Guideline 7-22

A Quality Initiative of the Program in Evidence-Based Care (PEBC), Cancer Care Ontario (CCO)

The Use of Systemic Treatment in the Maintenance of Patients with Non-small Cell Lung Cancer

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An assessment conducted in December 2017 deferred the review Evidence-based Series (EBS) 7-22, which means that the document remains current until it is assessed again next year. The PEBC has a formal a standardized process to ensure the currency of each document. (PEBC Assessment & Review Protocol)

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**Guideline 7-22**

The Use of Systemic Treatment in the Maintenance of Patients with Non-small Cell Lung Cancer: Recommendations Summary

**GUIDELINE OBJECTIVES**
To make recommendations in the maintenance setting regarding the use of systemic treatment in the care of patients with non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC).

**TARGET POPULATION**
Advanced, stage IIIB/IV patients who have NSCLC who have not progressed (i.e., complete response, partial response or stable disease) following four to six cycles of platinum-based chemotherapy and maintained an Eastern Cooperative Oncology Group performance status of 0 to 2.

**INTENDED USERS**
Oncologists involved in the care of patients with NSCLC who require maintenance systemic treatment.

**RECOMMENDATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maintenance therapy is recommended as an option for therapy as described below:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Maintenance therapy with pemetrexed should be considered an option for patients with non-squamous NSCLC. Maintenance therapy with pemetrexed is not recommended for patients with squamous NSCLC.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Maintenance therapy with epidermal growth factor receptor (EGFR) tyrosine kinase inhibitors (TKIs) may be considered an option. No recommendation can be made with respect to the choice of gefitinib or erlotinib. Any decision should be made in conjunction with discussion with the patient.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• There is insufficient evidence to recommend docetaxel or gemcitabine as maintenance chemotherapies.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• In patients who elect to have a break following first-line therapy, second-line therapy should be considered at the time of progression. Please refer to the Program in Evidence-Based Care guidelines on the use of second-line therapies in NSCLC [1,2].</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Qualifying statements**
- These recommendations apply both to patients who previously received pemetrexed or non-pemetrexed-containing platinum-doublet chemotherapy.
- Trials have evaluated both erlotinib and gefitinib, but no trials directly compared these two agents as maintenance therapy. However, the strongest data would support the use of erlotinib in this setting, although the overall survival advantage was modest for both agents.
- The recommendation for EGFR TKIs applies to both EGFR mutation-positive and wild-type patients.
- In patients receiving maintenance bevacizumab, it is unclear whether the addition of maintenance pemetrexed improves overall survival.