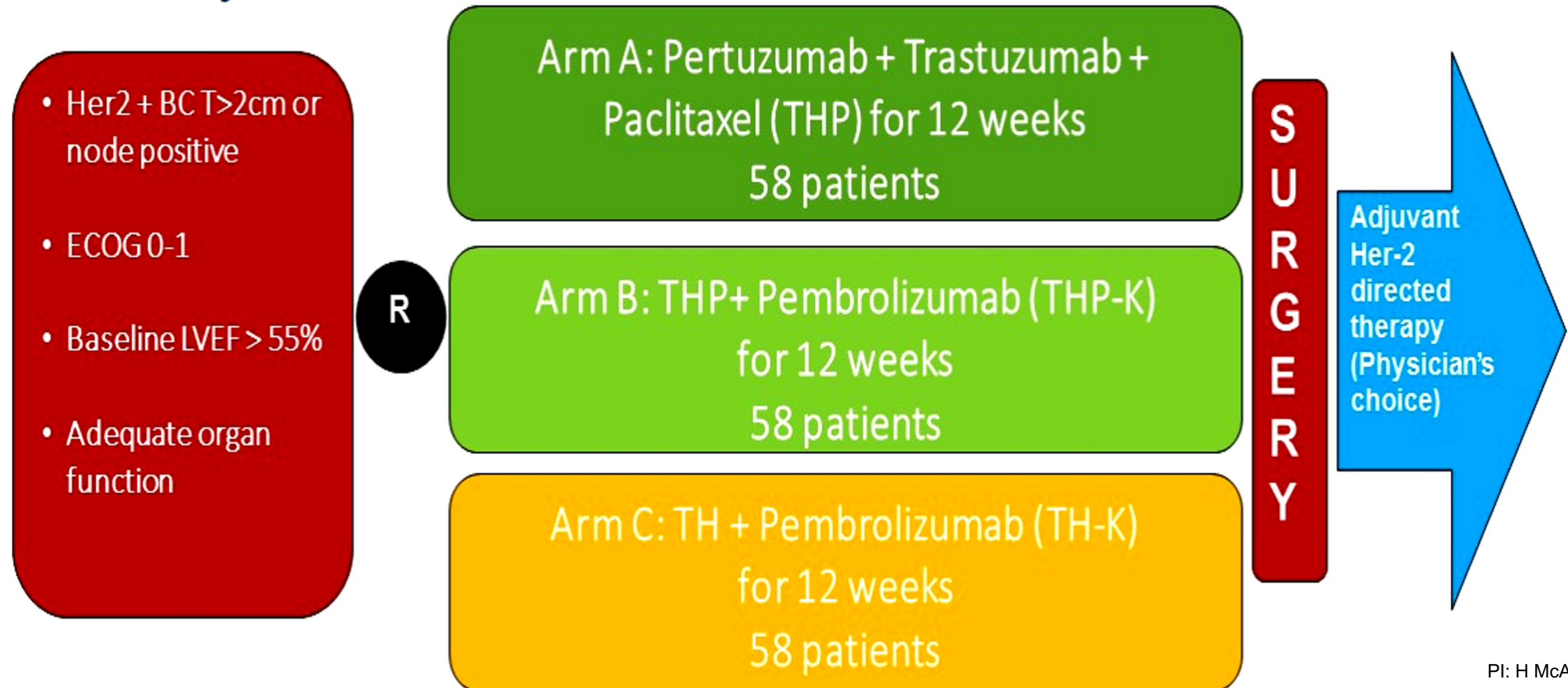
# CM-7FL: Efficacy

- CheckMate 7FL (NCT04109066) is a prospective, randomized, multicenter, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial investigating NIVO in combination with NACT and adjuvant ET in patients with high-risk, ER+ HER2- primary BC
- The primary endpoint (pCR) was met, resulting in a statistically significant improvement with added NIVO to NACT; RCB 0-1 rate was also meaningfully improved<sup>1</sup>
- Benefit of NIVO was enriched in the PD-L1+ population (SP142 >1%)

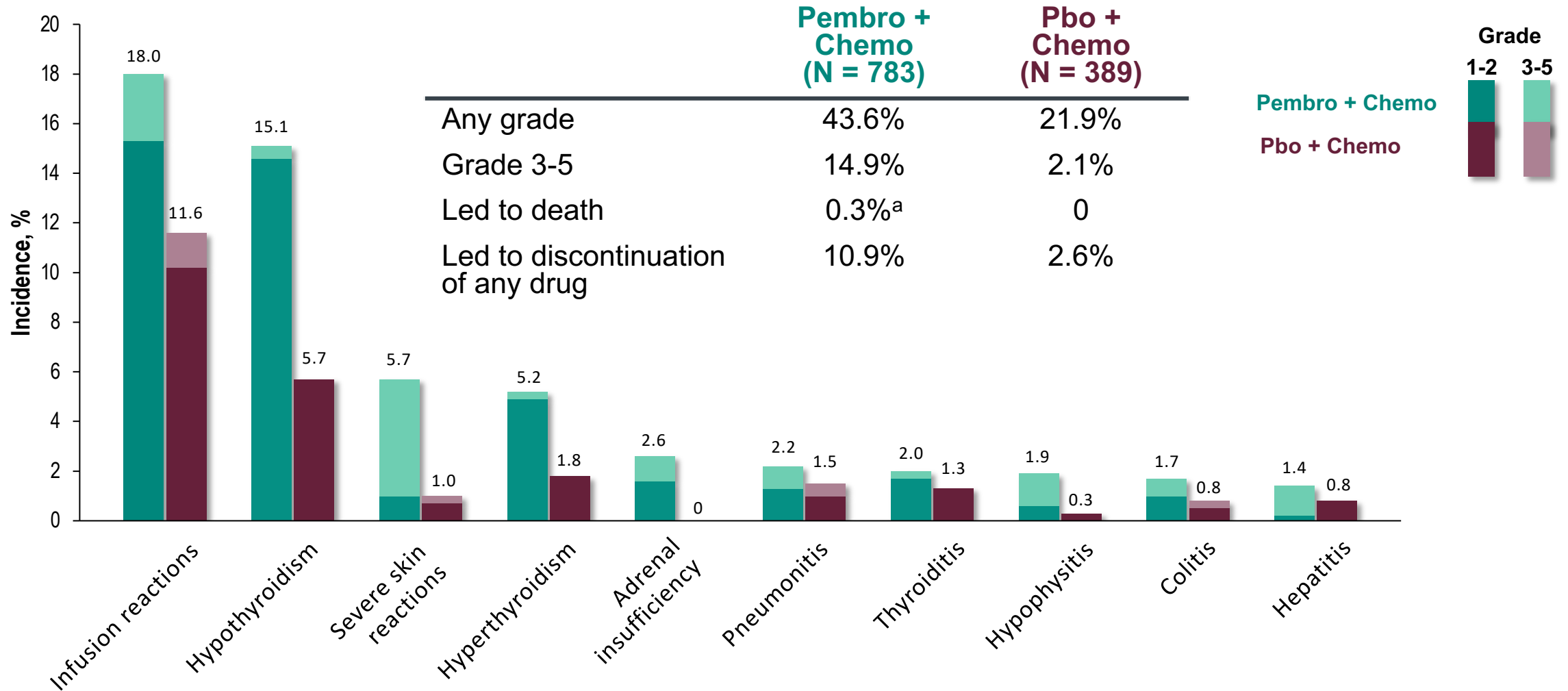


**Is there a Role for Immune  
Therapy in EARLY STAGE  
HER2+ Breast Cancer?**

# Can We Enhance Response to Checkpoint Blockade in HER2+ Breast Cancer?



# Keynote522: irAEs and Infusion Reactions in Combined Phases

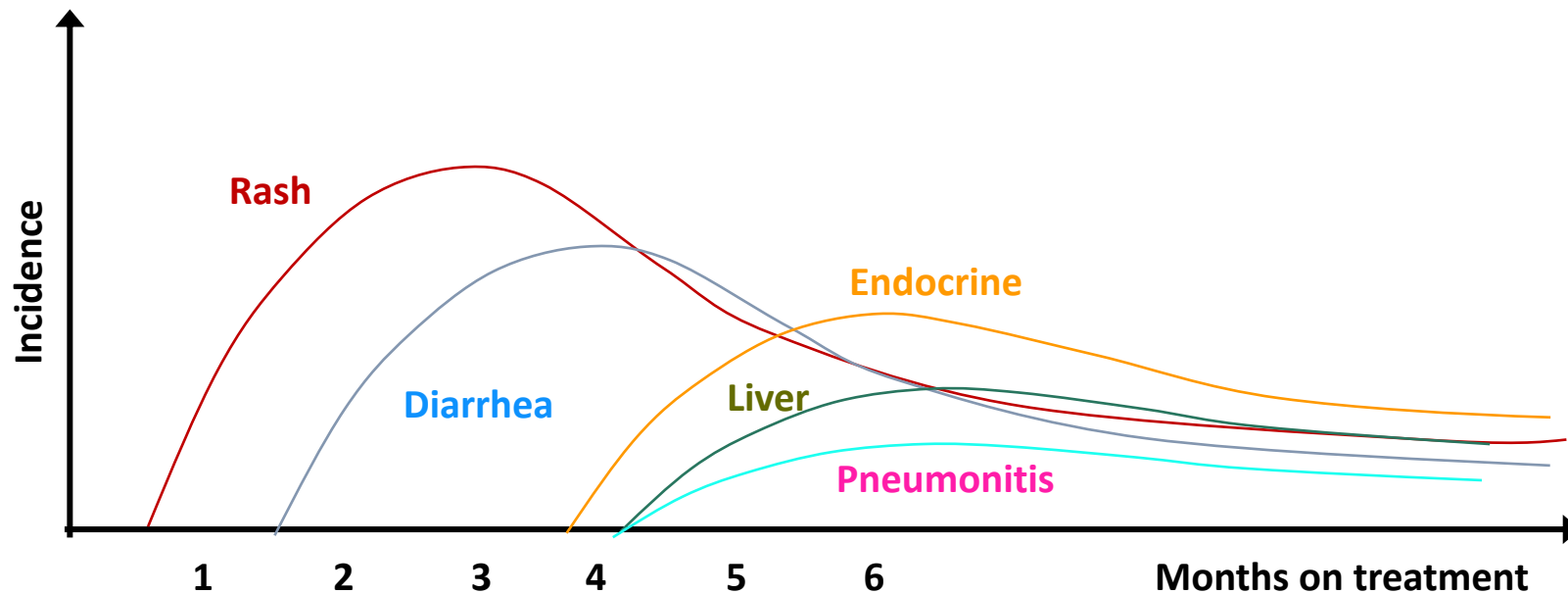


## Immune-Mediated AEs and Infusion Reactions with Incidence ≥10 Patients

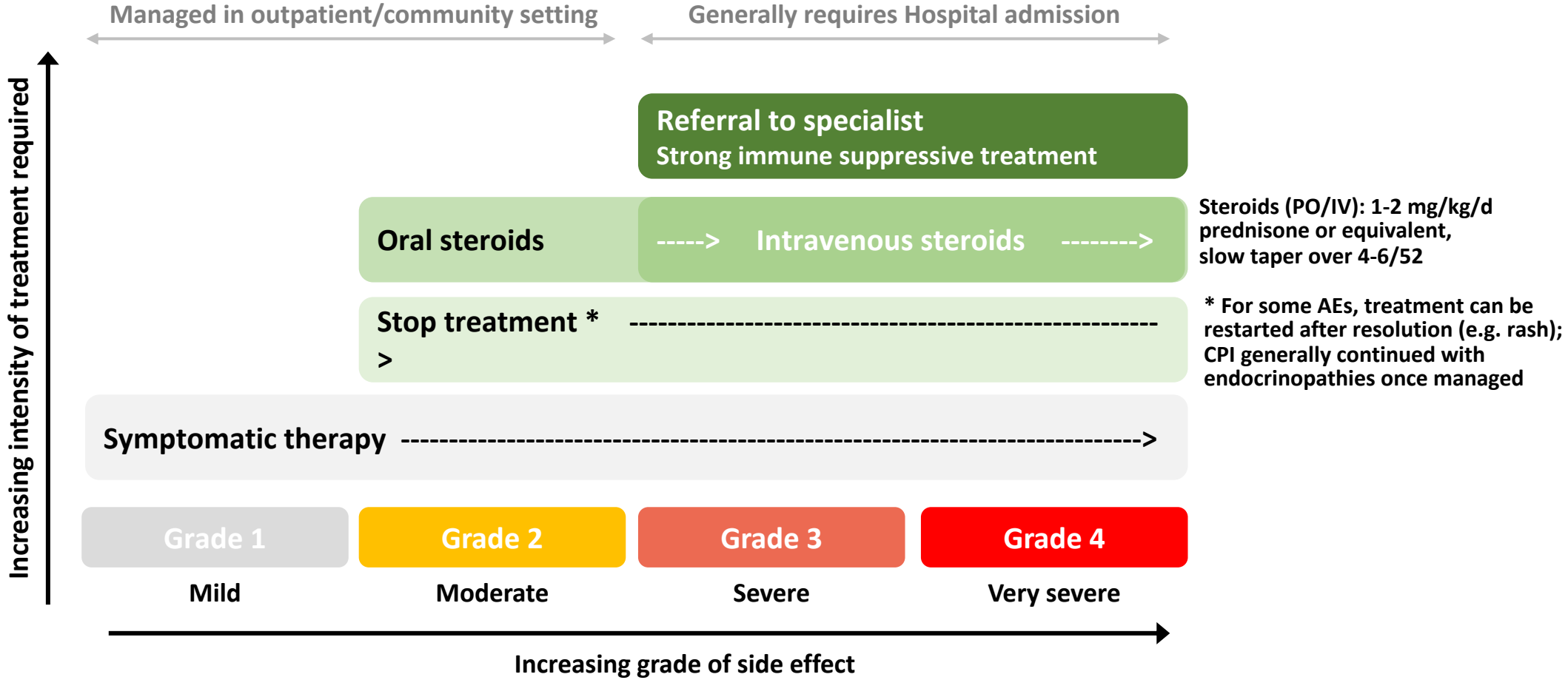
<sup>a</sup>1 patient from pneumonitis and 1 patient from encephalitis. Considered regardless of attribution to treatment or immune relatedness by the investigator. Related terms included in addition to preferred terms listed.

# Toxicities With Immune Checkpoint Inhibitors

- Timing can be highly variable
- irAE can occur months or **even a year** after the end of treatment
- Time course might be even more variable with novel combinations



# Managing AEs From Immune Checkpoint Inhibitors



Adapted from Champiat. ESMO Patient Guide Series.



# Resources for irAE Management


NCCN Clinical Practice Guidelines in Oncology (NCCN Guidelines®)

## Management of Immunotherapy-Related Toxicities

Management of Immune-Related Adverse Events in Patients Treated With Immune Checkpoint Inhibitor Therapy: American Society of Clinical Oncology Clinical Practice Guideline

*Julie R. Brahmer, Christina Lacchetti, Bryan J. Schneider, Michael B. Atkins, Kelly J. Brassil, Jeffrey M. Caterino, Ian Chau, Marc S. Ernstoff, Jennifer M. Gardner, Pamela Ginex, Sigrun Hallmeyer, Jennifer Holter Chakrabarty, Natasha B. Leighl, Jennifer S. Mammen, David F. McDermott, Aung Naing, Loretta J. Nastoupil, Tanyanika Phillips, Laura D. Porter, Igor Puzanov, Cristina A. Reichner, Bianca D. Santomasso, Carole Seigel, Alexander Spira, Maria E. Suarez-Almazor, Yinghong Wang, Jeffrey S. Weber, Jedd D. Wolchok, and John A. Thompson in collaboration with the National Comprehensive Cancer Network*

## Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer (SITC) clinical practice guideline on immune checkpoint inhibitor-related adverse events

Julie R Brahmer,<sup>1</sup> Hamzah Abu-Sbeih,<sup>2</sup> Paolo Antonio Ascierto ,<sup>3</sup> Jill Brufsky,<sup>4</sup> Laura C Cappelli,<sup>5</sup> Frank B Cortazar,<sup>6,7</sup> David E Gerber,<sup>8</sup> Lamy Hamad,<sup>9</sup> Eric Hansen,<sup>10</sup> Douglas B Johnson,<sup>11</sup> Mario E Lacouture,<sup>12</sup> Gregory A Masters,<sup>13</sup> Jarushka Naidoo,<sup>1,14</sup> Michele Nanni,<sup>10</sup> Miguel-Angel Perales,<sup>12</sup> Igor Puzanov,<sup>10</sup> Bianca D Santomasso,<sup>15</sup> Satish P Shanbhag,<sup>5,16</sup> Rajeev Sharma,<sup>10</sup> Dimitra Skondra,<sup>17</sup> Jeffrey A Sosman,<sup>18</sup> Michelle Turner,<sup>1</sup> Marc S Ernstoff  <sup>19</sup>



# IO Toxicity Considerations

- Consistency across curative intent IO trials
- Toxicity can occur on treatment and up to 1y later
- Cannot co-administer with CDK4/6 inhibitors
- Novel considerations with ADC coadministration
  - ILD/pneumonitis, neutropenia, stomatitis, ocular surface toxicity

**An Exciting Era!**



# Science

20 December 2013 | \$19

Breakthrough of the Year

**Cancer Cured with  
Immunotherapy  
Combinations**