





# How to manage infectious complications with bispecific and CAR T therapy

Noopur Raje, MD Massachusetts General Hospital, Harvard Medical School





### **Disclosures**

Consultancy: Amgen, Janssen, GSK, BMS, Abbvie, Astrazeneca, Pfizer, K-36 Therapeutics, Genentech

Research Funding: 2Seventy bio, Pfizer

Membership on an entity's Board of Directors or advisory committees: Immuneel, Caribou biosciences

### **Toxicities of Interest of TCRs**

- Cytopenias
- Infections
- Hypogammaglobulinemia with BCMA target

# **CARs versus Bispecifics**

- Predictable
- Short term

# **Infection Prophylaxis**



#### PATIENT-RELATED FACTORS



- Age
- · PS
- Comorbidities (e.g., renal failure and chronic heart failure)
- Immunoparesis
- Cytopenia (neutropenia and lymphopenia)
- Glucocorticoid cumulative dose / prior glucocorticoid use and duration
- Previous intensive treatment such as autologous transplant, allogenic transplant, or transplant
   year ahead of starting BsAb
- Previous treatment with: chemotherapy, Pls, IMiDs, anti-CD38 monoclonal antibodies, or BsAb
- Recent CAR T-cell therapy
- · Most recent line of MM treatment

TREATMENT-RELATED FACTORS

### DISEASE-RELATED FACTORS

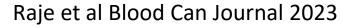
- Tumor burden
- Refractory to ≥3 lines of treatment
- Disease type (e.g., antibody type [full antibody or light-chain only, IgD, IgE], secretory status [yes vs. no], genetic status [hyperdiploid vs. hypodiploid])
- · Renal dysfunction
- RISK FACTORS FOR INFECTION

in patients with MM receiving BsAbs

- · Number of previous infections
- Type of previous infection
- History of hospitalization due to infection
- Severity of previous infections
- Baseline DNA-virus exposure, including VZV, CMV and HBV

INFECTIOUS HISTORY





# **Cytopenias with CAR T Cells**

- Lymphodepleting chemotherapy (Flu/Cy) +/- CAR T-cells often lead to prolonged neutropenia
- Thrombocytopenia (esp.) and anemia at baseline; made worse by CAR T and TCE

CAR T-cell Product	Time until blood count recovery
Idecabtagene vicleucel	Median 2 months (1-6 months)
Ciltacabtagene autoleucel	60-70% recovered by day 30

Cytopenia		Management
Neutropenia	-	Levofloxacin as ppx Fluconazole as ppx TMP-SMX as ppx G-CSF (ideally > 14 days out)
Anemia	-	Ensure iron, B12, folate stores replete pRBCs PRN
Thrombocytopenia	-	Platelet transfusions PRN TPO agonists if prolonged
Prolonged	-	Stem cell boost?

# KarMMa 3 Higher rates of cytopenias in the ide-cel arm

	ide-cel (N = 225)		Standard Regimens (N = 126)			
	Any Grade (%)	Grade 3/4 (%)	Grade 5 (%)	Any Grade (%)	Grade 3/4 (%)	Grade 5 (%)
Cytopenia	91.6	89.8	0	72.2	60.3	0
Neutropenia	85.8	84.0	0	45.2	40.5	0
Anemia	67.1	50.7	0	35.7	18.3	0
Thrombocytopenia	56.0	44.0	0	29.4	17.5	0
Lymphopenia	32.0	31.1	0	19.8	18.3	0
Febrile neutropenia	8.9	8.9	0	2.4	1.6	0
Infections	61.3	24.4	4.4	54.0	18.3	2.4
Pathogen unspecified	40.9	13.3	2.2	33.3	9.5	0
Viral	22.2	8.0	0.9	21.4	6.3	0.8
Bacterial	18.7	6.2	0.4	15.9	8.7	0.8
Fungal	6.7	2.2	0.9	5.6	0.8	0

# KarMMa 3: Overall safety profile of ide-cel remains consistent

Treated population, n (%)	ide-cel (N = 225)	Standard Regimens (N = 126)
Any-grade AE	225 (100)	124 (98)
Serious AE	105 (47)	52 (41)
ITT population, n (%)	ide-cel (N = 254)	Standard Regimens (N = 132)
Overall deaths	106 (42)	58 (44)
Cause of death		
Disease progression	64 (25)	37 (28)
AEs	17 (7)	8 (6)
Other causes	23 (9)	12 (9)
SPMs <sup>a</sup>	2 (1)	1 (1)

Similar rates of deaths due to AEs in the ide-cel and Standard Regimens arms

No new safety signals

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>a</sup> Deaths due to SPMs in the ide-cel arm were leukemia (n = 1) and pancreatic adenocarcinoma (n = 1); death due to SPMs in the Standard Regimens arm was malignant neoplasm of unknown primary site (n = 1).

### **CARTITUDE-4: TEAEs**

	Safety population					
Select TEAE ≥15%, n (%)	Cilta-cel	(n=208)	SOC (n=208)			
	Any grade	Grade 3/4	Any grade	Grade 3/4		
Any AE	208 (100)	201 (96.6)	208 (100)	196 (94.2)		
Serious AE	92 (44.2)	67 (32.2)	81 (38.9)	70 (33.7)		
Hematologic	197 (94.7)	196 (94.2)	185 (88.9)	179 (86.1)		
Neutropenia	187 (89.9)	187 (89.9)	177 (85.1)	171 (82.2)		
Anemia	113 (54.3)	74 (35.6)	54 (26.0)	30 (14.4)		
Thrombocytopenia	113 (54.3)	86 (41.3)	65 (31.3)	39 (18.8)		
Lymphopenia	46 (22.1)	43 (20.7)	29 (13.9)	25 (12.0)		
Infections	129 (62.0)	56 (26.9)	148 (71.2)	51 (24.5)		
Upper respiratory tracta	39 (18.8)	4 (1.9)	54 (26.0)	4 (1.9)		
Lower respiratory tract <sup>b</sup>	19 (9.1)	9 (4.3)	36 (17.3)	8 (3.8)		
COVID-19 <sup>c</sup>	29 (13.9)	6 (2.9)	55 (26.4)	12 (5.8)		

#### Hematologic TEAEs most common

- 85-90% neutropenia, almost all grade 3/4
- Most high-grade cytopenias resolved to grade ≤2 by day 30
- Grade 3/4 infections similar between arms
- Second primary malignancies:
  - Cilta-cel, 4.3% (n=9); most commonly cutaneous/noninvasive and hematologic
  - SOC, 6.7% (n=14); most commonly cutaneous/noninvasive<sup>d</sup>
- Deaths due to TEAEs
  - Cilta-cel, n=10<sup>e</sup> (7 due to COVID-19<sup>f</sup>)
  - SOC, n=5g (1 due to COVID-19)

\*Includes preferred terms upper respiratory tract infection, nasopharyngitis, sinusitis, rhinitis, tonsillitis, pharyngitis, laryngitis, and pharyngotonsillitis. Includes preferred terms lower respiratory tract infection, pneumonia, and bronchitis. Treatment-emergent COVID-19 only; includes preferred terms COVID-19, COVID-19 pneumonia, and asymptomatic COVID-19. With 1 case of peripheral T-cell lymphoma in the cilta-cel arm. due to COVID-19, and 1 each due to neutropenic sepsis, pneumonia, and respiratory failure. 3 of 7 who died from COVID-19 were unvaccinated prior to cilta-cel. These COVID-19-related deaths contributed to the higher number of fatal events in the first year. 1 each due to COVID-19, progressive multifocal leukoencephalopathy, respiratory tract infection, septic shock, and pulmonary embolism.

AE, adverse event; cilta-cel, ciltacabtagene autoleucel; TEAE, treatment-emergent adverse event; SOC, standard of care.



### **CARTITUDE-4: Causes of Death (Safety Population)**

	Safety population			
TEAE ≥15%, n (%)	Cilta-cel (n=208)	SOC (n=208)		
	Any grade	Any grade		
Deaths, n (%)	39 (18.8)	46 (22.1)		
Progressive disease	14 (6.7)	30 (14.4)		
Non-treatment-emergent adverse event <sup>a</sup>	15 (7.2)	11 (5.3)		
Treatment-emergent adverse event	10 (4.8) <sup>b</sup>	5 (2.4)		
COVID-19 pneumonia <sup>b</sup>	7 (3.4)	1 (0.5)		
Neutropenic sepsis	1 (0.5)	0		
Pneumonia	1 (0.5)	0		
Progressive multifocal leukoencephalopathy	0	1 (0.5)		
Respiratory tract infection	0	1 (0.5)		
Septic shock	0	1 (0.5)		
Respiratory failure	1 (0.5) <sup>c</sup>	0		
Pulmonary embolism	0	1 (0.5)		

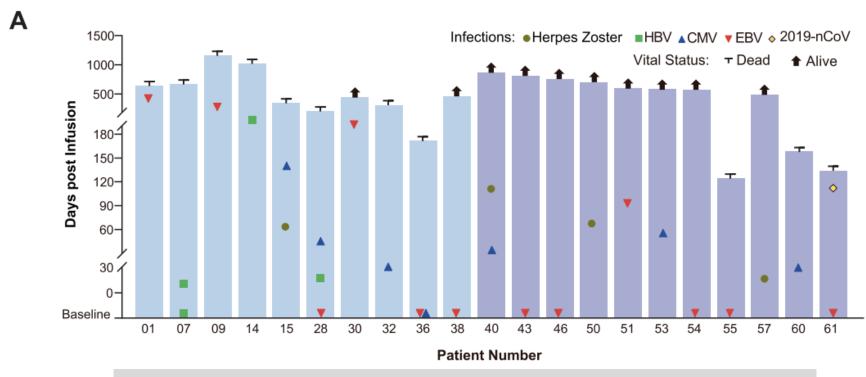
\*Adverse events in the cilta-cel arm were considered non-treatment emergent if they were not considered related to study treatment, and they occurred either >112 days after cilta-cel or after the start of subsequent therapy; for the standard care arm, adverse events were considered non-treatment emergent if they were not considered related to study treatment (DPd or PVd), and they occurred more than 30 days after the last dose of study treatment or after the start of subsequent therapy, whichever came first. <sup>b</sup>4 cilta-cel patients received 2 or 3 COVID-19 vaccinations prior to receiving cilta-cel, and 3 patients received no vaccines prior to cilta-cel. 2 of 7 patients received COVID-19 vaccination after cilta-cel, 1 dose each. All patients had a response of partial response or better to study treatment and did not progress prior to COVID-19 infection.

\*Occurred before infusion of cilta-cel.



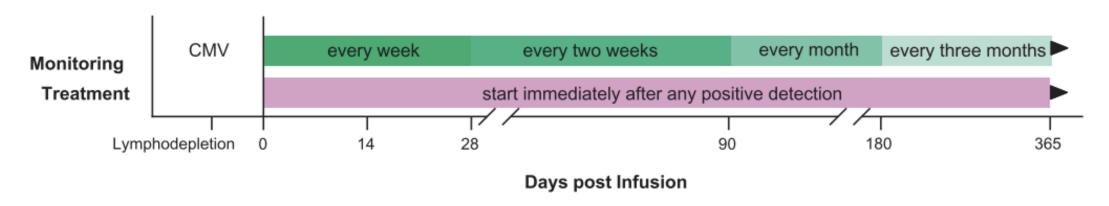
# Infectious Complications: CMV

### **CMV** Reactivation



\*6/61 (10%) had CMV reactivation post CAR T-therapy

# Infectious Complications: CMV (3)



Low level CMV by PCR: Valganciclovir ppx dose

High level/rapid rise in CMV: Valganciclovir treatment dose

\*\*WATCH FOR MYELSUPPRESSION: Maribavir or letermovir may work in select situations without cytopenias

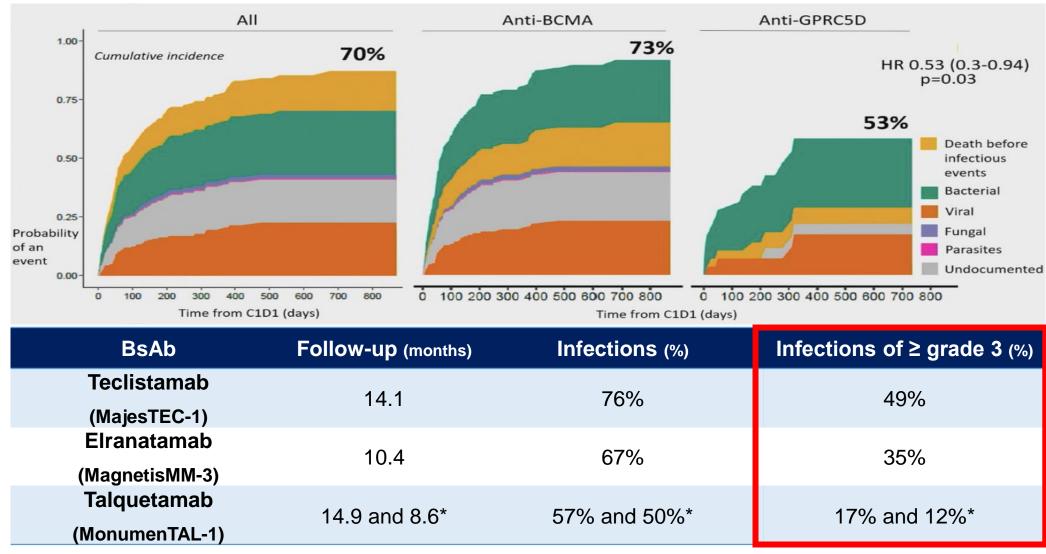
### **Bispecific Antibodies for MM: Infections**

- Increased risk of bacterial infections, viral infections, and opportunistic infections
- Infections occur due to combined effects of:
  - Neutropenia
  - Hypogammaglobulinemia
  - T-cell exhaustion
  - Other factors:
    - Myeloma-related immunodeficiency (deficits in humoral and cellular immunity)
    - Extent of prior immunosuppressive treatment

# Phase I/II trials of BCMA-targeting BsAbs as monotherapy in heavily pretreated multiple myeloma patients

BsAb	Patients (n)	BsAb structure	Design	ORR/ CR (%)	PFS (months)	CRS (all grades, ≥grade 3; %)	NTX (all grade; %)	Approved dosing schedule
Teclistamab (TECVAYLI™)	<b>165</b> treated at RP2D	Fully human, IgG4-based	SQ, two step-up doses, then once per week; option for doses q2weeks if ≥CR for ≥6 months	63%, 39%	11 months	72%, 1%	14% (ICANS 3%)	1.5 mg/kg SQ, weekly after step-up doses (0.06 and 0.3 mg/kg). Biweekly dosing approved.
Elranatmab (ELREXFIO™)	<b>123</b> treated at RP2D	Humanized, IgG2a backbone	<b>SQ</b> , two step-up doses, then weekly (q2 weeks if patient received ≥6 cycles and had ≥PR)	61%, 28%	17.2 months	58%, 0%	ICANS 3%	76 mg fixed dose, SQ weekly after two step- up doses (12 and 32 mg). Biweekly after 6 cycles.
Talquetamab (TALVEY™)	<b>232</b> (102 IV, 130 SQ)	GPRC5D (IgG4 with proline, alanine, alanine scaffold designed to minimize Fc- receptor binding)	SQ, two step-up doses, then weekly; OR 3 step-up doses and then q2 weeks	64-70%, 22- 23%	7.8-10.2 months	77-80%, 0-3%	5-10% (all grade 1-2)	0.8 mg/kg SQ, biweekly after 3 step-up doses (0.01, 0.06 and 0.4 mg/kg) 0.4 mg/kg SQ, weekly after 2 step-up doses (0.01 and 0.06 mg/kg)

### **Bispecific Antibodies for MM and Infections**



<sup>\*</sup>Frequency of infections for both RP2Ds is reported (400 µg/kg SQ weekly and 800 µg/kg SQ q2weeks).

# Infections in MajesTEC-1

- Majority of grade ≥3 infections were COVID-19 and respiratory infections
  - Study enrollment overlapped with peak of the COVID-19 pandemic\*
  - 13/165 (7.9%) patients received a COVID-19 vaccine prior to the first teclistamab dose
  - 18/165 (10.9%) patients died due to COVID-19

	N=165				
Patients, n (%)	Any Grade	Grade 3/4	Grade 5		
Any infection	132 (80.0)	91 (55.2)	21 (12.7)		
Respiratory infections	95 (57.6)	32 (19.4)	2 (1.2)		
COVID-19 infection	48 (29.1)	35 (21.2)	18 (10.9)		
Key viral infections <sup>a</sup>	20 (12.1)	7 (4.2)	1 (0.6)		
GI infections	15 (9.1)	2 (1.2)	0		
Fungal infections <sup>b</sup>	9 (5.5)	0	0		
PJP	7 (4.2)	7 (4.2)	0		
HBV reactivation	1 (0.6)	1 (0.6)	0		

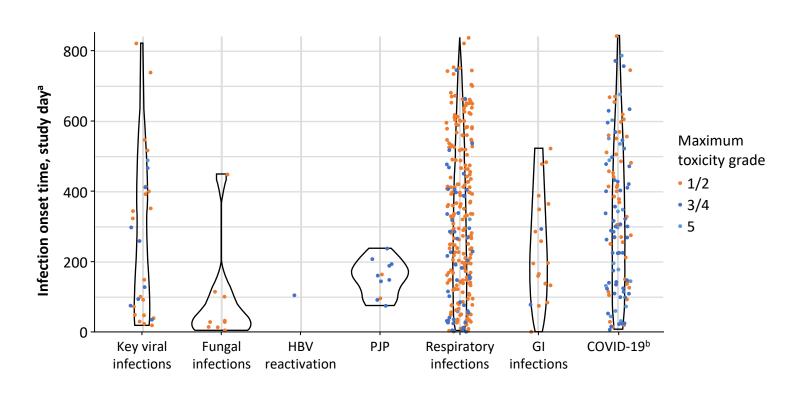
<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>a</sup> Excluding COVID19 <sup>b</sup> Excluding PJP

Significant proportion of infections on trial were COVID19; likely less of an issue currently with majority of population vaccinated and/or have had prior COVID19 infections

<sup>\*</sup>Trial enrolled between March 2020 and August 2021

# Timing and Maximum Toxicity Grade of Clinically Relevant Infections During Teclistamab Treatment Was Variable

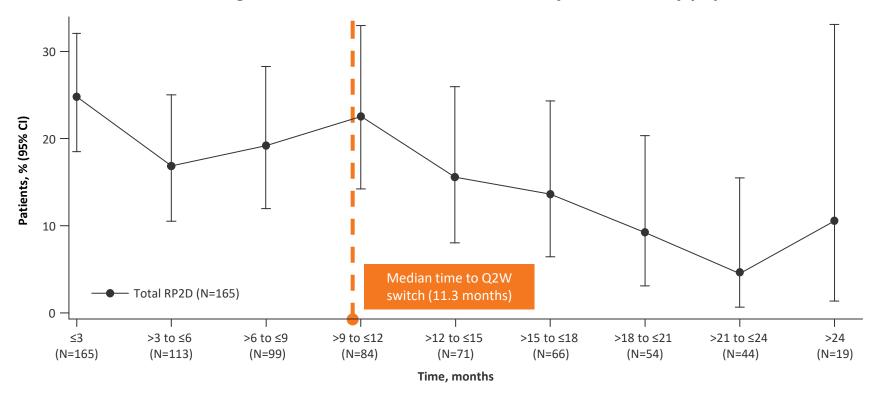
- Respiratory infections occurred throughout the study (mostly grade 1/2)
- COVID-19 infections of all grades were observed throughout the study
- Most viral infections occurred during the first 12 months
- GI infections were seen throughout the study
- Most fungal and PJP infections were observed early



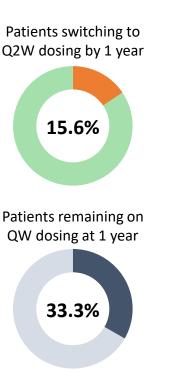
Continued monitoring throughout treatment is recommended, although improvements are expected with increased awareness and vigilance, new expert management guidelines, and additional strategies

# New-Onset Grade ≥3 Infections Decreased Over Time in MajesTEC-1, With Fewer Infections in Patients Switching to Q2W





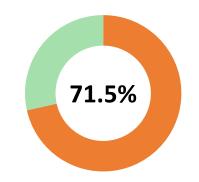
# New-onset grade ≥3 infections at 1–1.5 years<sup>1</sup>



# Hypogammaglobulinemia Was Managed With IgG Replacement Although Institutional Protocols and Access Varied

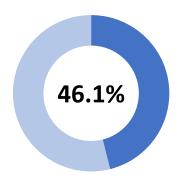
#### **Overall incidence**

≥1 hypogammaglobulinemia AE or post-baseline IgG value <400 mg/dL

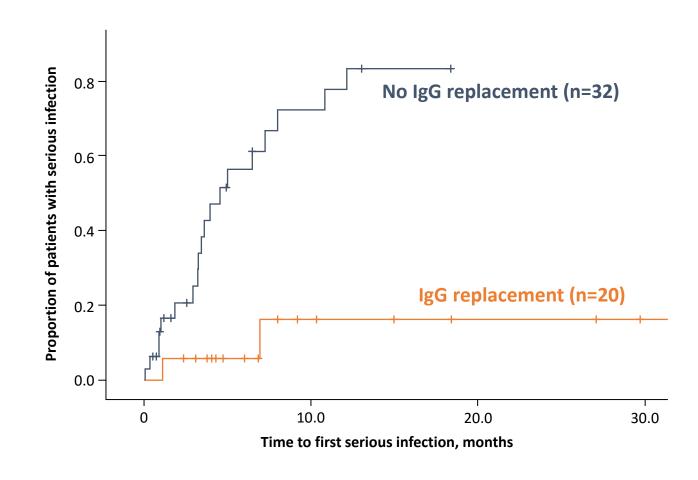


#### **IgG** replacement

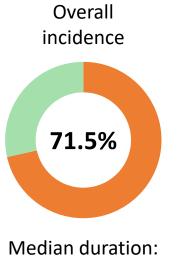
≥1 dose of IgG replacement



- In a retrospective analysis of 52 patients at Amsterdam UMC:
  - Low baseline polyclonal IgG levels further decreased after starting teclistamab<sup>1</sup>
  - Monthly IgG replacement significantly reduced the risk of grade ≥3 infections
    - Mostly lower respiratory tract infections caused by gram-negative bacteria
- Consistent with another study of BCMA-targeted bispecific antibodies, showing 80% reduction in grade ≥3 infections with IgG replacement<sup>2</sup>

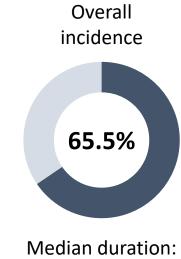


#### Any grade neutropenia

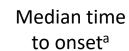


Median duration
1.2 months

#### **Grade 3/4 neutropenia**



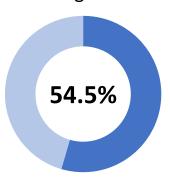
Median duration: 0.8 months<sup>a</sup>





#### **G-CSF** use

Prophylaxis and management



## MagnetisMM-3 Study: AEs of special interest: Infections

- Infections were reported in 69.9% (grade 3/4, 39.8%; grade 5, 6.5%) of patients
- Among patients with quantitative Ig data (n=72), 98.6% had immune paresis at baseline
- Overall, 43.1% of patients received IgG replacement during the study

Patients, n (%)	Any grade	Cohort A (N=123 Grade 3/4	Grade 5
Infection TEAEs in ≥5% of patients	7 my grade		
COVID-19–related <sup>a</sup>	36 (29.3)	19 (15.4)	2 (1.6)
Upper respiratory tract infection	20 (16.3)	0	0
Pneumonia	20 (16.3)	10 (8.1)	0
Sinusitis	13 (10.6)	2 (1.6)	0
Urinary tract infection	12 (9.8)	4 (3.3)	0
Sepsis	8 (6.5)	8 (6.5)	0
Bacteremia	7 (5.7)	2 (1.6)	0
CMV reactivation	7 (5.7)	2 (1.6)	0
Key infections occurring in <5% of patients <sup>b</sup>			
Pneumocystis jirovecii pneumonia	6 (4.9)	5 (4.1)	0
CMV infection	4 (3.3)	0	0
Adenoviral hepatitis	1 (0.8)	0	1 (0.8)
Adenovirus infection	1 (0.8) <sup>c</sup>	0	1 (0.8) <sup>c</sup>
Hepatitis B reactivation	1 (0.8)	0	0
Pneumonia adenoviral	1 (0.8) <sup>c</sup>	0	1 (0.8) <sup>c</sup>
Pneumonia cytomegaloviral	1 (0.8)	1 (0.8)	0
Pneumonia pseudomonal EAEs includes preferred terms: CMV infection reactivation, <i>Pneum</i>	1 (0.8)	0 AV infection. Adenoviral he	1 (0.8)

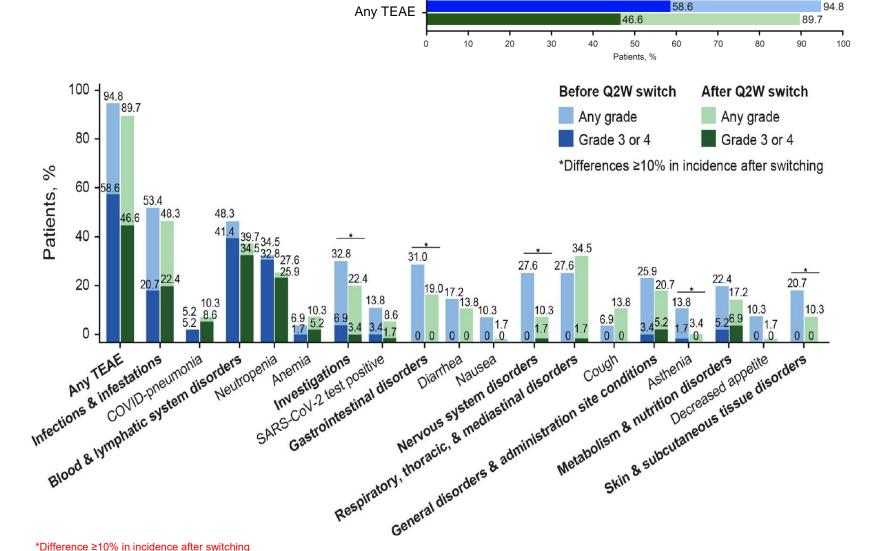
<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>a</sup> Includes preferred terms in COVID-19 (narrow) standardized MedDRA queries; <sup>b</sup> Key infection TEAEs includes preferred terms: CMV infection reactivation, *Pneumocystis jirovecii* pneumonia, CMV infection, Adenoviral hepatitis, Adenovirus infection, Hepatitis B reactivation, Pneumonia adenoviral, Pneumonia CMV, Pneumonia pseudomonal; <sup>c</sup> Preferred Terms both reported in the same patient.

Immune paresis was defined as ≥2 uninvolved Ig <lower limit of normal.

Administration of antibacterial and/or antiviral agents for infection prophylaxis was permitted for patients at increased risk of infection in accordance with local standard of care practice and/or institutional guidelines.

AE=adverse event: CMV=cytomegalovirus: Ig=immunoglobin: MedDRA=Medical Dictionary for Regulatory Activities: TEAE=treatment-emergent adverse event

# **Elranatamab - Safety with Q2W dosing**

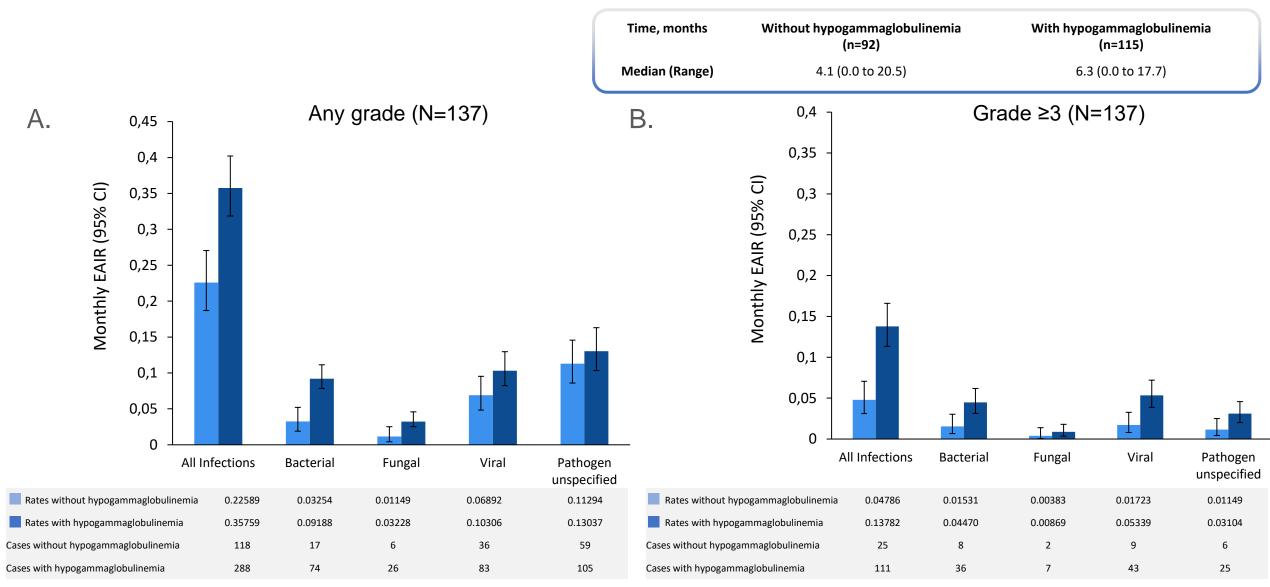




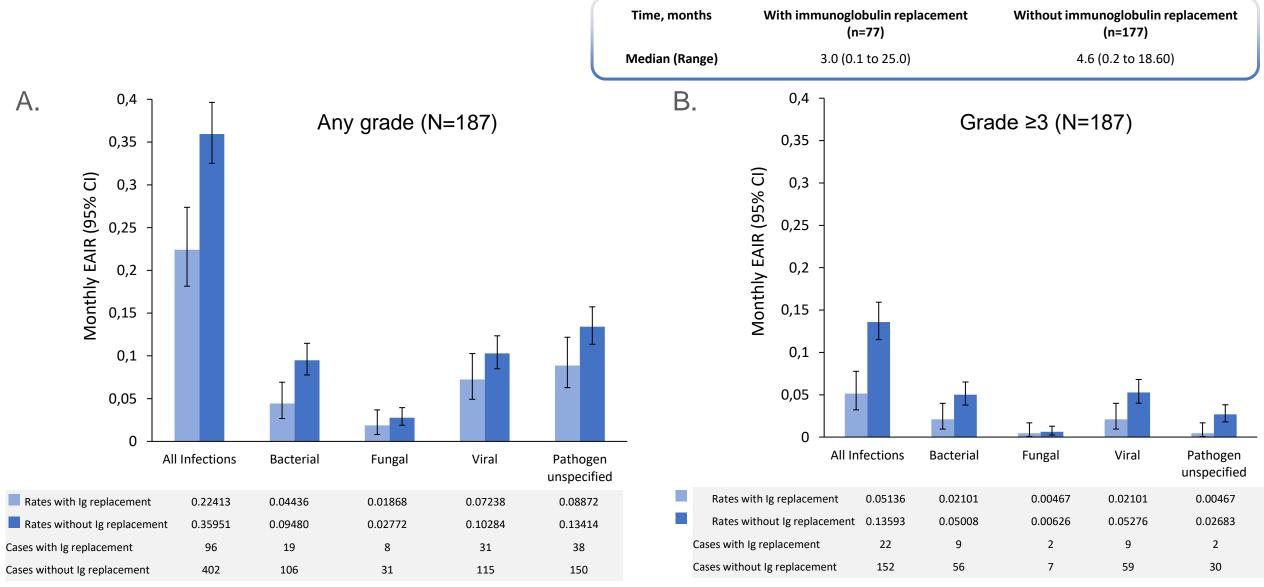
- A total of 50 patients had a response per BICR and switched to Q2W dosing; 40 (80%) of these patients maintained or improved their response ≥6 mo after the switch
- 66.7% (n=50/75) objective responses were ongoing
- Incidence of grade 3/4 TEAEs decreased by >10% after switching to Q2W dosing; 58.6% within 3 mo before switching and 46.6% in the 3 mo after switching

\*Difference ≥10% in incidence after switching

# Infections of any grade (A) and grade ≥3 (B) in patients with or without hypogammaglobulinemia in MagnetisMM-3



# Infections of any grade (A) and grade ≥3 (B) in patients with or without Ig replacement therapy in MagnetisMM-3



### **Overview of Consensus Recommendations from Expert Meeting**



Administer monthly IVIG for the duration of hypogammaglobulinemia and in the absence of life-threatening infectious manifestations (level IIC)



Use colony-stimulating factors in patients with Grade ≥3 neutropenia\* (level III)



Screen for HBV reactivation risk in all patients (level III)



Use anti-viral prophylaxis against HSV and VZV in all patients (level III)



Use PJP prophylaxis for all patients (level IIC)



Except for PJP, do not use general anti-fungal prophylaxis unless a patient has a previous history of fungal infections, prolonged neutropenia, or has recently received prolonged treatment with high dose corticosteroids (>2 weeks) (level IIC)

<sup>\*</sup>Grade 3 neutropenia: ANC 500 to 1000/mm<sup>3</sup>; Grade 4 neutropenia: ANC <500/mm<sup>3</sup>.

# **Infectious Complications: COVID**

Situation	Management Advice
Before CAR T-cell / TCE therapy	- Ensure adequate COVID vaccination
Post CAR T-cell / During TCE therapy	<ul> <li>Revaccinate +/- Evusheld</li> <li>If (+) test: Remdesivir (IV) vs         Paxlovid (PO)     </li> </ul>

<sup>\*</sup>Vaccination may lead to transient elevations in light chains

# Summary

- Cytopenias and infections are target and TCR specific
- Appropriate monitoring and prophylaxis is critical
- Case for fixed duration treatment with bispecifics to minimize infectious complications over time



### Acknowledgements

#### **Our Patients**

nraje@mgh.harvard.edu











# Thank you!

**Noopur Raje** 

nraje@mgh.harvard.edu