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UNIVERSITÀ DI BOLOGNA  
DIPARTIMENTO DI  
SCIENZE MEDICHE E CHIRURGICHE

POLICLINICO DI  
**SANT'ORSOLA**

SERVIZIO SANITARIO REGIONALE  
EMILIA-ROMAGNA  
Azienda Ospedaliero - Universitaria di Bologna

# New Drugs in Hematology

## CAR T-cell Therapy: Novel CARS for RRMM

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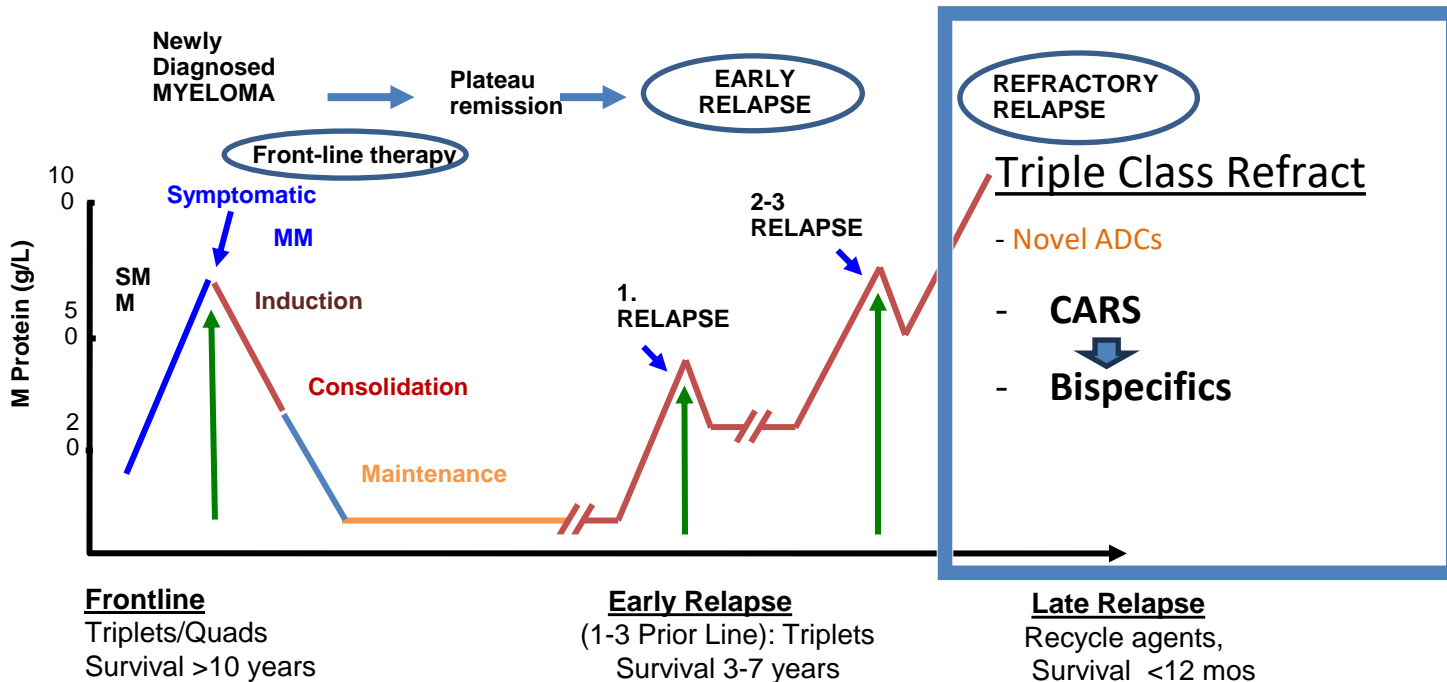
President: Pier Luigi Zinzani

**Bologna,**  
Royal Hotel Carlton  
**May 18-19-20, 2026**

**BOLOGNA** BOLOGNA, ROYAL HOTEL CARLTON



## Immunotherapy in MM



## CARTITUDE-1 Long-Term Remission: 5-year follow-up One-Third of Patients Were Progression-Free for $\geq 5$ Years

### From No Hope to a Potential Cure for a Deadly Blood Cancer

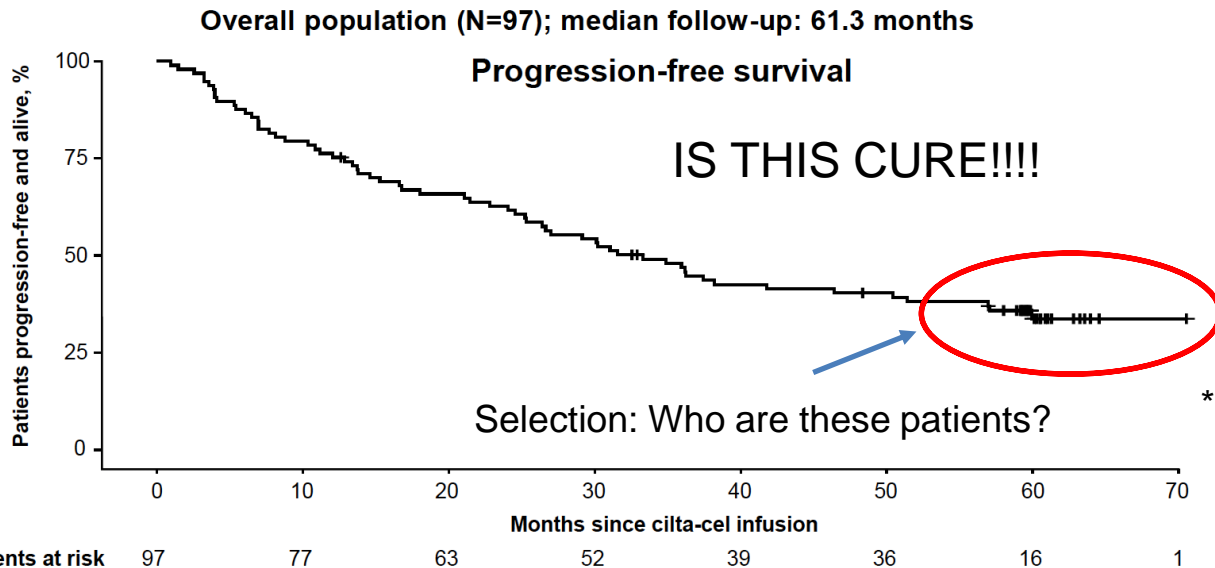
Multiple myeloma is considered incurable, but a third of patients in a Johnson & Johnson clinical trial have lived without detectable cancer for years after facing certain death.

▶ Listen to this article - 7:33 min [Learn more](#)



An X-ray of the skull of a patient with multiple myeloma, showing its telltale bone lesions, in dark patches. "This is the first time we are really talking actively about cure in one of the worst malignancies imaginable," said a doctor. Science Photo Library/Science Source

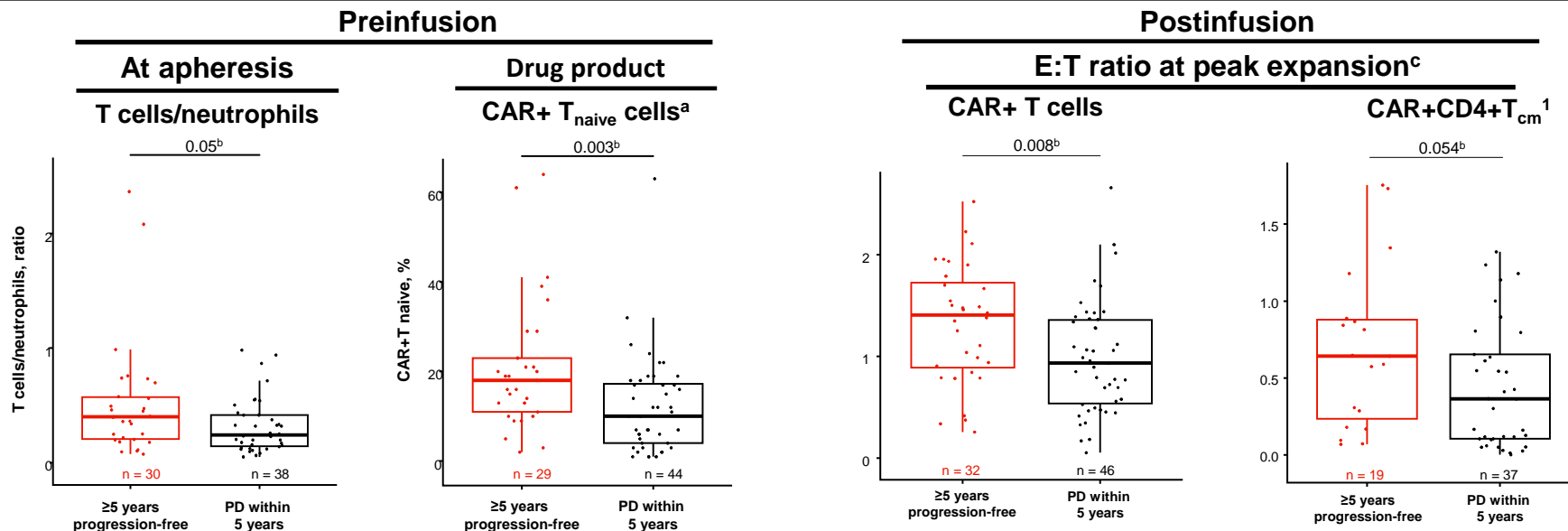
NYT  
2025



**32 of 97 (33%) patients were treatment- and progression-free at  $\geq 5$  years**



## CARTITUDE-1 Long-Term Remission: Long-Term Disease Control Was Associated With Fitter Immune T Cells Before Infusion and Higher E:T Ratio After Infusion

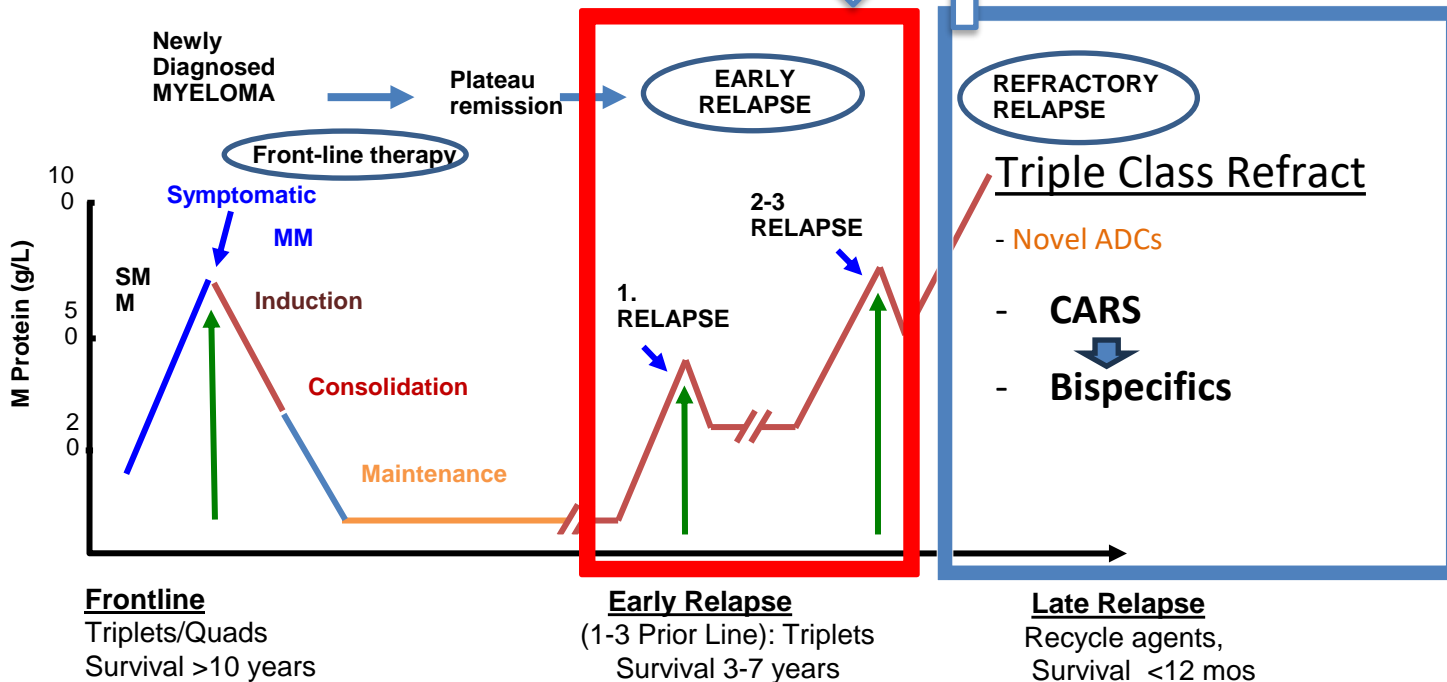


Long-term disease control was significantly associated with:

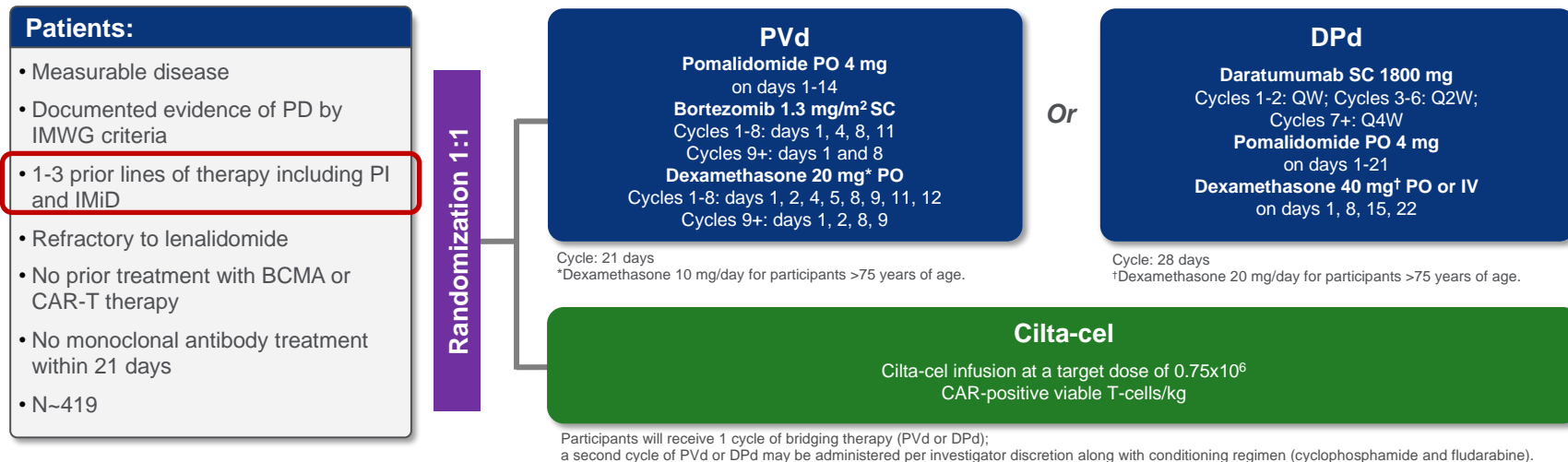
- Higher T cells over neutrophil ratio
- Fitter T<sub>naive</sub> cells in the drug product
- Higher overall E:T ratio with either total CAR+ T cells or CAR+ CD4+ T cells with central memory phenotype at peak expansion

<sup>a</sup>CAR+ T<sub>naive</sub> cells were defined as CD95-CD27+CD45RO-. <sup>b</sup>2-sided nominal *P* values unadjusted for multiplicity were provided for descriptive purposes. These analyses were exploratory in nature and utilized for hypothesis generation. <sup>c</sup>E:T ratio was defined as maximal CAR-positive T-cell levels normalized by preinfusion serum sBCMA levels. CAR, chimeric antigen receptor; E:T, effector to target; PD, progressive disease; sBCMA, soluble B-cell maturation antigen; T<sub>cm</sub>, central memory T cell; T<sub>naive</sub>, naive T cell. 1. Ledergor G, et al. *Blood Adv* 2024;8:3562-75.

## Immunotherapy in MM



# Cilta-cel: CARTITUDE-4 (MMY3002) Study Design



Primary Outcome:	Secondary Outcomes:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progression-free survival</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CR or sCR</li> <li>• MRD negativity status</li> <li>• Sustained MRD negative rate</li> <li>• HRQoL</li> <li>• OS, ORR, PFS2</li> <li>• Safety</li> </ul>

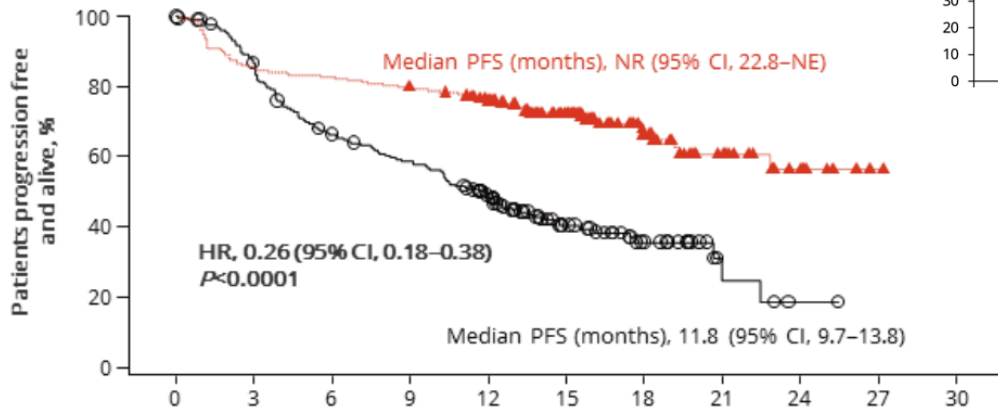
**Approval in Early RRMM in April, 2024**

# CARTITUDE 4: Population and Results

- Results

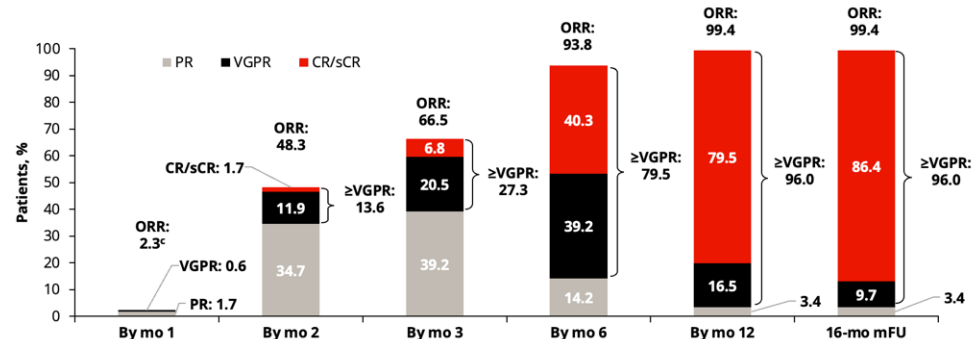
- FIGURE 1: Primary Endpoint PFS

PFS in CARTITUDE-4: Cilta-cel vs SOC<sup>6,a</sup>



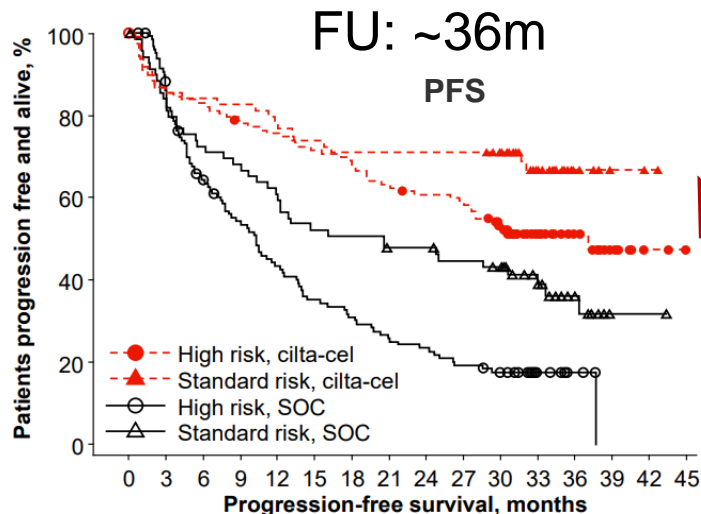
No. at risk	PFS, months										
	0	3	6	9	12	15	18	21	24	27	30
Cilta-cel	208	177	172	166	146	94	45	22	9	1	0
SOC	211	176	133	116	88	46	20	4	1	0	0

FIGURE 2: Responses deepened over time<sup>a,b</sup>



HR population: ~60% HR-fish

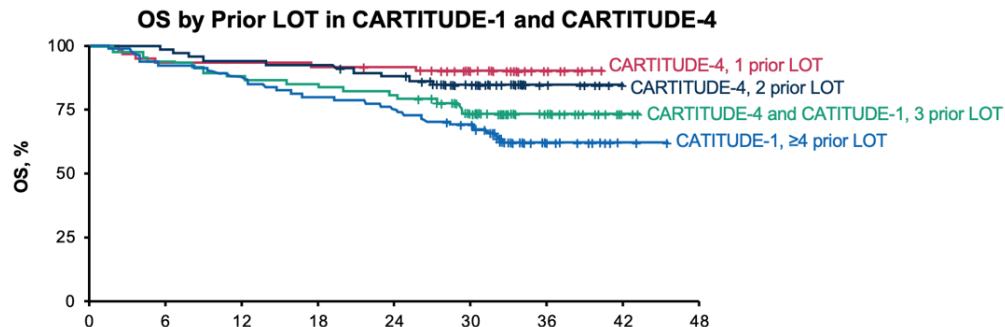
<sup>a</sup>Start of study treatment. <sup>b</sup>Physicians' choice. <sup>c</sup>Cyclophosphamide 300 mg/m<sup>2</sup> plus fludarabine 30 mg/m<sup>2</sup> daily for 3 days.  
DPd, daratumumab, pomalidomide, and dexamethasone; PD, pharmacodynamics; PK, pharmacokinetics; PVd, pomalidomide, bortezomib, and dexamethasone.



## CARTITUDE-4: 1-3 PLoT

*Efficacy by Standard and High-Risk<sup>a</sup> Status*

Also impressive OS, by Prior LOT



**Patients at risk**

High risk, SOC	132	111	79	65	52	42	37	31	28	23	20	7	3	0	0	0
High risk, cilta-cel	123	106	102	96	92	87	84	76	73	70	55	31	14	7	2	0
Standard risk, SOC	70	58	50	47	41	36	35	32	32	29	27	18	9	1	1	0
Standard risk, cilta-cel	69	59	58	57	53	51	49	49	49	49	46	27	9	2	1	0

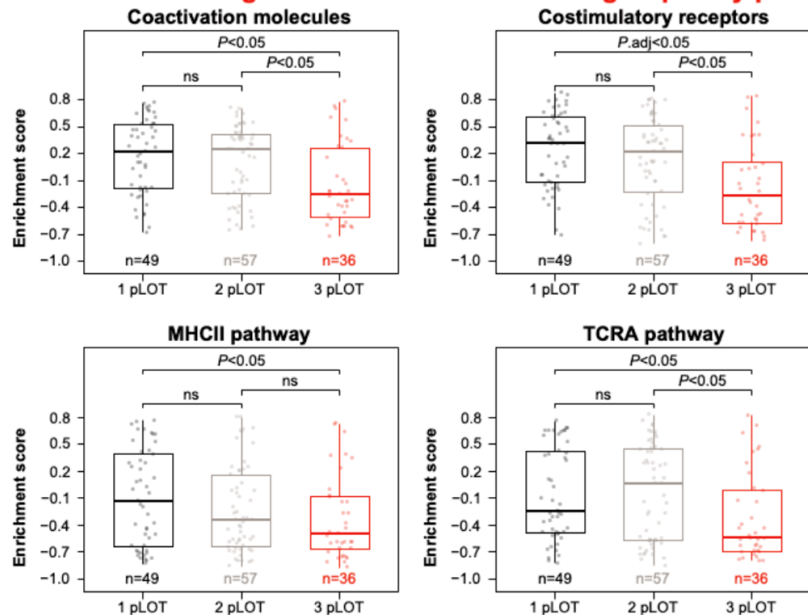
Data Cut-off: May 1, 2024; Median Follow-up: 33.6 mo

<sup>a</sup>High-risk cytogenetics was defined as del(17p), t(4;14), t(14;16), or gain/amp(1q) by FISH

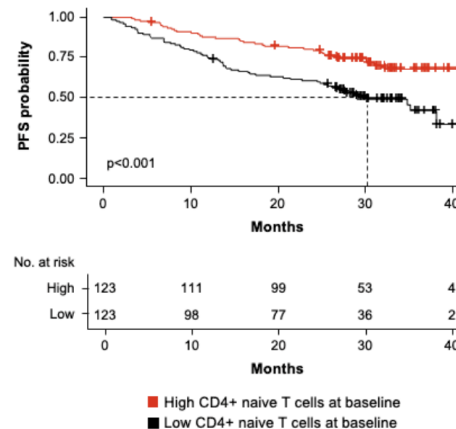
cilta-cel, ciltacabtagene autoleucel; FISH, fluorescence in situ hybridization; HR, hazard ratio; OS, overall survival; PFS, progression-free survival; SOC, standard of care.

# Favorable T-cells in earlier lines = Improved PFS

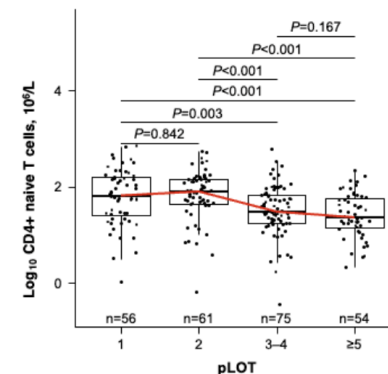
Baseline TME gene set enrichment scores grouped by pLOT



PFS stratified by CD4+ naive T cells at baseline<sup>a</sup>



CD4+ naive T cells at baseline grouped by pLOT<sup>a</sup>



# Better Success with Effective Bridging Therapy

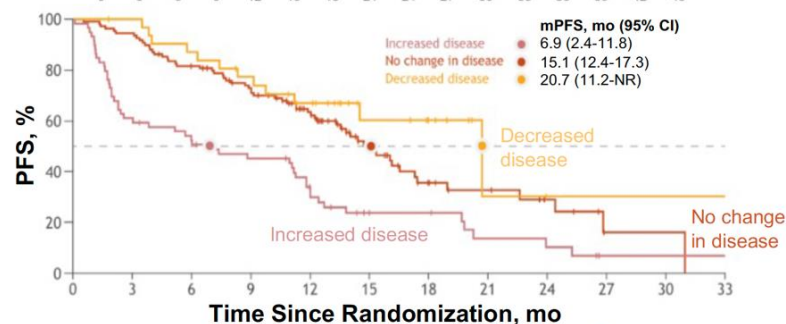
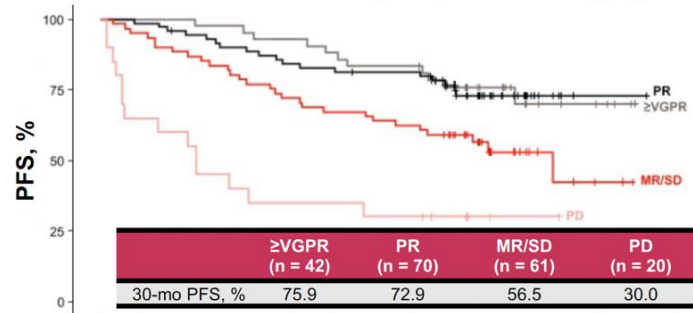
## CARTITUDE4 – Cilta-cel 1-3 PLoT

**CARTITUDE-4:** Deeper response to bridging therapy is correlated with longer PFS and OS; lower incidence of fatal infections after cilta-cel<sup>1,2</sup>

## KarMMa3 Ide-cel in 2-4 PLoT

**KarMMa-3:** Ide-cel resulted in longer mPFS and greater response in patients who had a decrease/no change versus increase in disease burden with bridging therapy<sup>3</sup>

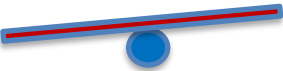
PFS From Cilta-Cel Infusion by Response to Bridging Therapy



**CART → FIRST in RRMM?**

1. Dhakal B et al. ASH 2025. Abstract 2215. 2. Dhakal B et al. Tandem 2026. Abstract 203. 3. Einsele H et al. IMS 2023. Abstract P-008.

# Many considerations for CART use in RRMM

- Benefit vs Toxicity 
- Sequencing/options
  - CAR → Bispecific
  - Bispecific → CAR
  - ADC → CAR
  - BCMA → GPRC5D
  - GPRC5D → BCMA
- PFS1 + PFS2 +/- PFS3
  - Interim treatments
- Are patients cured with ITs?
- Should we use dual targets?
  - Trispecifics (multiple)
  - CARS (BCMA-GPRC5D CAR)
- Which dual targets are better
  - GPRC5D + BCMA
  - BCMA + CD19
- Preventing resistance
  - Greater after bsAb

## Delayed CART Toxicity

### Delayed Toxicities

- B-cell aplasia/hypogammaglobulinemia
- Prolonged cytopenias
- Late infections
- Long-term neurologic events
  - Cranial neuropathies
  - Peripheral neuropathy, Guillain barre
  - Movement and neurocognitive
- Enterocolitis (IEC-EC)
- Transient cardiac toxicities
- Secondary malignancies?

May be recognized by primary oncologist  
(Need collaboration with community MDs)

### Management of Delayed Toxicities

Prolonged cytopenias	Growth factors, Stem cells
Immunosuppression “B-cell aplasia”	Prophylactic/preemptive IVIG for hypogammaglobulinemia
Infection (eg, HSV/VZV, encapsulated bacteria)	Vaccines, acyclovir, sulfamethoxazole/ trimethoprim, other
Delayed Neurotox	Corticosteroids, IVIG, chemotherapy (IV, IT)
Enterocolitis	Aggressive supportive care (TPN), Steroids, infliximab

## Delayed Neurotox: ALC Elevation is Key

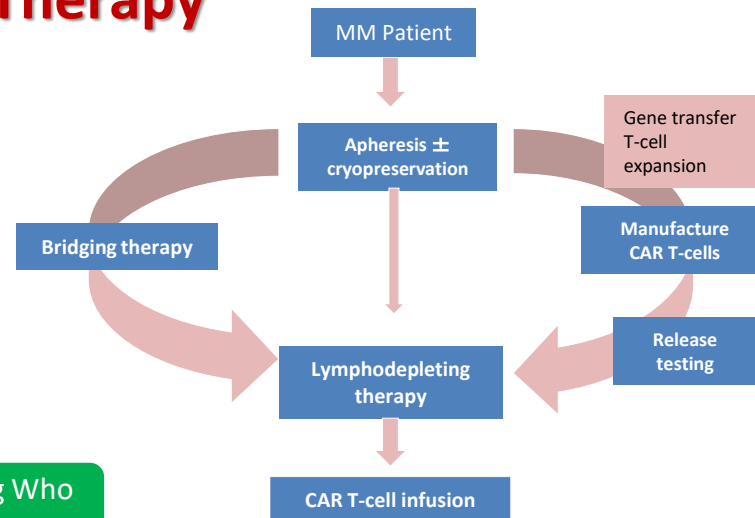
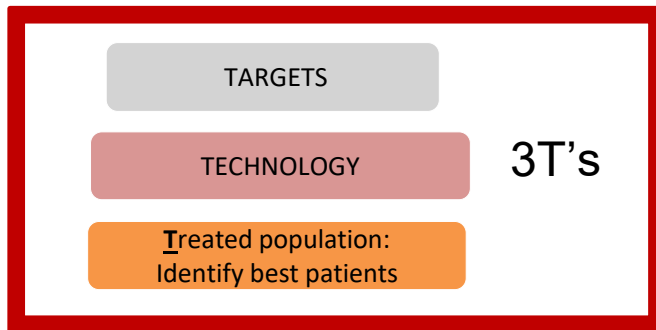
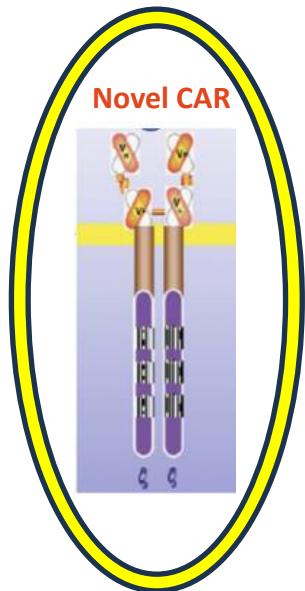
- Retrospective review of N=191 patients s/p CAR-T at UCSF from 2021-present
- Median ALC, through day 30: 1.96  
Ciltacel (n=147): 2.17 (0.21-39.04)  
Idecel (n=44): 1.13 (0.28-14.05)
- Timing of peak ALC elevation
  - Median → **day 13** (range 1-30d)
  - Median duration of ALC ≥3: 2d
- ALC ≥3: 66/191 (34.6%)  
**Ciltacel: 38.8%**  
Idecel: 13.3%

	ALC ≥3 (n=66)	ALC <3 (n=125)
Neurotoxicity (n=20)	<b>16</b>	<b>4</b>
No Neurotoxicity (n=171)	<b>50</b>	<b>121</b>

24% chance of NT with ALC ≥3

Response to Bridging → Key for Toxicity

## Innovation/New Drugs in CAR T-Cell Therapy



**Improve targeting**

Human/Synthetic

Novel Antigens

Dual targets

Intracellular Ag

**Improve Technology**

CRISPR/Integrate

Intracellular Signaling

Switch tech

*in vivo* CAR

**Improving Who to Treat**

NDMM

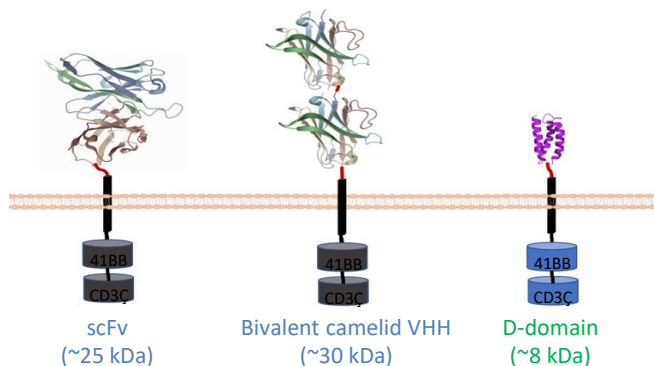
Healthy T's

Low-risk

**ACCESS, ACCESS, ACCESS**  
- Still requires academic center  
- Still requires "brain-to-vein" time

# Anitocabtagene Autoleucl: BCMA CART

- Anito-cel is an autologous BCMA-directed CAR T-cell therapy using a novel, D-domain binder<sup>1,2</sup>



D-Domain Attribute*	Description
Size	Small D-domain construct → high transduction efficiency/CAR positivity → low total cell dose <sup>2-4</sup>
Structure and stability	Stable, lack of tonic signaling because of rapid folding, hydrophobic core of the D-domain, and lack of disulfide bonds <sup>4-6</sup>
Binding	Fast off-rate and high CAR surface expression, which may allow optimal tumor cell killing in absence of prolonged inflammation

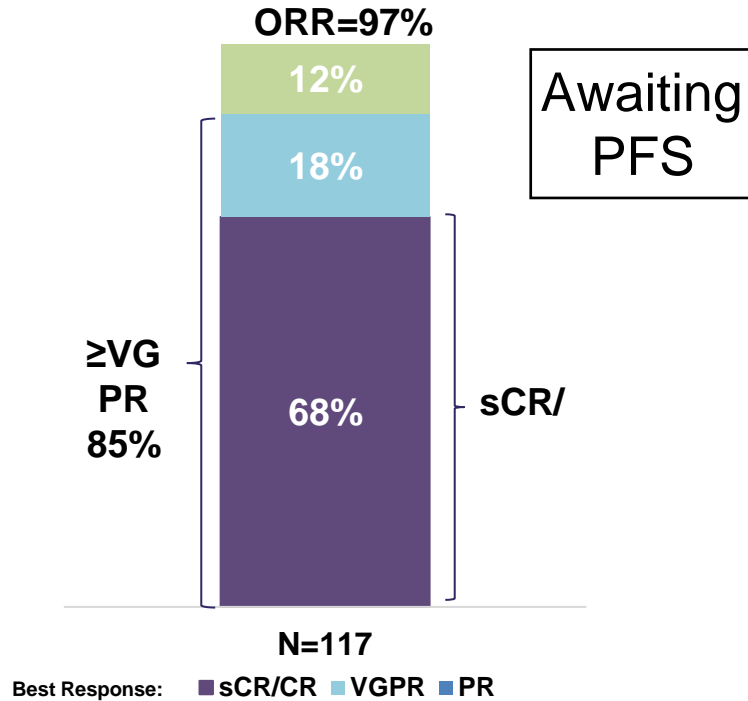
- In the phase I study in 38 patients with R/R MM after ≥3 prior LoT, anito-cel demonstrated<sup>7-9</sup>:
  - ORR: 100%; sCR/CR: 76%
  - 24-mo PFS: 56% (Median 30.2m)
- With high-risk features: 68%

\*A non-antibody-derived synthetic protein.

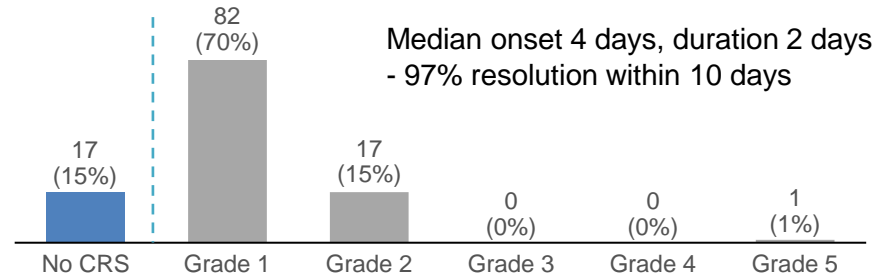
1. Rotte. Immuno-Oncology Insights. 2022;3:13. 2. Frigault. Blood Adv. 2023;7:768. 3. Cante-Barrett. BMC Res. 2016;9. 4. Buonato. Mol Cancer Ther. 2022;21:1171. 5. Zhu. Proc Nat Acad Sci. 2003;100:15486. 6. Qin. Mol Ther. 2019;27:1262. 7. Frigault. ASH 2023. Abstr 1023. 8. Frigault. EHA 2024. Abstr S207. 9. Bishop. ASH 2024. Abstr 4825.

# iMMagine-1: Anito-cel Efficacy and Safety

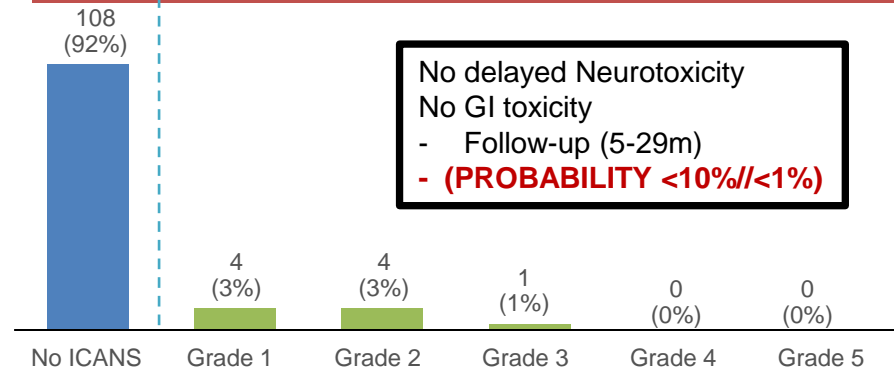
## Efficacy Evaluable Patients, N=117



## Incidence and severity of CRS



## Incidence and severity of ICANS



Responses are investigator assessed per IMWG criteria, ORR defined as partial response or better; MRD evaluable patients had an identifiable malignant clone in the baseline bone marrow sample and had a post-treatment bone marrow sample sufficient to assess MRD negativity CR, complete response; MRD, minimal residual disease; ORR, overall response rate; PR, partial response; sCR, stringent complete response; VGPR, very good partial response

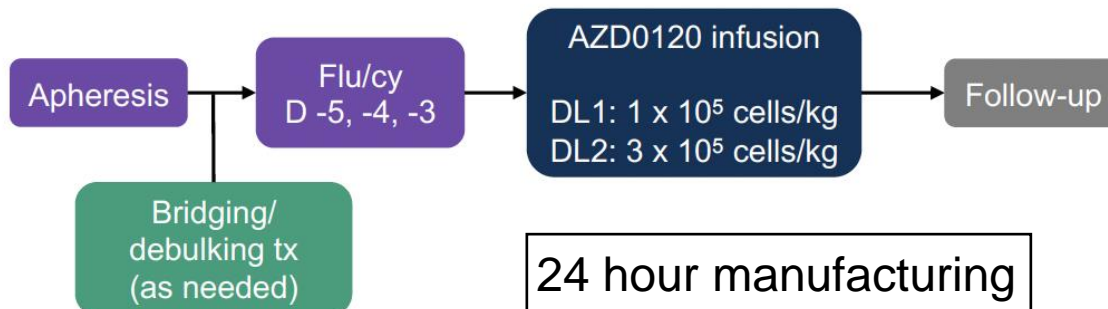
## BCMA-CD19: Dual-targeted Fast CAR

### DURGA -1 Assessed AZD0120 in RRMM<sup>1</sup>

#### DURGA -1

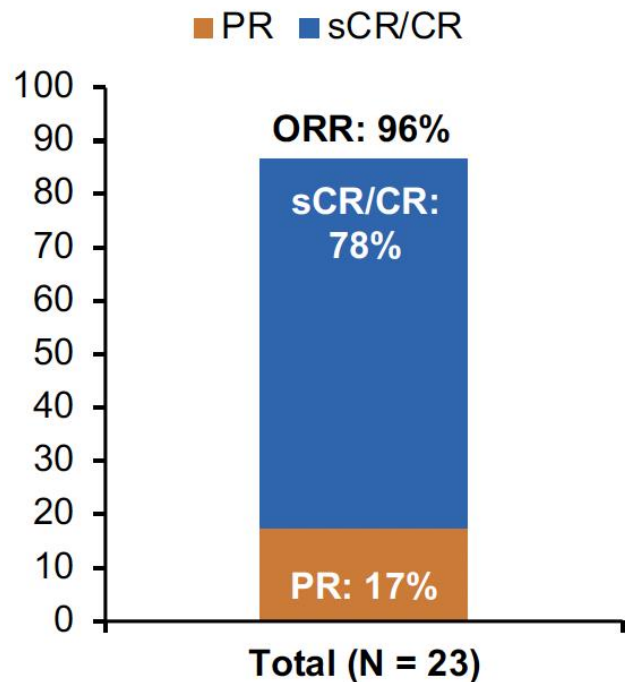
##### Key Inclusion Criteria

- $\geq 3$  prior LOT (exposure to PI, IMiD, and anti-CD38 Ab required)
- Documented evidence of PD with most recent LOT
- Prior exposure to BCMA-directed therapy permitted



Phase 1b primary objectives: safety/tolerability, RP2D determination

## DURGA -1: Early Evidence Showed Deep Responses With BCMA x CD19 Dual-Targeting CAR-T Therapy in RRMM<sup>1,2</sup>



- Median follow-up: 3.9 mo
- Median time to first response: 28 d
- Responses deepen over time

%	Total (N = 23)	BCMA CAR-T Exposed (n = 5)
ORR	96	100
sCR/CR	78	80

- 94% MRD negativity in 17 MRD-evaluable patients
- All patients achieved MRD negativity by month 1

1. Richard S et al. ASH 2025. Abstract 269. 2. Richard S et al. Tandem 2026. Abstract 37.

No Delayed Tox

# Arlo-cel: A GPRC5D Targeted CAR T-Cell Therapy

Phase 1 in patients with heavily pretreated ( $\geq 3$  PLoT) RRMM



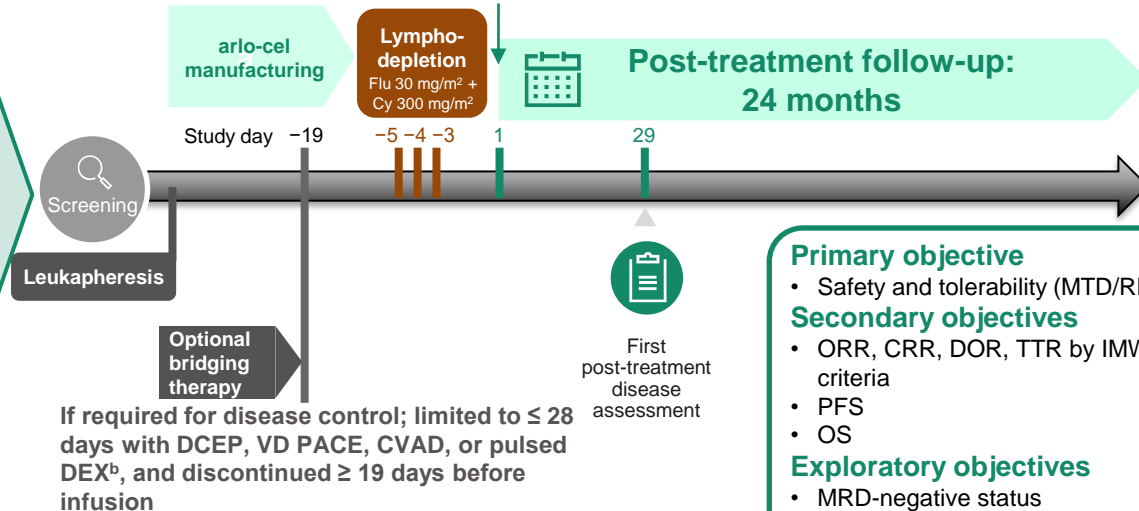
## Part A and Part B, Cohort A: key eligibility criteria

- Age  $\geq 18$  years
- RRMM that progressed  $\leq 12$  months of the most recent regimen per IMWG criteria<sup>a</sup>
- Previously exposed to  $\geq 3$  antimyeloma treatment regimens, including:
  - a PI
  - IMiD agent
  - Anti-CD38 therapy
  - ASCT (unless ineligible)
- Prior BCMA-directed therapies allowed, including CAR T cell therapies
- ECOG PS 0–1

Manufacturing successful in all patients



DEsc: 5 cohorts: 25-450 million  
DExp: 4 cohorts: 75-450 million



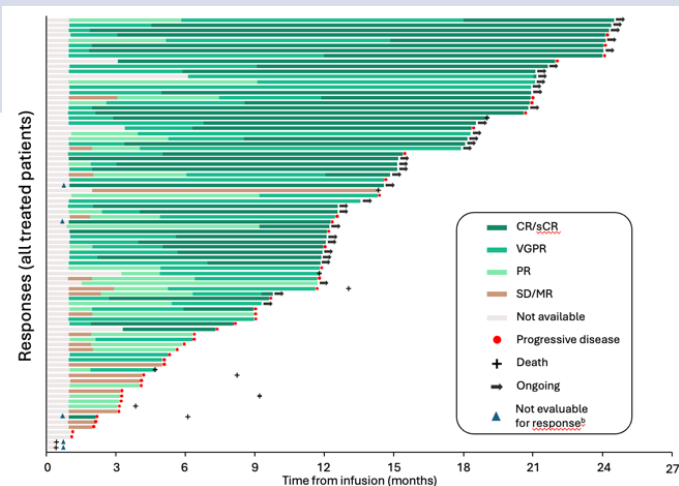
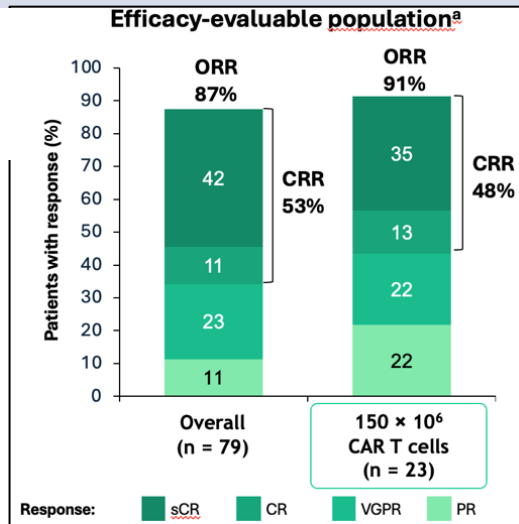
<sup>a</sup> Unless most recent therapy was CAR T cell therapy, which could be  $\geq 12$  months prior. <sup>b</sup> Alternative bridging therapy was allowed after discussion with the medical monitor: arlo-cel, arlocabtagene autoleucel; ASCT, autologous stem cell transplant; BCMA, B-cell maturation antigen; CAR, chimeric antigen receptor; CRR, complete response rate; CVAD, cyclophosphamide, vincristine, doxorubicin, and dexamethasone; Cy, cyclophosphamide; DCEP, dexamethasone, cyclophosphamide, etoposide, and cisplatin; DEX, dexamethasone; DOR, duration of response; Flu, fludarabine; GPRC5D, G protein-coupled receptor class C group 5 member D; IMiD, immunomodulatory imide drug; IMWG, International Myeloma Working Group; MM, multiple myeloma; MRD, minimal residual disease; MTD, maximum tolerated dose; ORR, overall response rate; OS, overall survival; PFS, progression-free survival; PI, proteasome inhibitor; PLoT, prior lines of therapy; PS, performance status; RP2D, recommended phase 2 dose; RR, relapsed/refractory; TTR, time to response; VD PACE, bortezomib, dexamethasone, cisplatin, doxorubicin, cyclophosphamide, and etoposide. Bal S et al. ASH 2024.

# Arlo-cel in RRMM Results

## Phase 1

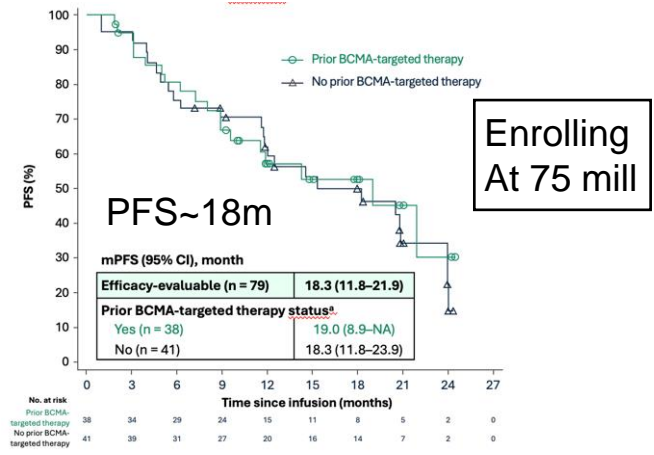
- >79 treated
- 23 @ 150
- F/u 16m

Disease characteristic	n/N	ORR (%) (95% CI)
<b>Triple class-refractory</b>		
Yes	52/60	87 (75-94)
No	17/19	89 (67-99)
<b>Extramedullary disease</b>		
Yes	31/36	86 (71-95)
No	38/43	88 (75-96)
<b>High-risk cytogenetics<sup>b</sup></b>		
Yes	26/31	84 (66-95)
No	43/48	90 (77-97)
<b>Previous BCMA-targeted therapy</b>		
Yes	30/38	79 (63-90)
No	39/41	95 (84-99)
Yes; refractory	13/16	81 (54-96)



## Results:

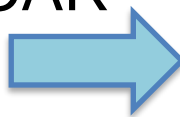
- \* ORR similar in prior BCMA Rx
- \* Overall - mPFS 18.3 m
  - Skin (30%)
  - Nails (19%)
  - Mouth (32%)
  - **Other Neuro (12%)**



Data cutoff: August 23, 2024. <sup>a</sup> The efficacy-evaluable population includes all patients who received conforming arlo-cel, had measurable disease at the most recent disease assessment prior to arlo-cel infusion, had ≥ 1 post-infusion disease response assessment, and inclusion was irrespective to any possible response to bridging therapy. Five patients were not included in the efficacy-evaluable set; 2 died before the first post-infusion assessment, and 3 because their disease was no longer measurable after bridging therapy. <sup>b</sup> del(17p), t(4;14), and/or t(14;16). arlo-cel, arlocabtagene autoleucel; BCMA, B-cell maturation antigen; CAR, chimeric antigen receptor; CR, complete response; CRR, complete response rate; ORR, overall response rate; PR, partial response; sCR, stringent complete response; VGPR, very good partial response. Bal S et al. ASH 2024. Abstract 922.

## Ongoing randomized trials of T-Cell in 2<sup>nd</sup> LOT and beyond

P3 BCMA CAR  
- 12/23/26



QUINTESSENTIAL-2

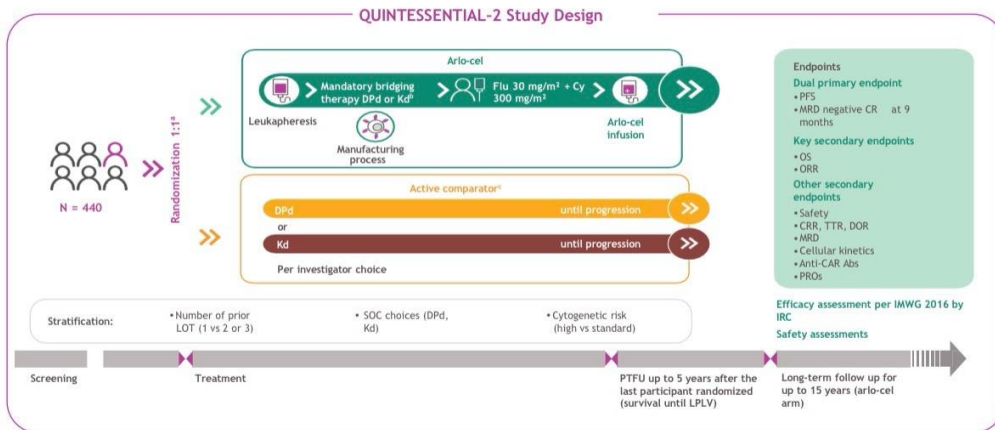
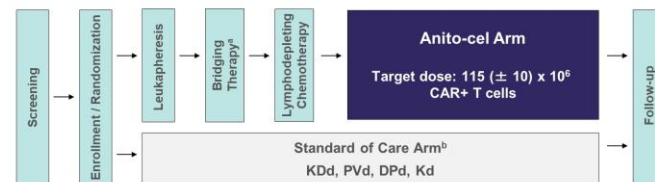


iMMagine-3: Global Phase 3 Study

iMMagine-3 (NCT06413498) is a global, Phase 3 trial comparing anito-cel to standard of care therapy in patients with RRMM after 1-3 prior LoT, including an anti-CD38 monoclonal antibody and an iMID



**Study Design**

- 1:1 Randomization
- n = Approximately 450, ~130 sites globally

**Study Endpoints**

- Primary Endpoint: PFS
- Key Secondary Endpoints: CR rate, MRD, OS, safety

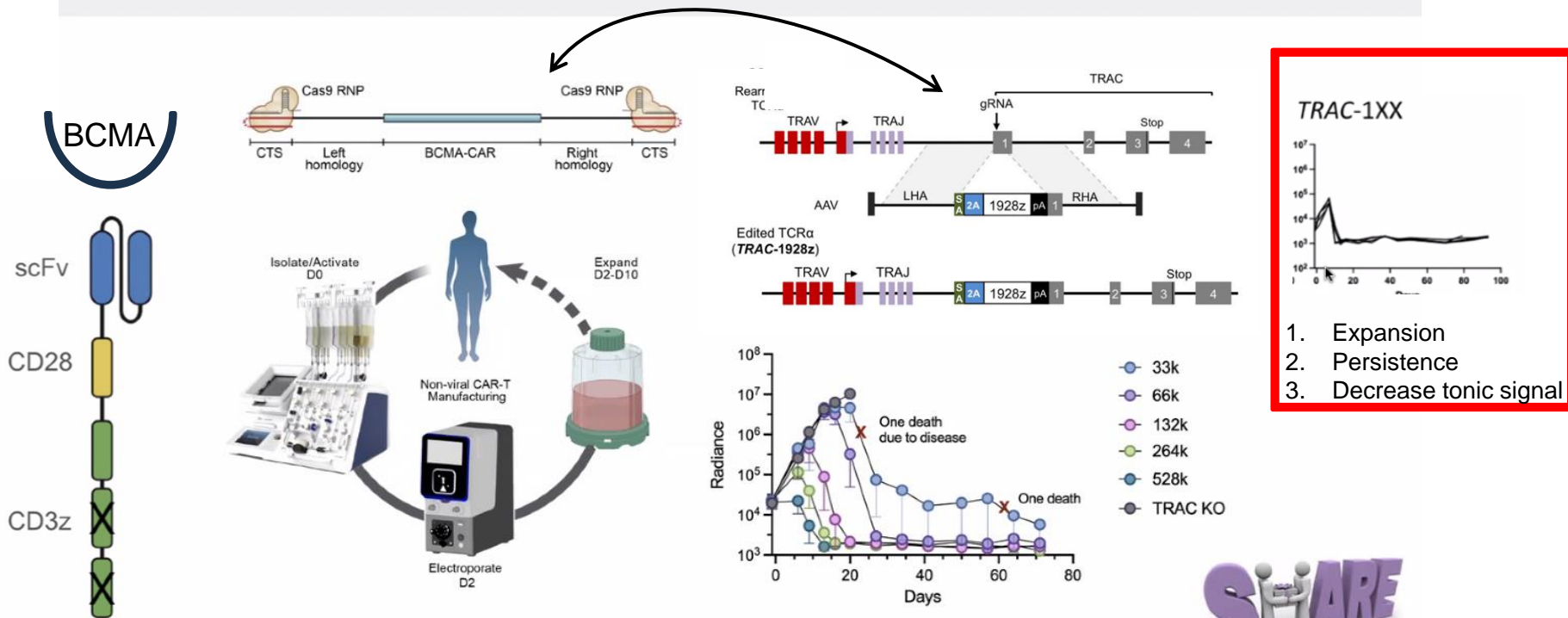
<sup>a</sup> Bridging therapy will be the SOC regimen selected prior to randomization  
<sup>b</sup> Cycle will continue until unacceptable toxicity, progression as per IMWG criteria, or patient withdrawal of consent



GPRC5D-CAR  
- Phase 2 on-going

<sup>a</sup>Leukapheresis to occur within 3 days of randomization. <sup>b</sup>Bridging Therapy to begin within 3 days of leukapheresis. <sup>c</sup>First active comparator dose to occur within 6 days of randomization; no crossover to receive arlo-cel is permitted. Abs, antibodies; CAR, chimeric antigen receptor; CR, complete response; Cy, cyclophosphamide; DOR, duration of response; DPd, daratumumab-pomalidomide-dexamethasone; Flu, fludarabine; IMWG, International Myeloma Working Group; Kd, carfilzomib plus dexamethasone; LOT, lines of therapy; LPLV, last patient last visit; MRD, minimal residual disease; ORR, overall response rate; OS, overall survival; PFS, progression-free survival; PROs, patient reported outcomes; PTFU, post treatment follow up; (RR)MM, (relapsed or refractory) multiple myeloma; SOC, standard of care; TTR, time to response.1. ClinicalTrials.gov. <https://clinicaltrials.gov/study/NCT06615479>. Accessed May 2025. 2. Bristol-Myers Squibb. Data on File 2025.

## UCSF: 1XX-Enhanced and Fully Non-viral BCMA CAR for RRMM

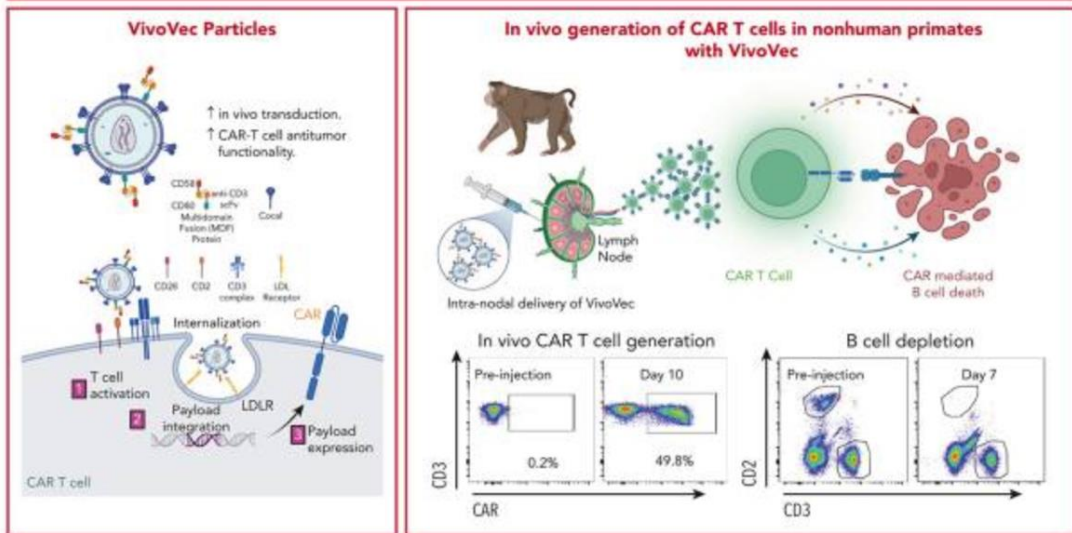


Jenny Lee, Ke Li, Niran Almudhfar, Shanshan Lang, Justin Eyquem

## Novel CART Cell Designs

- In Vivo CAR T-cell
  - Apheresis-NO
  - Ex-vivo manufacturing-NO
  - Quality control testing – NO
  - LD Chemotherapy – NO
  - Reinfusion of CART-NO
- Off-the shelf- YES
- Delivery
  - Virus/viral particles
  - Nano-particles
- Targeted to T-cells – Yes
- *In vivo* T-Cell Expansion YES

### In Vivo CAR T-Cell Generation in Nonhuman Primates Using Lentiviral Vectors Displaying a Multidomain Fusion Ligand

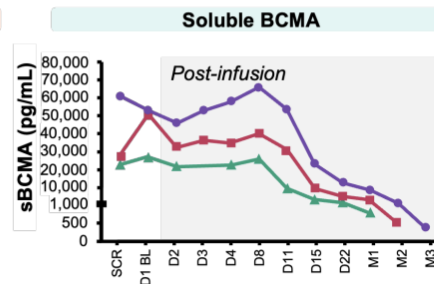
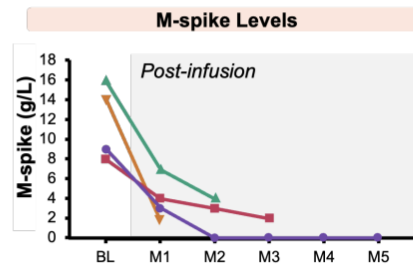
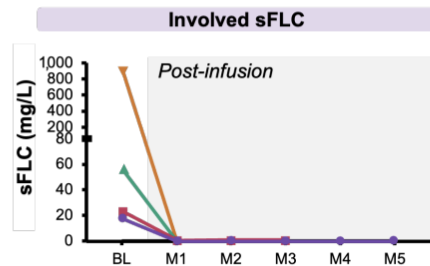
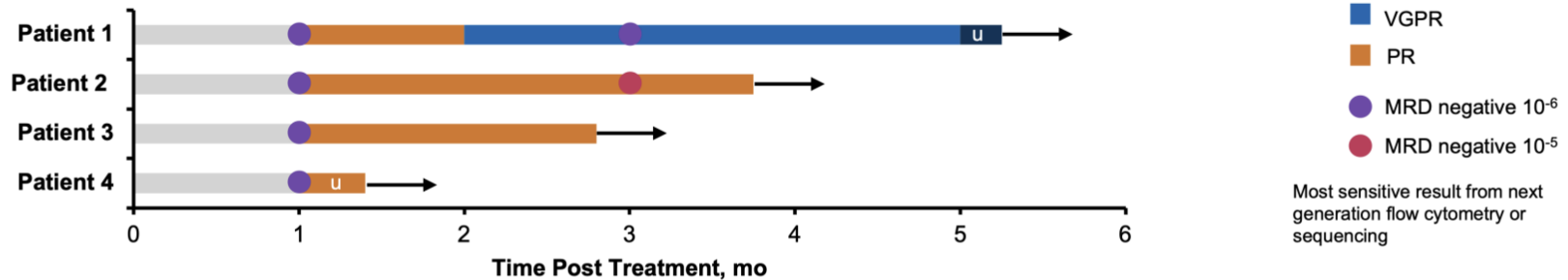


**Conclusion:** Administration of VivoVec particles into nonhuman primates in the absence of lymphodepleting chemotherapy resulted in a robust generation of anti-CD20 CAR T cells and complete depletion of B cells.

Nicolai et al. DOI: 10.1182/*blood*.2024024523

# inMMycAR: “Off-the-Shelf” In Vivo CAR-T Cell Generation Appears Feasible, Safe, and Effective<sup>1</sup>

KLN-1010 Is an Off-the-Shelf Gene Therapy Capable of Generating Anti-BCMA CAR-T Cells In Vivo for Patients With RRMM after ≥3 Prior Therapies



- All instances of CRS were grade 1-2
- No ICANS or delayed neurotoxicity
- Cytopenias were limited (only one case of grade 4; transient neutropenia related to margination)
- Infusion-related reactions in 3/4 patients (two grade 2, one grade 3)—all received prophylactic tocilizumab after the first patient
- Persistent memory T cells in all patients; phenotypic evidence of memory CAR-T cell formation in blood after KLN-1010 treatment

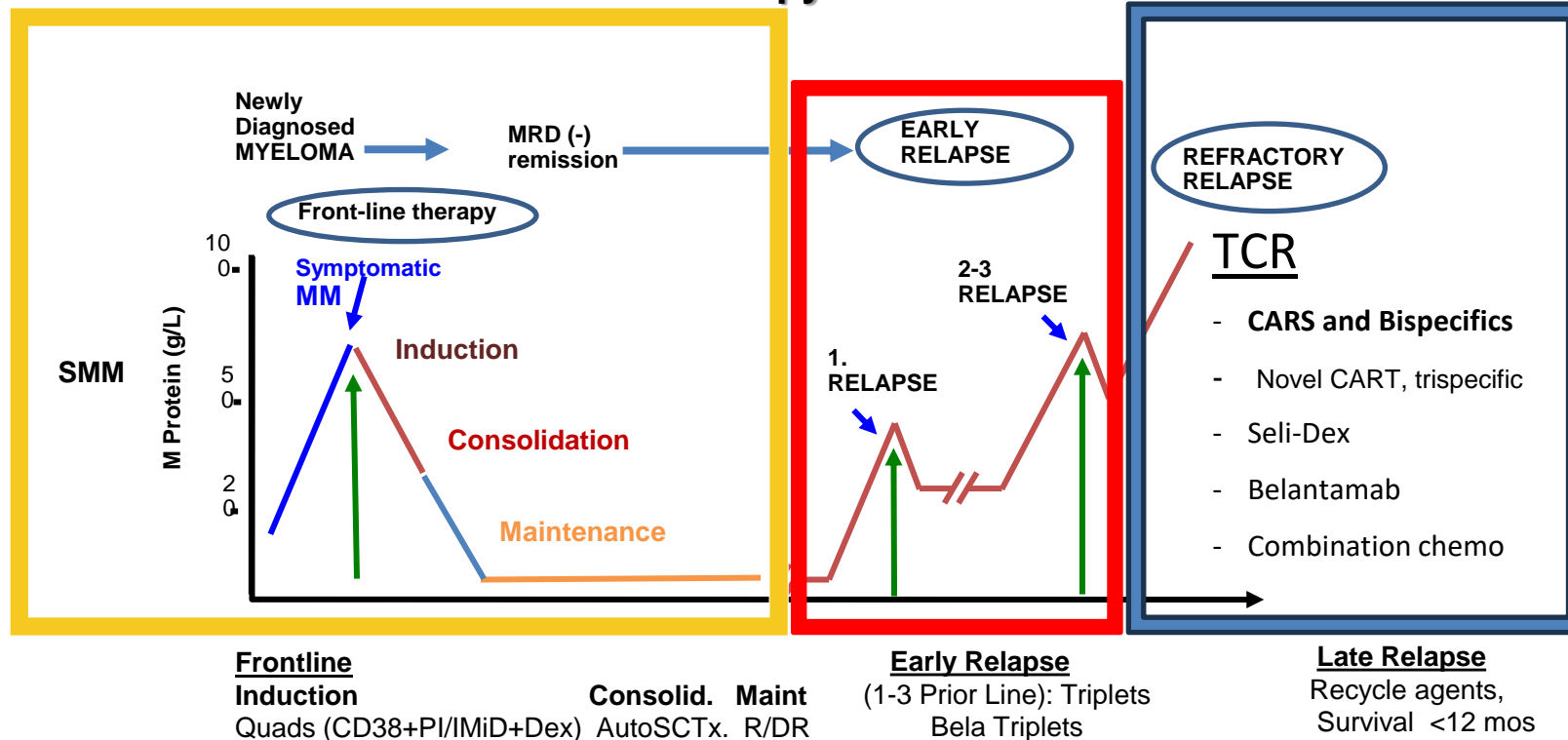
## Summary



CART Therapy	Target/Binder	ORR	PFS	TRM*	Toxicity
Cilta-cel CART-4 <i>n</i> =208	BCMA (VHH)	84.6%	59.4% @33.6m	3-5%	Delayed Neuro-tox, IEC-EC (2-5%)
Ide-cel KarMM-3 <i>n</i> =254	BCMA (Murine scFv)	71% (≥CR = 44%)	13.8m (20.7m effective bridging)	2.7%	Low rates of delayed tox (<1%)
Zevo-CAR (approved - China) <i>n</i> =102	BCMA (Hum-scFv)	92.2 (%≥CR = 72%)	61.9% @18m	NR	No – IEC-EC, No- late Neurotox
AZD0120 Durga-1 <i>n</i> =29	BCMA/CD19 FasTCAR	100%	NR	NR	No – IEC-EC, No- late Neurotox
Anito-cel <i>n</i> =117	BCMA (D-domain)	>90%	30.2 months	NR	No – IEC-EC, No- late Neurotox
Arlo-cel	GPRC5D	87%	18.3m	NR	Non-ICANS neurotox 12%

\*Need to report NRM or (RFS + IEC-Park + IEC-EC (N-GRFS))

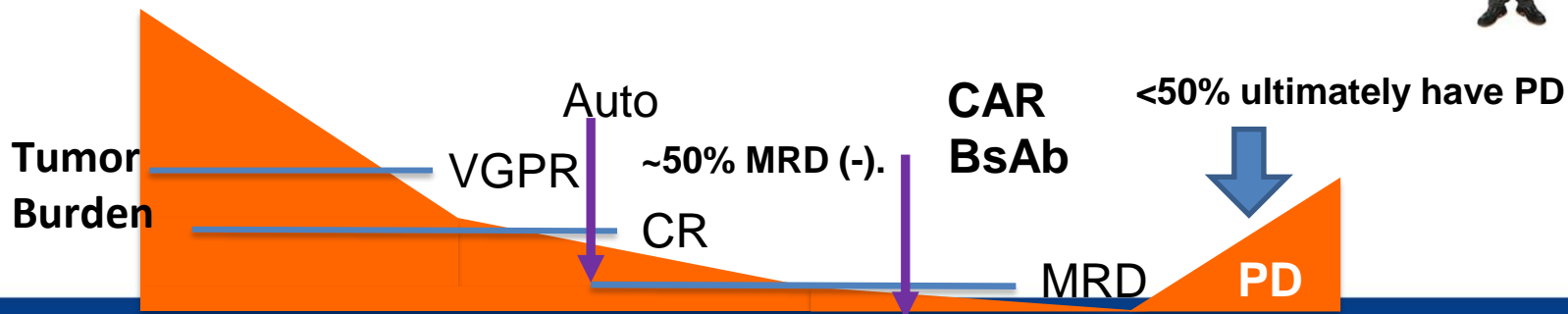
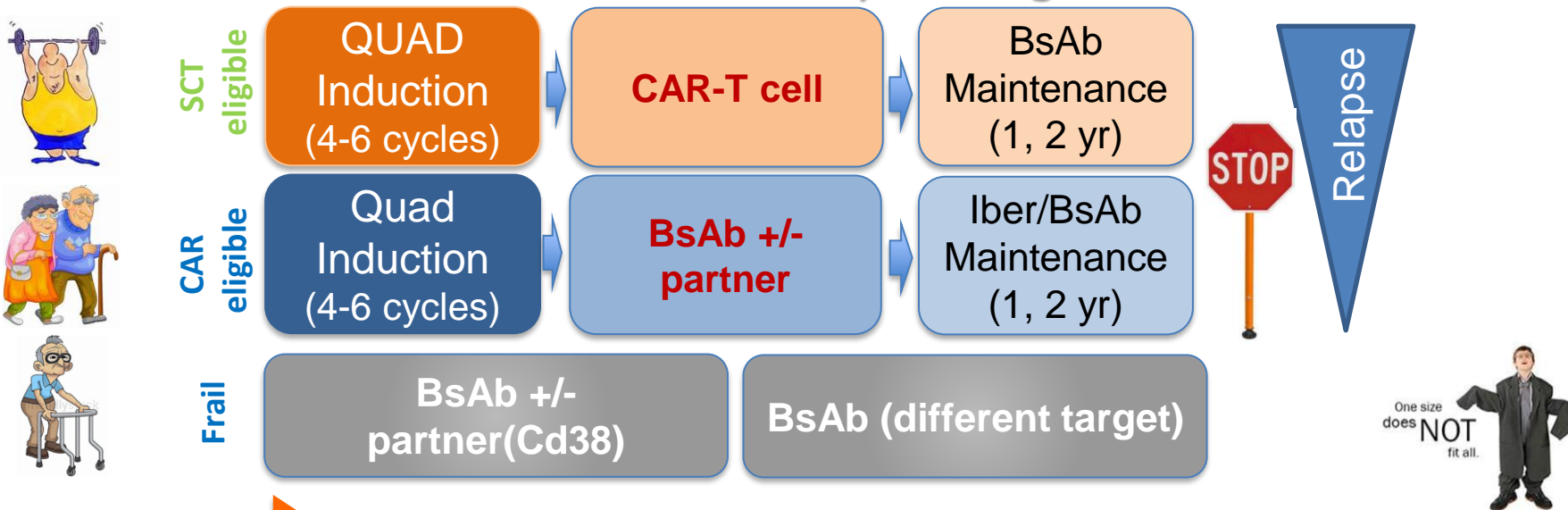
## Where does CART Therapy Fit: Fits EVERYWHERE?



## Conclusions

1. Cilta-cel remains the most potent CAR T-cell therapy
2. Cilta-cel is associated with >33% RFS @ 5 years in heavily pretreated
3. In early RRMM – perhaps >50% 5 year RFS, and less significant toxicity
4. Novel CARS may have lower potency but less toxicity (can they achieve plateau)
5. Can dual targeting get deeper remissions and exceed PFS1+PFS2.
6. In vivo CAR has generated significant enthusiasm → *OFF THE SHELF*
7. Sequencing studies are needed!!!
8. “Cure” wins – whatever the platform

## Future treatment paradigms.....



## Many Other CAR Strategies being investigated

1. BCMA-GPRC5D dual targeted CART
2. BCMA-Taci dual targeted CART
3. CAR-Enhancers
4. TRUCKS
5. mRNA vaccines with CARs

# Holding Therapy, Bridging Therapy, and Lymphodepletion Chemotherapy in MM

## Holding therapy

- Definition: before apheresis
- Goal: control disease without jeopardizing feasibility of CAR T-cell therapy
- Not standardized
- Often used: PIs, IMiDs, anti-CD38 mAbs, dex
- Avoid use of alkylators, bendamustine, polychemotherapy, TCEs

**Apheresis**



**CAR T-Cell  
Infusion**

## Bridging therapy

- Definition: after apheresis, waiting for CAR T-cell therapy
- Goal: avoid clinical deterioration, reduce disease burden
- Not standardized
- Often used: PIs, IMiDs, anti-CD38 mAbs, dex
- Acceptable: alkylators, bendamustine, polychemotherapy, TCEs

## Lymphodepletion CT

- Standardized
- Timed with CAR T-cell infusion
- Goal: induce extreme lymphopenia and corresponding cytokine milieu
- Fludarabine + cyclophosphamide
- Limited data for bendamustine
- Dose adjustment/drug choice influenced by renal function