

# **VEGF Inhibition is the Best Option First Line Metastatic Renal Cell Carcinoma**

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# Management of mRCC: Strategies for today

- How can we optimise outcomes with current therapies in the first-line treatment of mRCC?

## Strategies for today



# Management of mRCC: Strategies for today and tomorrow

- How can we achieve our goal of long-term survival in mRCC?

## Strategies for tomorrow

**Goal**

**Challenge**

**Potential solutions**

**Long-term  
survival**

**Resistance to  
current agents**

**Sequencing and  
combination of agents**

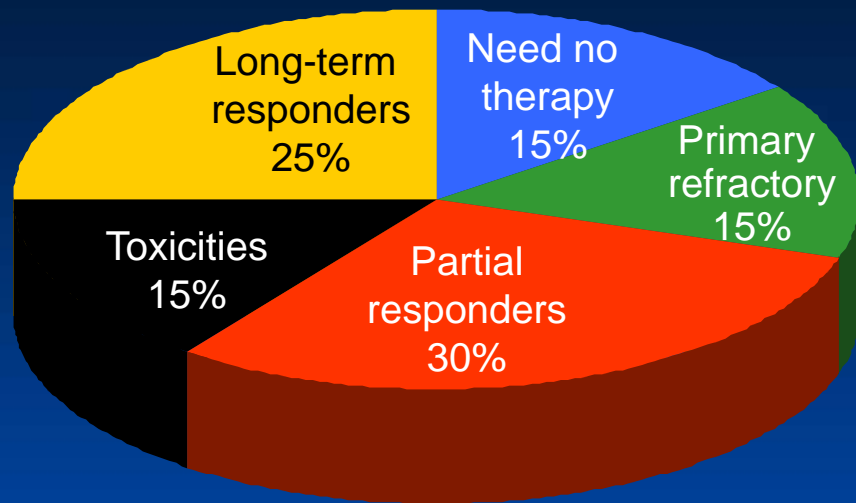
**Novel agents**

**Individualisation  
of treatment**

**Appropriate  
treatment selection**

**Biomarkers**

## ■ Patients with mRCC are heterogeneous



**Predict risk of recurrence?**

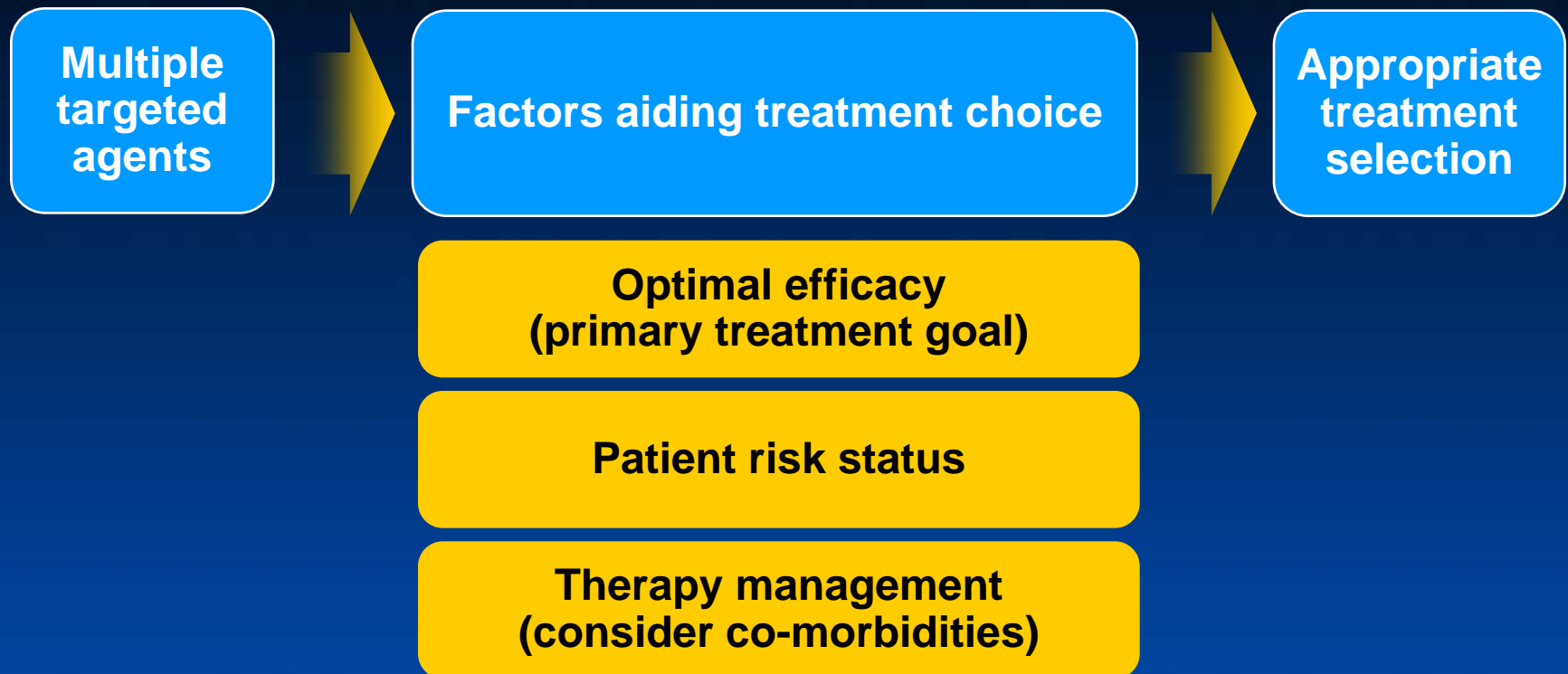
**Choose appropriate therapy?**

**Avoid toxicity?**

# **Current options for maximising patient benefit with first-line agents**

# Introduction

- Several targeted agents are now available for the treatment of mRCC



# Recommended targeted agents for first-line treatment of mRCC: Results from pivotal trials

Agent	N	ORR (%)	Median PFS (months)	Median OS (months)
Sunitinib vs IFN- $\alpha$ <sup>1</sup>	750	47 vs 12 P<0.001	11 vs 5 P<0.001	26.4 vs 21.8 P=0.051
Bevacizumab + IFN- $\alpha$ vs IFN- $\alpha$ <sup>2,3</sup>	649	31 vs 13 P=0.0001	10.2 vs 5.4 P<0.0001	23.3 vs 21.3 P=0.1291
Bevacizumab + IFN- $\alpha$ vs IFN- $\alpha$ <sup>4,5</sup>	732	26 vs 13 P<0.0001	8.5 vs 5.2 P<0.0001	18.3 vs 17.4 P=0.069
*Pazopanib vs placebo <sup>6,7</sup>	435	30 vs 3 <sup>†</sup> P<0.001	11.1 vs 2.8 P<0.0001	22.9 vs 20.5 <sup>†</sup> P=0.224
Poor risk patients				
Temsirolimus vs IFN- $\alpha$ <sup>8*</sup>	626	8.6 vs 4.8 NS	5.5 vs 3.1 P<0.001	10.9 vs 7.3 P=0.008

\*Poor risk patients (modified MSKCC criteria); <sup>†</sup>Includes cytokine refractory and treatment-naïve patients

1. Motzer RJ, et al. *J Clin Oncol* 2009; 2. Escudier B, et al. *Lancet* 2007; 3. Escudier B, et al. *J Clin Oncol* 2010;  
 4. Rini BI, et al. *J Clin Oncol* 2008; 5. Rini B, et al. *J Clin Oncol* 2010; 6. Sternberg C, et al. *J Clin Oncol* 2010;  
 7. Sternberg C, et al. *ESMO* 2010; 8. Hudes G, et al. *N Engl J Med* 2007

# 'Real world' clinical experience with targeted agents: Sunitinib expanded-access programme

- International programme involving 4,564 patients with mRCC (treatment-naïve or cytokine-refractory)

	Overall population	Brain metastases	ECOG PS $\geq 2$	Non-clear cell histology	Age $\geq 65$ years
Evaluable patients (n)	4,349	320	582*	588	1,414
PFS, months (95% CI)	10.9 (10.3–11.2)	5.6 (5.2–6.1)	5.1 (4.2–5.5)	7.8 (6.3–8.3)	11.3 (10.7–12.3)
OS, months (95% CI)	18.4 (17.4–19.2)	9.2 (7.8–10.9)	6.7 (6.0–7.9)	13.4 (10.7–14.9)	18.2 (16.6–19.8)

\*There were 503 patients with ECOG PS  $\geq 2$  evaluable for OS

Sunitinib demonstrated efficacy in subpopulations of interest



# Efficacy in mRCC: ESMO/EAU treatment guidelines (2011)

	Setting	Treatment
Treatment-naïve	Favourable or intermediate MSKCC risk status	Sunitinib <sup>1,2</sup> Bevacizumab + IFN- $\alpha$ <sup>1,2</sup> *Pazopanib <sup>1,2</sup>
	Poor MSKCC risk status	Temsirolimus <sup>1,2</sup>
Refractory	Prior cytokine	Sorafenib <sup>1,2</sup> Pazopanib <sup>1,2</sup>
	Prior VEGFR-TKI	Everolimus <sup>1,2</sup>
	Prior mTOR	Clinical trials <sup>1</sup>

\*Conditionally approved

1. Ljungberg B, et al. 2010; <http://www.uroweb.org>; 2. Escudier B, et al. *Ann Oncol* 2010

# Appropriate treatment selection: Defining risk status in clinical trials

## MSKCC criteria

**Karnofsky PS <80**

**Low serum hemoglobin**

**High corrected calcium**

**High LDH**

**Time from diagnosis to  
treatment <1 year**

## ARCC trial criteria

**Karnofsky PS = 60/70**

**Low serum haemoglobin**

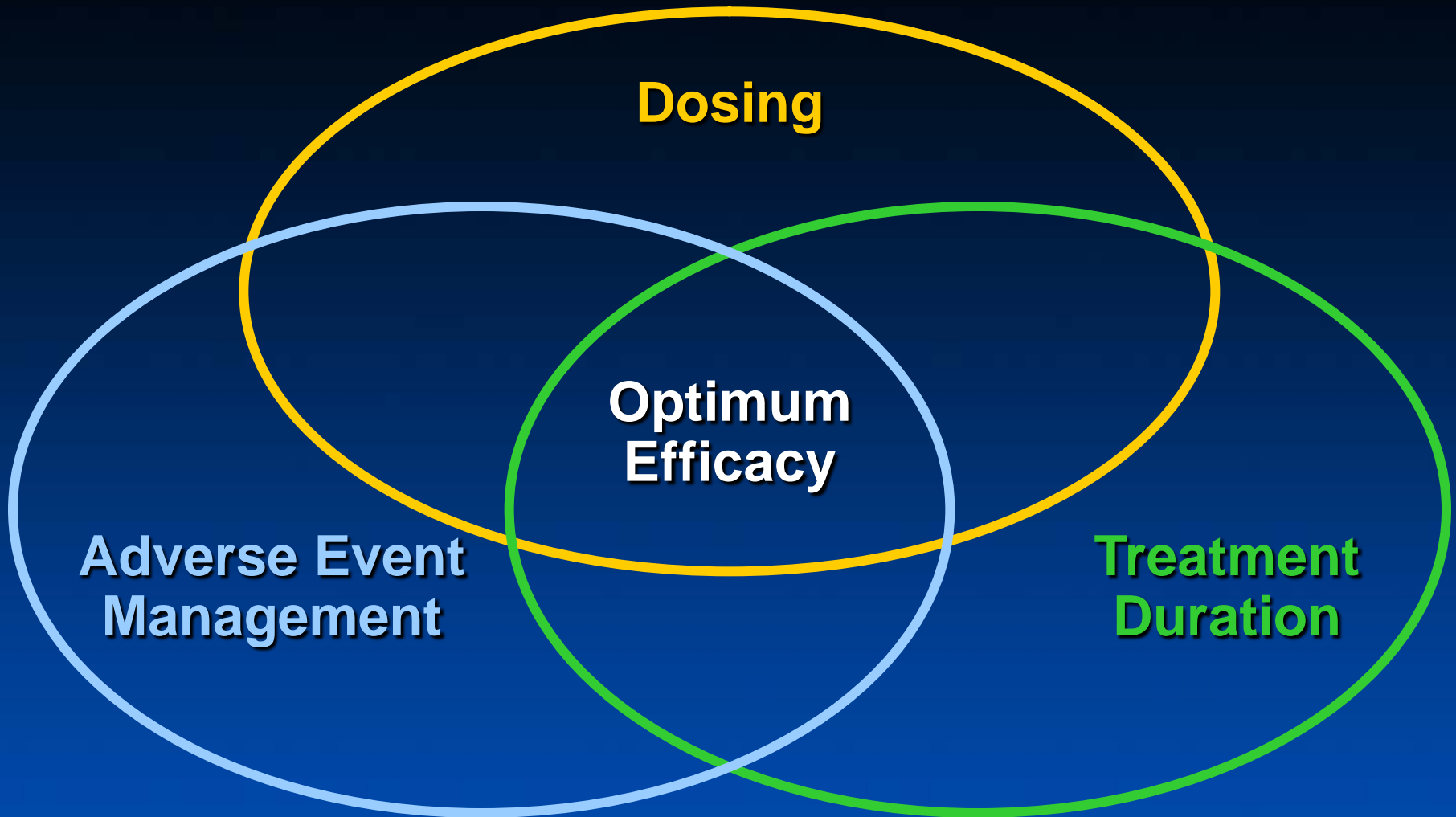
**High corrected calcium**

**High LDH**

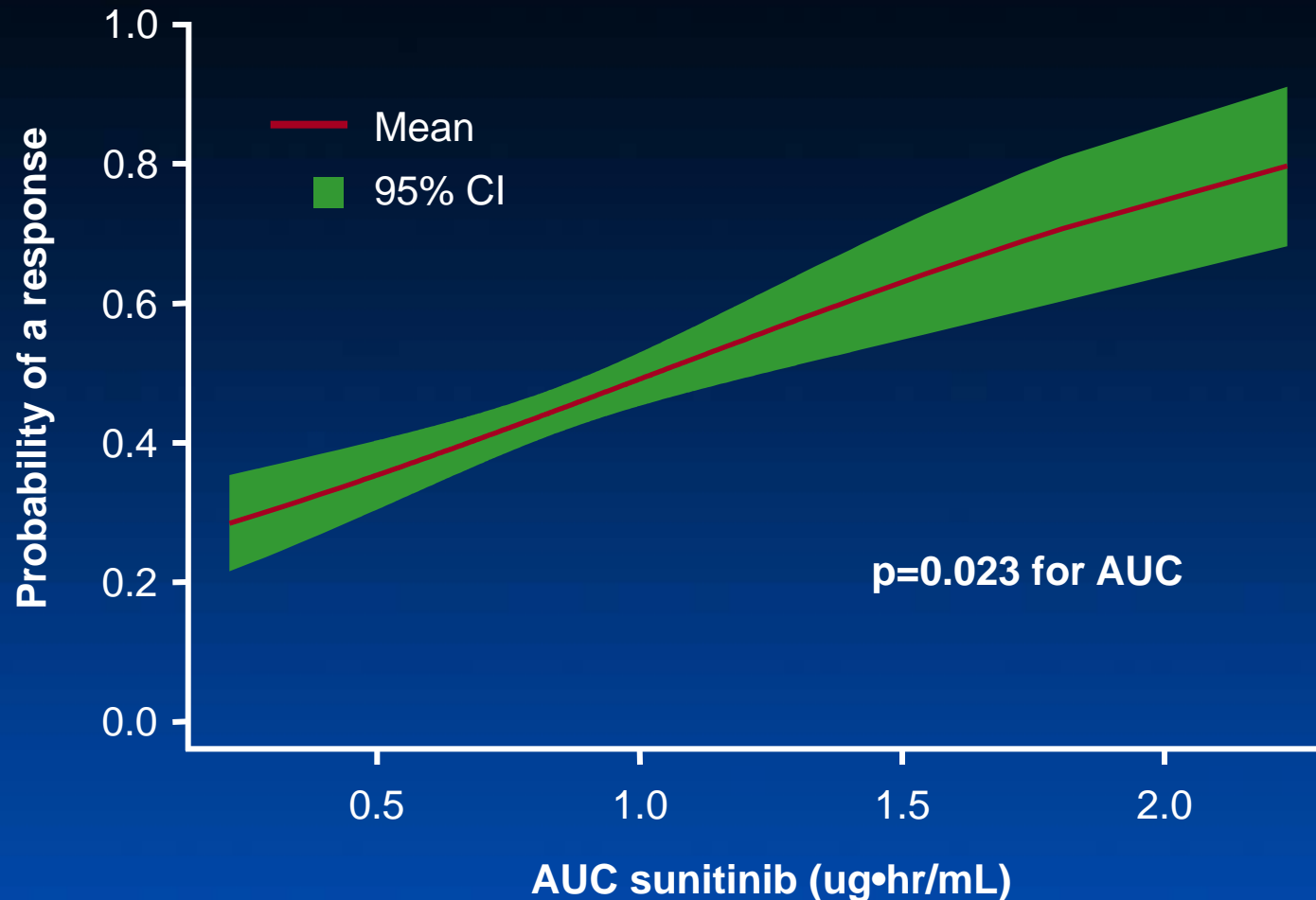
**Time from diagnosis to  
randomization <1 year**

**Multiple organ site of  
metastasis**

# Effective therapy management

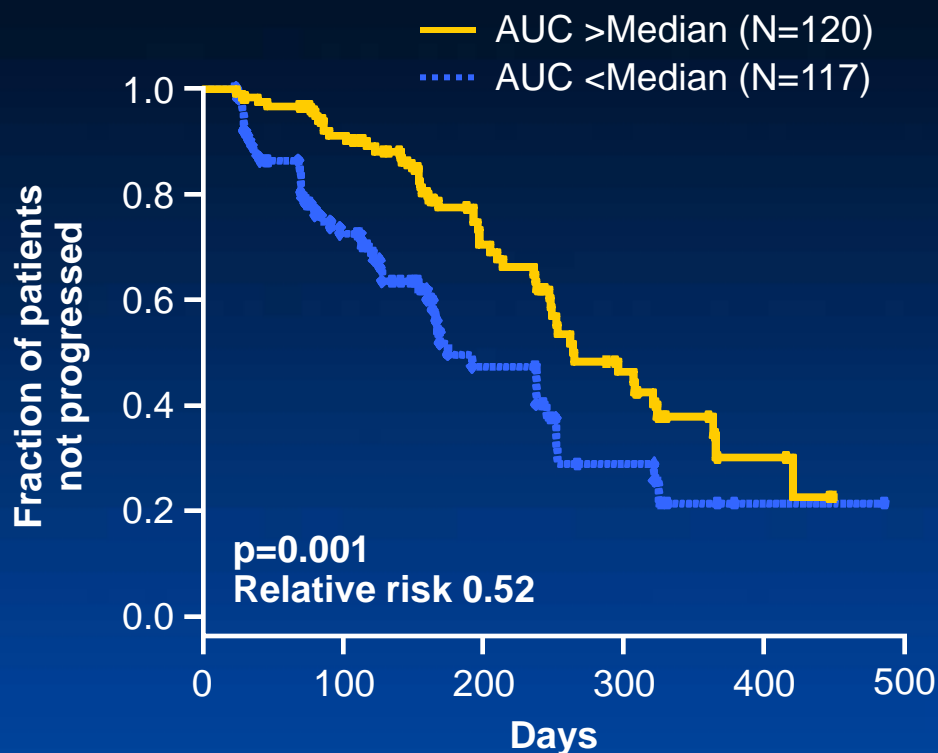


# Probability of a Tumour Response Increases with Mean Daily Sunitinib Exposure

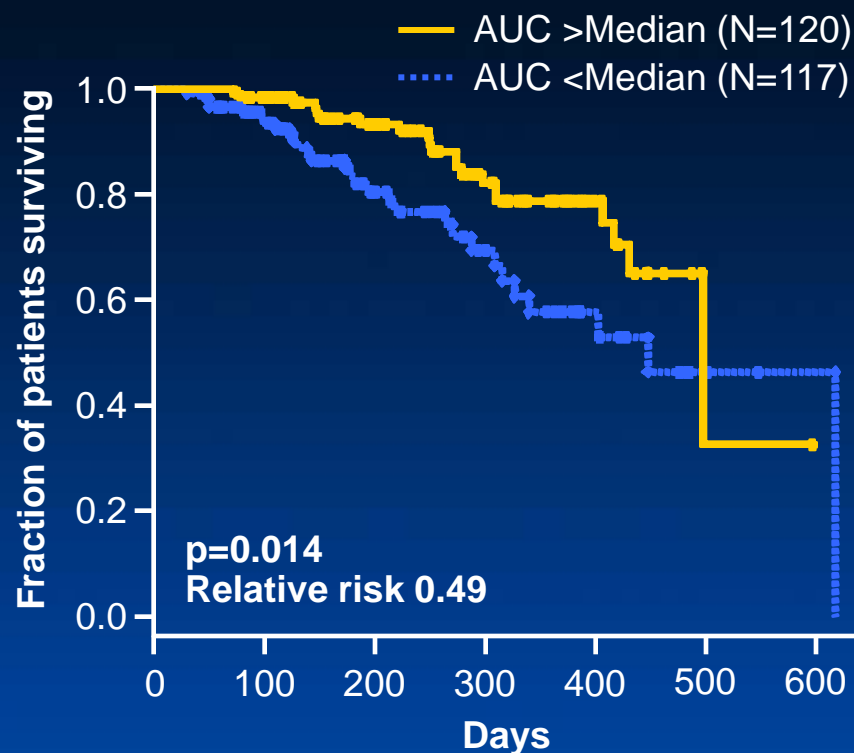


# Higher Exposure to Sunitinib Is Associated with Longer Time to Progression and OS

## Time to Tumour Progression



## OS



# Therapy management: Appropriate treatment duration

- Objective response may be increased by long-term exposure to targeted agents

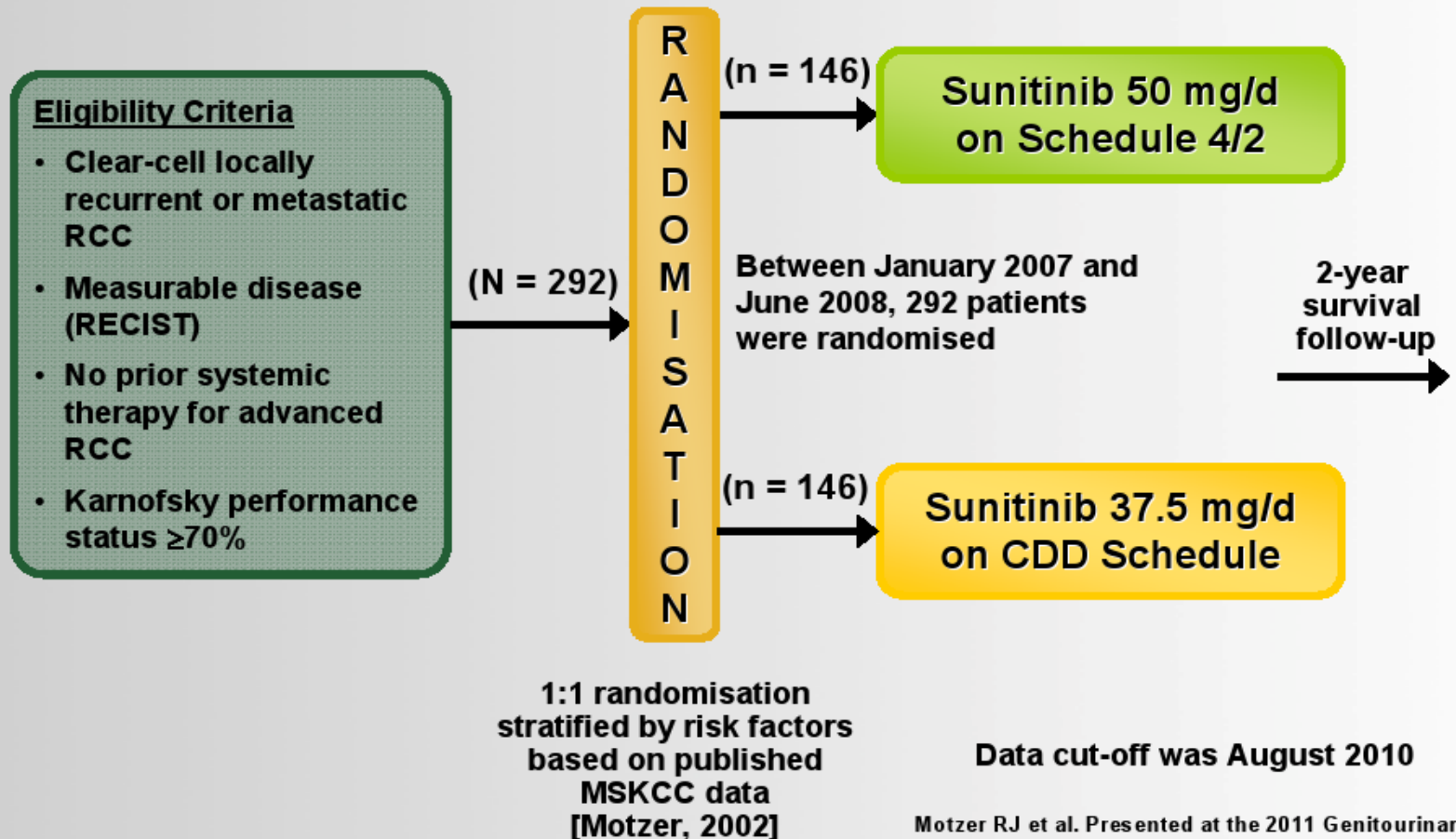
Analysis	Sunitinib N=374		IFN- $\alpha$ N=373		P-value
	Duration, months (range)	ORR, %	Duration, months (range)	ORR, %	
Interim	6 (1–15)	31 (26–36)	4 (1–13)	6 (4–9)	<0.001
Final					
Invest.	11 (<1–41)	47 (42–52)	4 (<1–40)	12 (9–16)	<0.001
Central		39 (34–44)		8 (6–12)	<0.001



**What is the best dose or optimal  
schedule for VEGFR-targeted agents?**

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# Phase II EFFECT Study: Sunitinib 4/2 vs Continuous Dosing Schedule as First-line Therapy in mRCC



CDD, continuous daily dosing.

Motzer RJ et al. Presented at the 2011 Genitourinary Cancers Symposium (abstract LBA308).



## Phase II EFFECT Study: Sunitinib 4/2 vs Continuous Dosing Schedule as First-line Therapy in mRCC

Endpoint	Sunitinib 50 mg/d Schedule 4/2 (n = 146)	Sunitinib 37.5 mg/d CDD schedule (n = 146)
ORR, % (95% CI)	32.2 (24.7–40.4)	28.1 (21.0–36.1)
<i>P</i>	.444	
TTP, median (95% CI), months	9.9 (7.0–13.4)	7.1 (6.8–9.7)
HR (95% CI)	0.77 (0.57–1.04)	
<i>P</i>	.090	
OS, median (95% CI), months	23.1 (17.4–25.4)	23.5 (17.5–not reached)
HR (95% CI)	1.09 (0.78–1.50)	
<i>P</i>	.615	
PFS, median (95% CI), months *	8.5 (6.9–11.1)	7.0 (6.0–8.7)
HR (95% CI)	0.77 (0.58–1.02)	
<i>P</i>	.070	

\*PFS was estimated as a sensitivity analysis for TTP.

Motzer RJ et al. Presented at the 2011 Genitourinary Cancers Symposium (abstract LBA308).

# Conclusions

- In this randomized phase II mRCC trial, there was no statistically significant difference in TTP between the two treatment schedules
  - ORR and OS were similar
  - Grade 3/4 AE profiles were similar
  - No significant difference was observed in PRO between the two treatment arms; however, an 'on/off' effect was evident for Schedule 4/2
- There was a trend toward inferior TTP (and PFS) with continuous dosing, and Schedule 4/2 was statistically superior to continuous dosing in time to deterioration
- The treatment goal should be to adhere to the approved dose and schedule

**Individualized Dose/Schedule Strategy  
for Sunitinib in RCC patients to  
maximize dose and minimize time off Rx:  
Correlation with DCE-US data**

**A single Centre Experience**

# Rationale for dose / schedule changes

## ■ Clinical observation:

- ◆ Pts referred as Sutent resistant taking 37.5 and 25 mg
- ◆ Responded / stabilized when dose escalated to 50mg, and Rx schedule changed to 14 days on/ 7 days off

## ■ Individually maximize dose and course duration

- ◆ ↑ AUC associated with better response, PFS and OS
- ◆ High inter-patient variability in pharmacokinetics (40-60%)
- ◆ Ethnic differences in toxicity
- ◆ Sunitinib steady state reached at 10-14 days

## ■ Minimize time off therapy

- ◆ Progression during Rx breaks

## ■ Minimize toxicity / Maximize overall duration of therapy

- ◆ Dose modifications done to keep dose limiting toxicity at  $\leq$  grade-2

# Individualized Dose/Schedule Strategy: Maximize dose and minimize time off therapy

**Dose modifications done to keep dose limiting toxicity at  $\leq$  grade-2**  
Pts seen on day 14 on first course to assess toxicity

- **DL1: Starting dose: 50 mg, 28 days on / 14 days off:**
  - Reduce off period to 7 days if minimum toxicity

- **DL 2: 50 mg, 14 days on / 7 days off**
  - Individually increase # of days on treatment

- **DL 3: 50 mg, 7 days on / 7 days off**
  - Individually increase # of days on treatment

- **DL 4: 37.5 mg continuously**
  - Individualize 7 day breaks off Rx based on toxicity

- **DL 5: 25 mg continuously**
  - Individualize 7 day breaks off Rx based on toxicity

# Single Centre retrospective data: Patient characteristics for 172 pts

	patient (%)
<b>Mean age = 60</b>	
<b>Males / Females</b>	125 / 47
<b>Heng prognostic group:</b>	
Favorable	35 (20)
Intermediate	102 ( 60)
Poor	35 (20)
<b>Histology</b>	
Clear cell	136 (79.1)
Papillary	19 (11.1)
Chromophobe	4 (2.3)
Unclassified	10 (5.8)

	patient (%)
<b>Nephrectomy</b>	
yes	139 (80.8)
no	33 (19.2)
<b>Line of Therapy</b>	
1 <sup>st</sup>	103 (59.1)
2 <sup>nd</sup>	53 (31.1)
3 <sup>rd</sup>	13 (8.1)
4 <sup>th</sup>	3 (1.7)

Imaging done q3 months

## Median PFS based on Sunitinib dose/schedules used for the majority of time on Rx. N=172 RCC pts

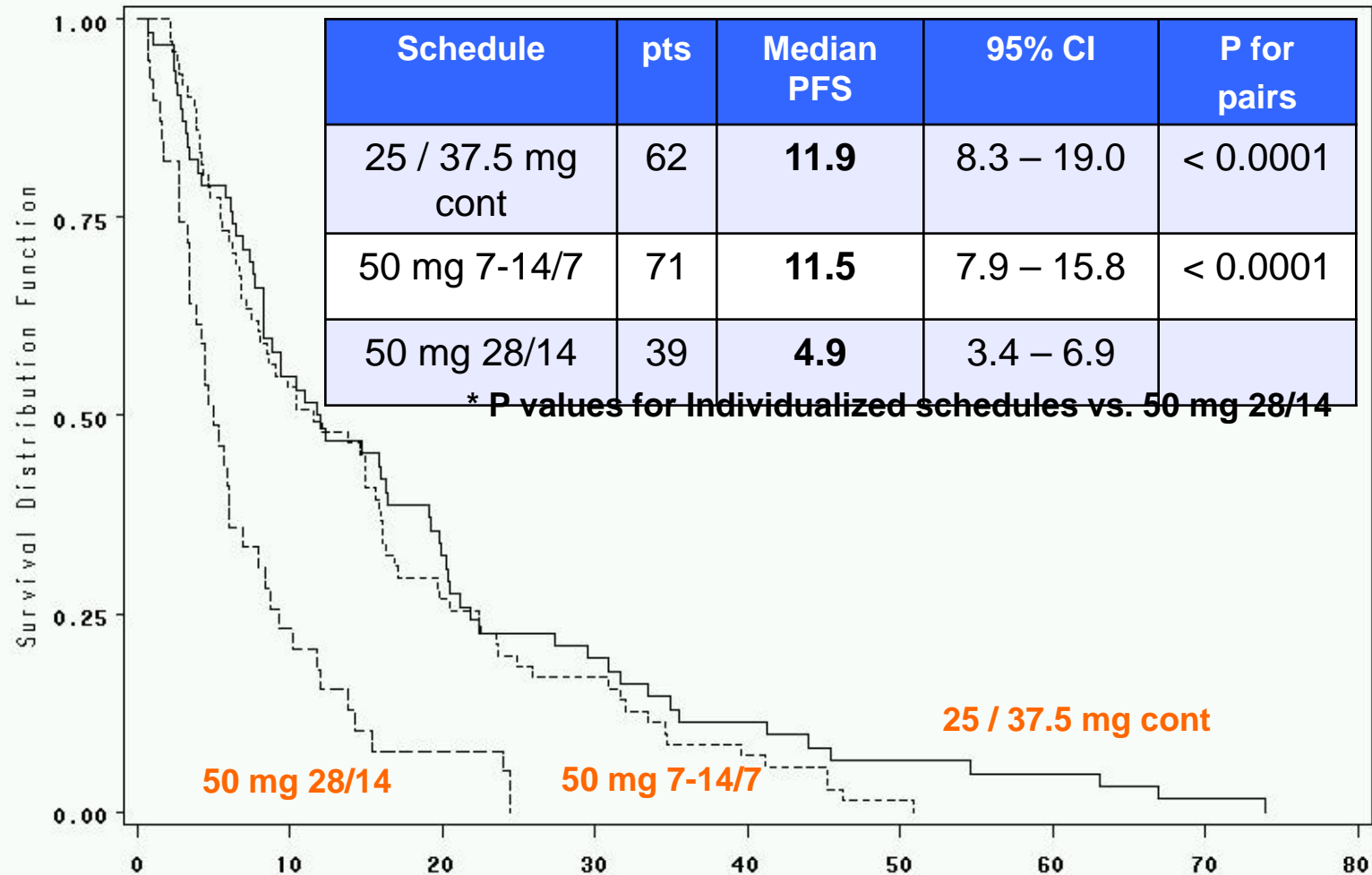
Schedule	pts	Median PFS Mo	95% CI Mo	P for Pairs*
25 / 37.5 mg cont	62	11.9	8.3 – 19.0	< 0.0001
50 mg 7-14/7	71	11.5	7.9 – 15.8	< 0.0001
50 mg 28/14	39	4.9	3.4 – 6.9	

Patient were only dose reduced (37.5 mg) if they did not tolerate the 50mg 7 / 7 schedule

The 71 (41.2%) patients that were maintained on 50 mg individualized 7-14/7 schedule would have been dose reduced to 37.5 if standard dosing criteria were used.

22.6% of patient remained on 50 mg 28/14

# 172 RCC patients: Median PFS based on Sunitinib dose/schedules used for the majority of time on Rx.





# 172 RCC patients: Response data

Schedule	pts	PD %	PR %	SD %	PR and SD %
25 / 37.5 mg cont	62	17.7	21.0	61.3	<b>82.3</b>
50 mg 7-14/7	71	22.5	18.3	59.2	<b>77.5</b>
50 mg 28/14	39	35.9	15.4	48.7	<b>64.1</b>

# Planned confirmatory trial: Patient numbers and statistics

- Based on recent studies and the standard arm of the EFFECT trial (identical eligibility criteria as this study)
  - ◆ Median PFS of 8.5 month in patients treated using standard Sunitinib dosing criteria.
- Based on the retrospective data from Bjarnason, MD-Anderson and two Pfizer trials
  - ◆ Median PFS of 14 months with an individualized dosing strategy
- Number of patient required:
  - ◆ Setting  $H_0$ : median PFS=8.5 months versus  $H_A$ : median PFS=14 months,
    - >  $\alpha=0.05$ , a two-sided, single-arm non-parametric survival test would have over 90% power to detect this difference with a total of 99 patients on study
  - ◆ Accounting for a 10% loss to follow-up, we will aim to accrue a total of 110 patients.
  - ◆ If the true median PFS is 12 or 13 months, this trial design with a sample size of 99 patients would still have 67% and 81% power respectively to detect this difference.

# Individualized Dose/Schedule Adjustment for Toxicity

- **DL1: Starting dose: 50 mg, 28 days on / 14 days off**

- **DL 2: 50 mg, 14 days on / 7 days off**
  - Individually increase # of days on treatment

- **DL 3: 50 mg, 7 days on / 7 days off**
  - Individually increase # of days on treatment

- **DL 4: 37.5 mg 14 days on / 7 days off**
  - Individually increase # of days on treatment

- **DL 5: 25 mg 14 days on / 7 days off**
  - Individually increase # of days on treatment

# Efficacy of bevacizumab appears to be independent of baseline VEGF levels

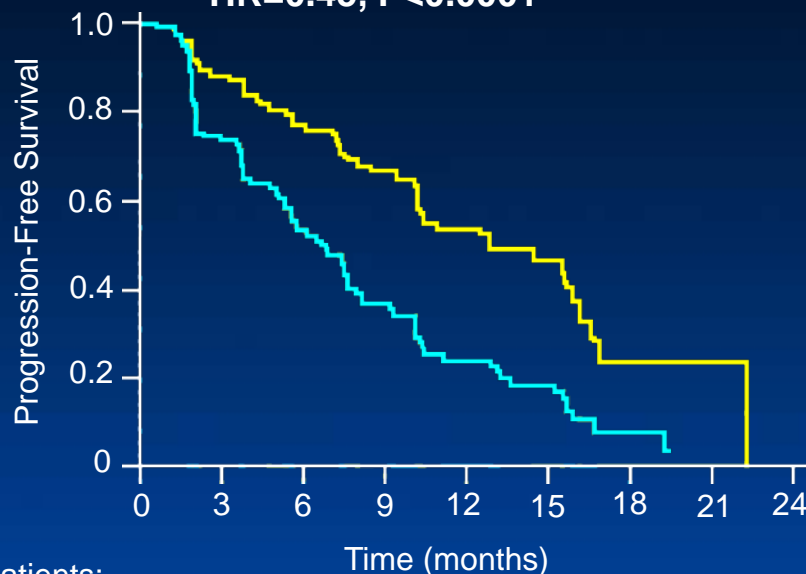
≤ Median baseline VEGF (N=191)

Median PFS

— Bevacizumab + IFN = 12.9 months

— IFN + placebo = 6.8 months

HR=0.45, P<0.0001



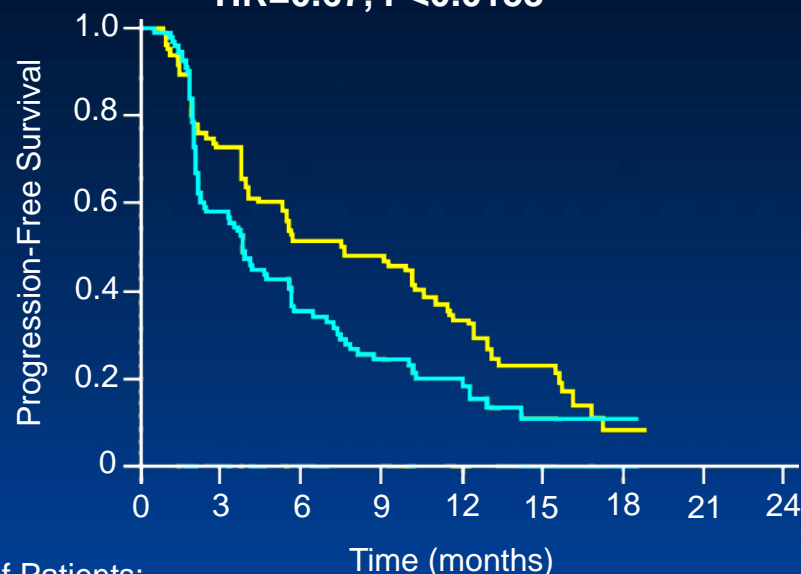
≥ Median baseline VEGF (N=191)

Median PFS

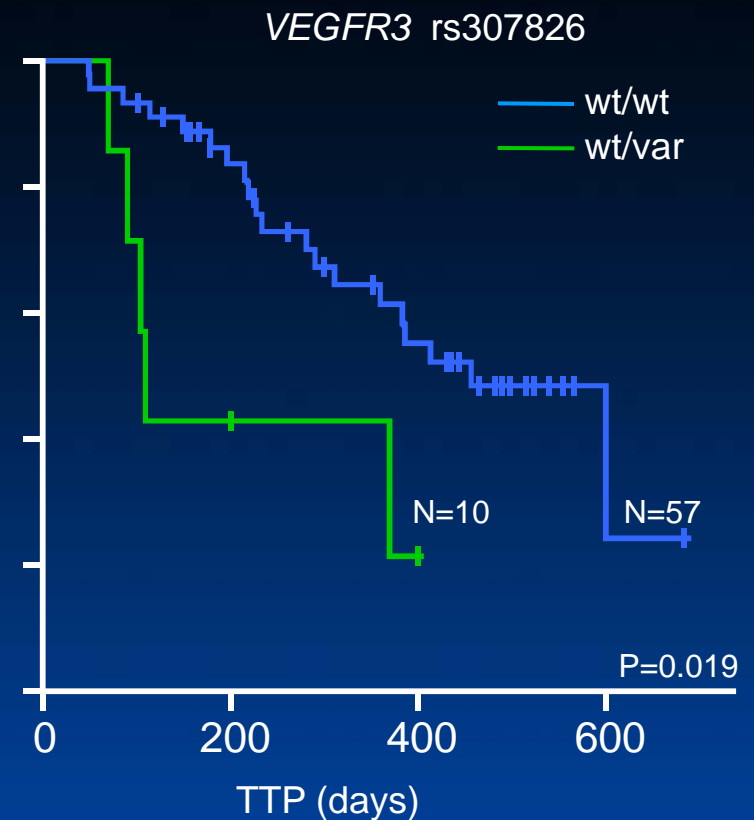
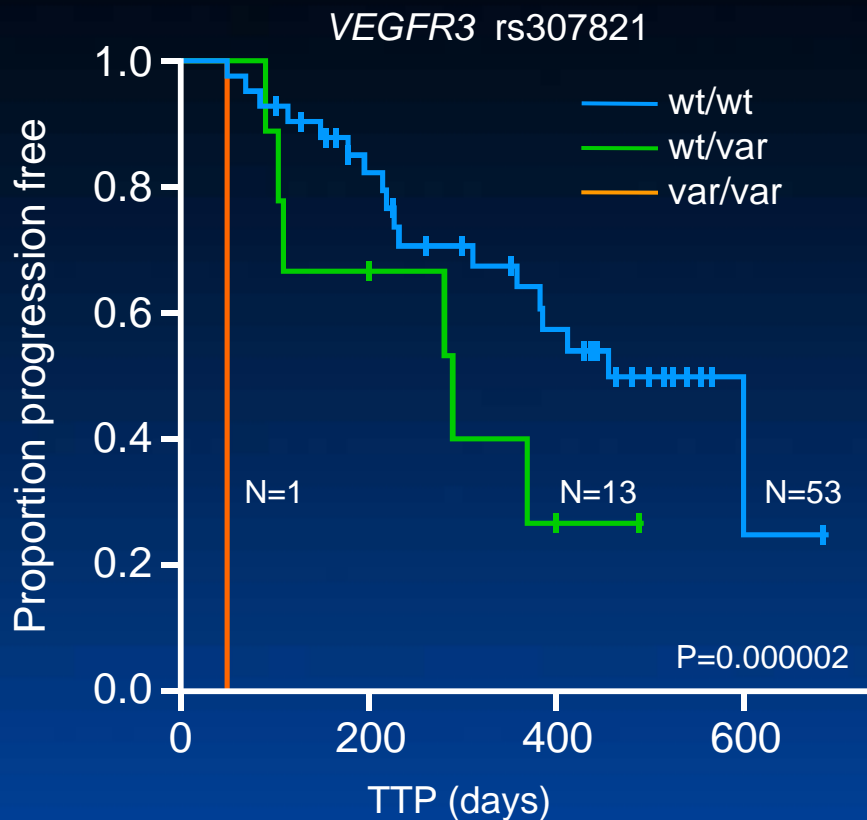
— Bevacizumab + IFN = 7.6 months

— IFN + placebo = 3.8 months

HR=0.67, P<0.0153



# VEGFR3 polymorphisms associated with differential response to sunitinib



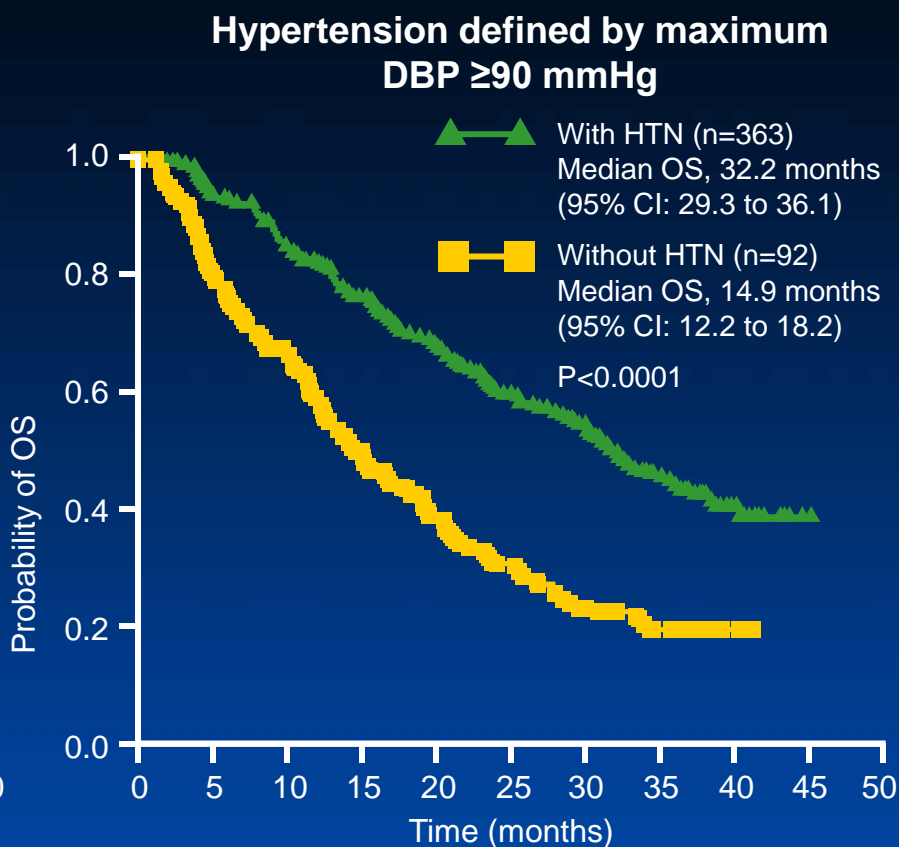
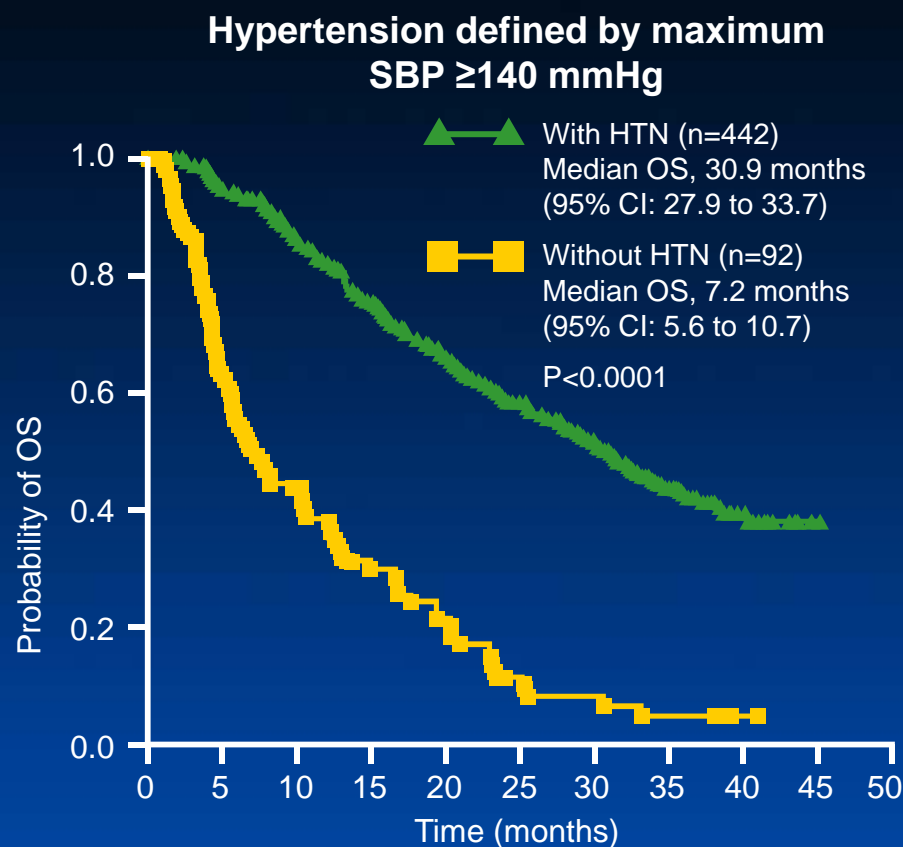
**Response**  
(PD vs CR+PR+SD)

**VEGFR3** rs307821 **P=0.045** (Univariate)

**VEGFR3** rs307826 **P=0.028** (Univariate)

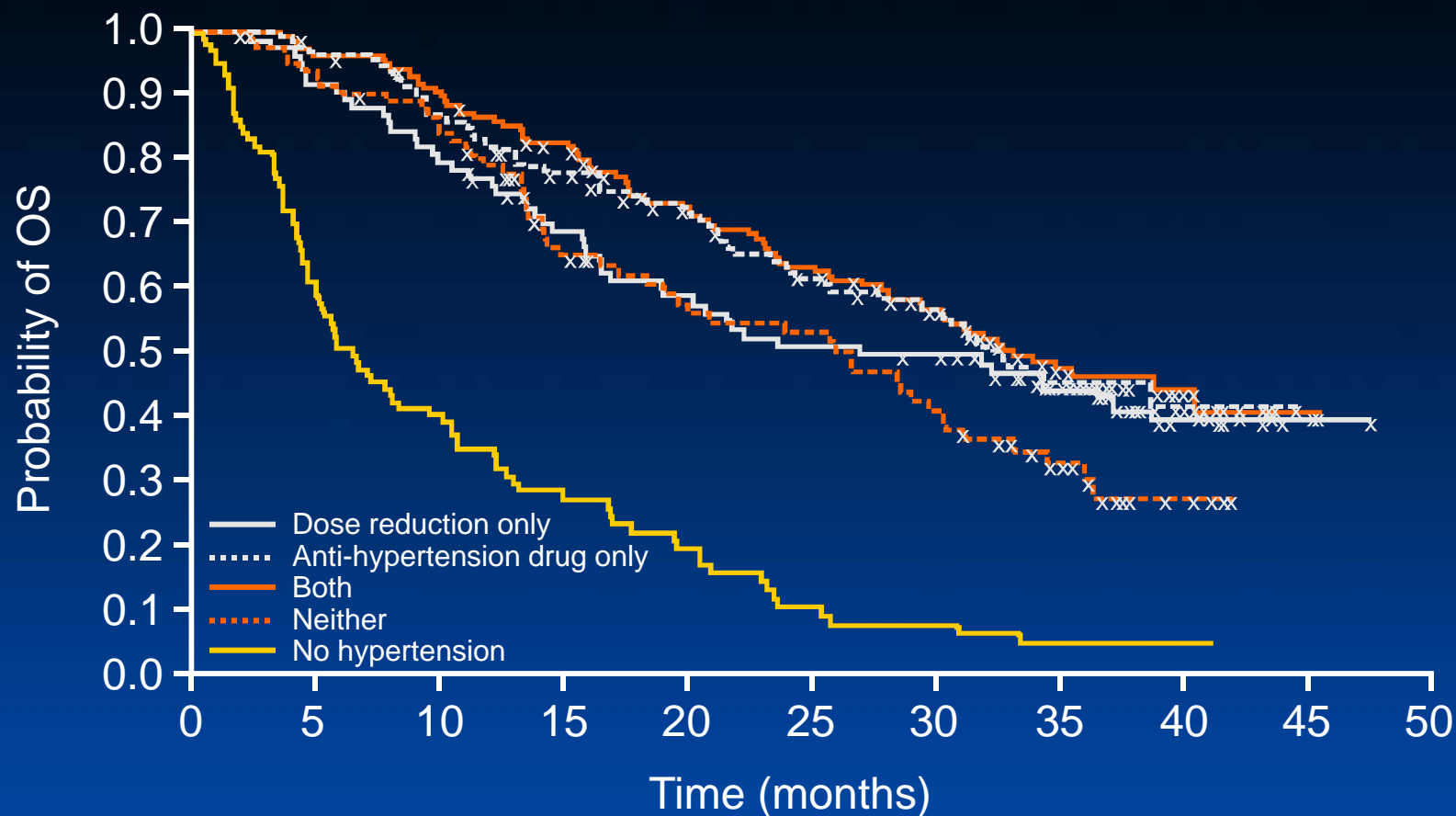
# Hypertension as a biomarker of improved efficacy during sunitinib treatment

- Hypertension associated with improved response, PFS and survival



**Do you escalate to hypertension?**

# Control of blood pressure did not diminish the effect of sunitinib



# Therapy management: Adverse event management

Key adverse events associated with targeted agents

## VEGFR-targeted therapy

**Fatigue/asthenia**  
**Skin toxicities**  
**Gastrointestinal symptoms**  
**Stomatitis**  
**Hypertension**

## mTOR inhibitors

**Metabolic abnormalities**  
**(e.g. hyperglycaemia)**  
**Fatigue/asthenia**  
**Rash**  
**Anaemia**  
**Pneumonitis (rarely)**



# Adverse-event management

## Prior to treatment

- Patient education about potential adverse events
- Assess and stabilise baseline co-morbidities

## During treatment

- Monitor patients frequently
- Prompt adverse event management
  - ◆ Standard medical intervention
  - ◆ Consider dose reductions/interruptions

# Conclusions

- Targeted agents have significantly improved patient outcomes in mRCC
  - ◆ In some patients, it is now possible to achieve long-term survival with targeted agents, such as sunitinib and temsirolimus
- To maintain patients on currently available agents and thus derive optimal clinical benefit, we need to:
  - ◆ Select treatment appropriately according to patient risk status
  - ◆ Manage the chosen therapy effectively through:
    - > Optimising dose
    - > Maximising treatment duration
    - > Prompt and effective adverse-event management

# **Novel agents and approaches for the treatment of mRCC**

# Can we further improve clinical outcomes for patients with mRCC?

- Targeted agents have significantly improved patient outcomes in mRCC
- However, resistance to targeted agents eventually develops and some patients do not respond to treatment
- Several approaches are being assessed to try to improve patient outcomes

Optimising use of  
existing agents

Ongoing trials

Combination therapy

Sequencing

Novel agents

More potent TKIs

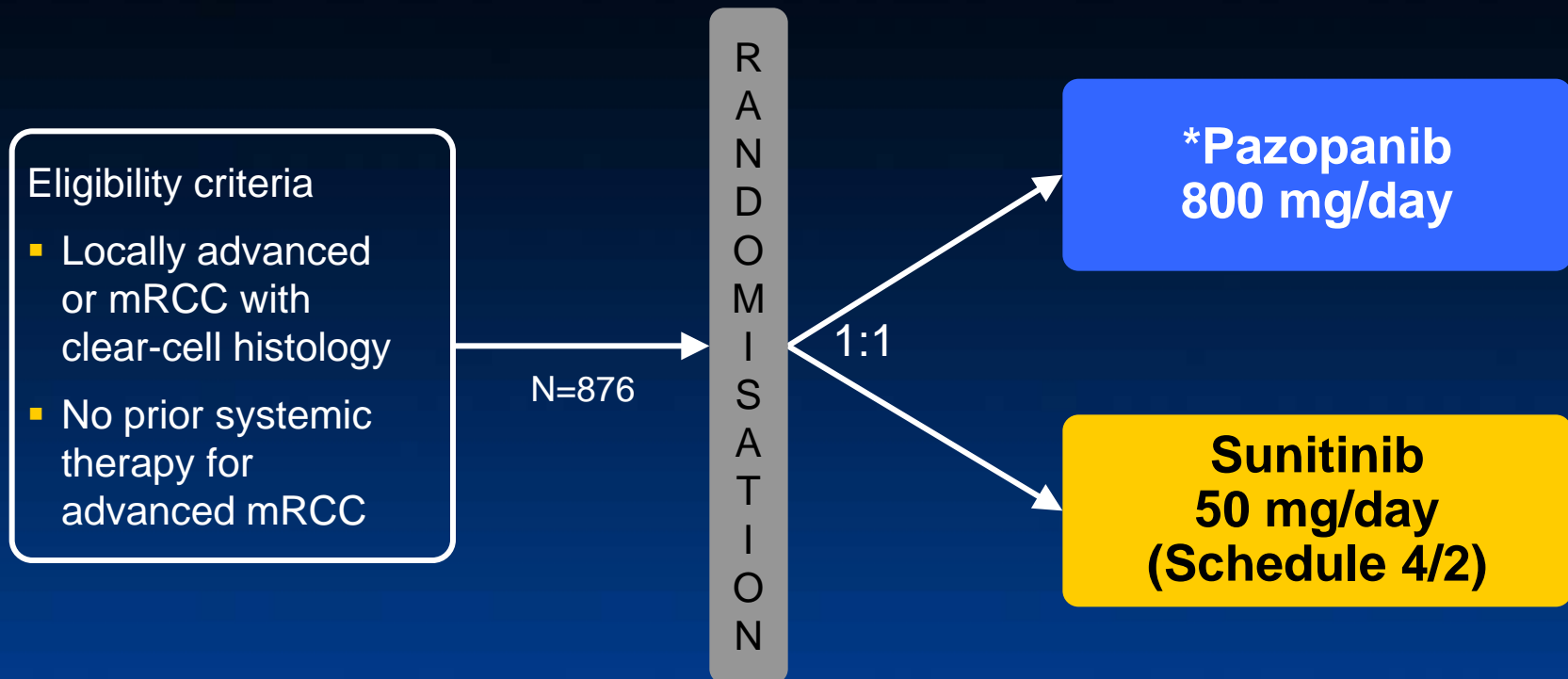
PI3K/mTOR inhibitors

Immunotherapy

# **Optimising use of existing agents**

Is there an optimal TKI for first line treatment?

# Phase III non-inferiority trial of pazopanib vs sunitinib in first-line mRCC (COMPARZ)



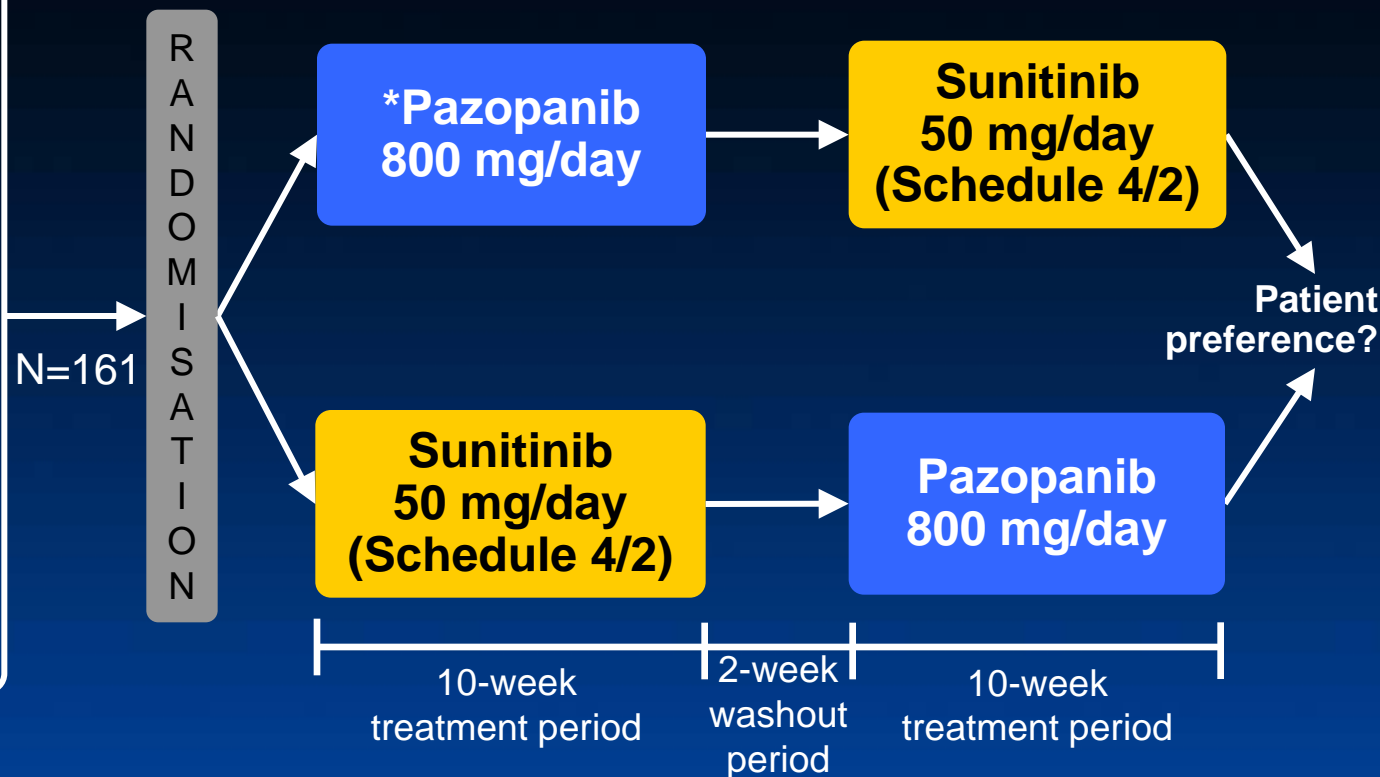
Primary endpoint: PFS

Secondary endpoints: OS, ORR, time to response, duration of response, safety, QoL

# Phase III patient preference study of sunitinib vs pazopanib (PISCES)

## Eligibility criteria:

- Locally advanced or mRCC of any histology
- Non-measurable disease permitted if metastatic disease confirmed
- No prior systemic therapy for advanced or mRCC
- ECOG PS 0 or 1



- Primary endpoints: Patient preference (questionnaire)
- Secondary endpoints: Reason for patient preference; fatigue; dose modifications and time to dose modification; safety/tolerability

# **Optimising use of existing agents**

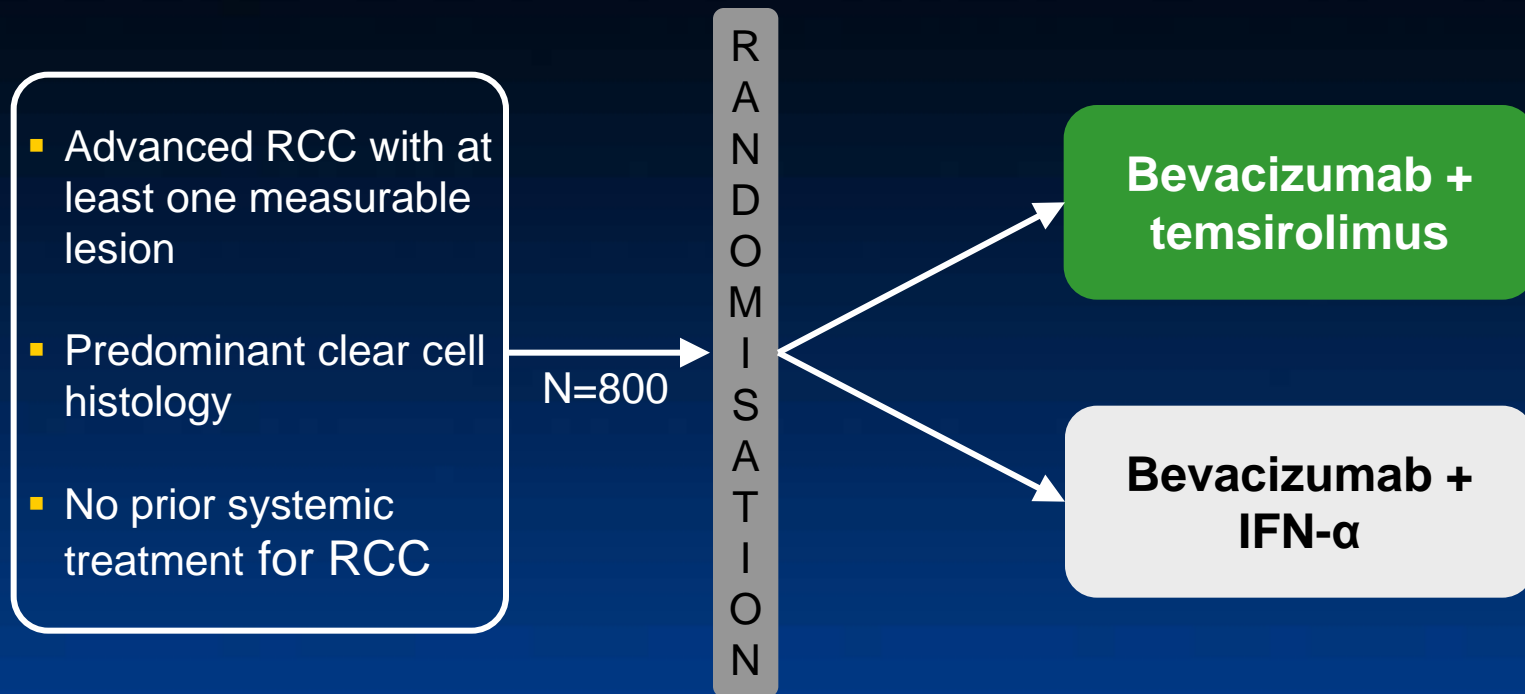
Combination and sequencing of therapy



# Combination therapy may be limited by toxicity profiles

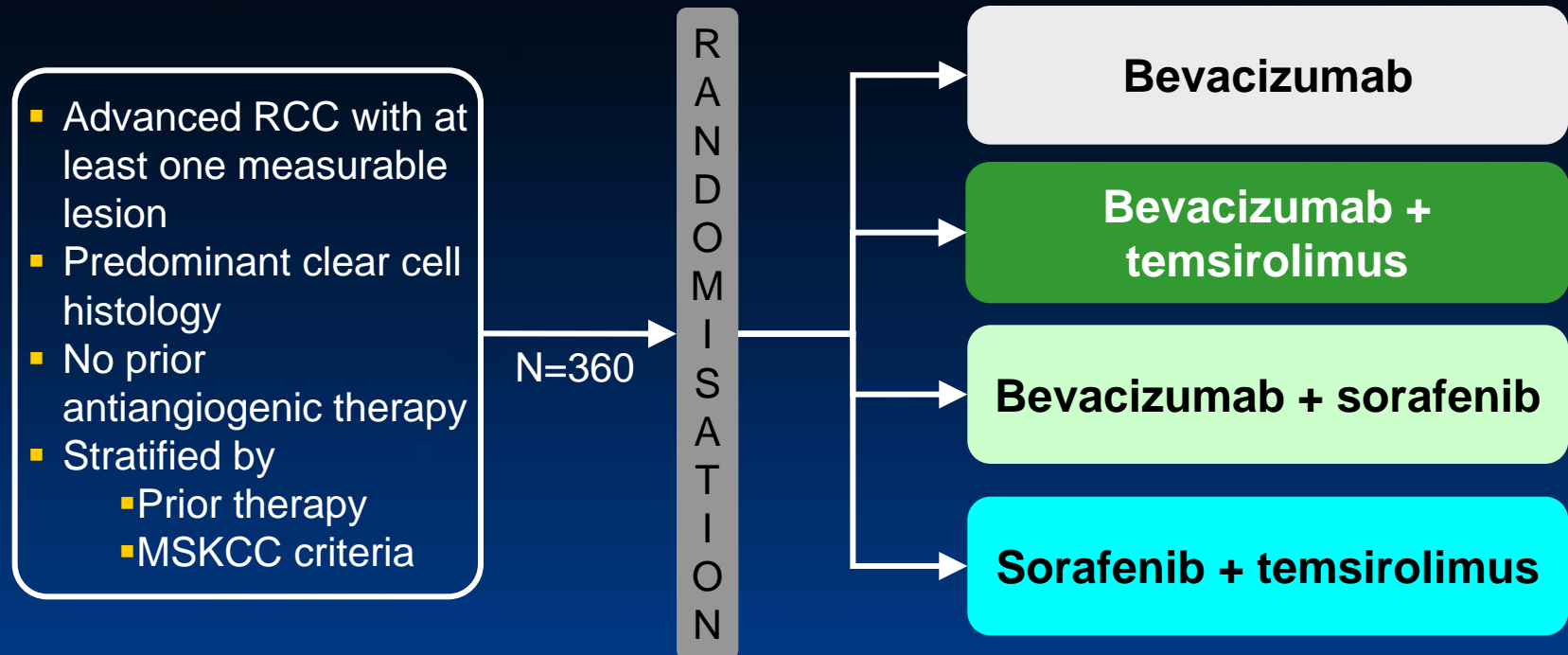
Combination	N	Frequently reported grade 3/4 AEs
Bevacizumab + sunitinib	26	Hypertension/MAHA (60%) Proteinuria (36%) Elevated lipase (28%)
Bevacizumab + sunitinib	38	Hypertension/MAHA (47%) Fatigue (24%) Thrombocytopenia (18%) Proteinuria (13%)
Bevacizumab + everolimus	80	Proteinuria (26%) Mucositis/stomatitis (15%) Fatigue (12%)
Bevacizumab + temsirolimus	80	Grade 3 or worse (77%) Grade 4 (13%) Discontinuation rate for toxicity (42%)

# Ongoing phase III combination studies in the first-line setting: INTORACT



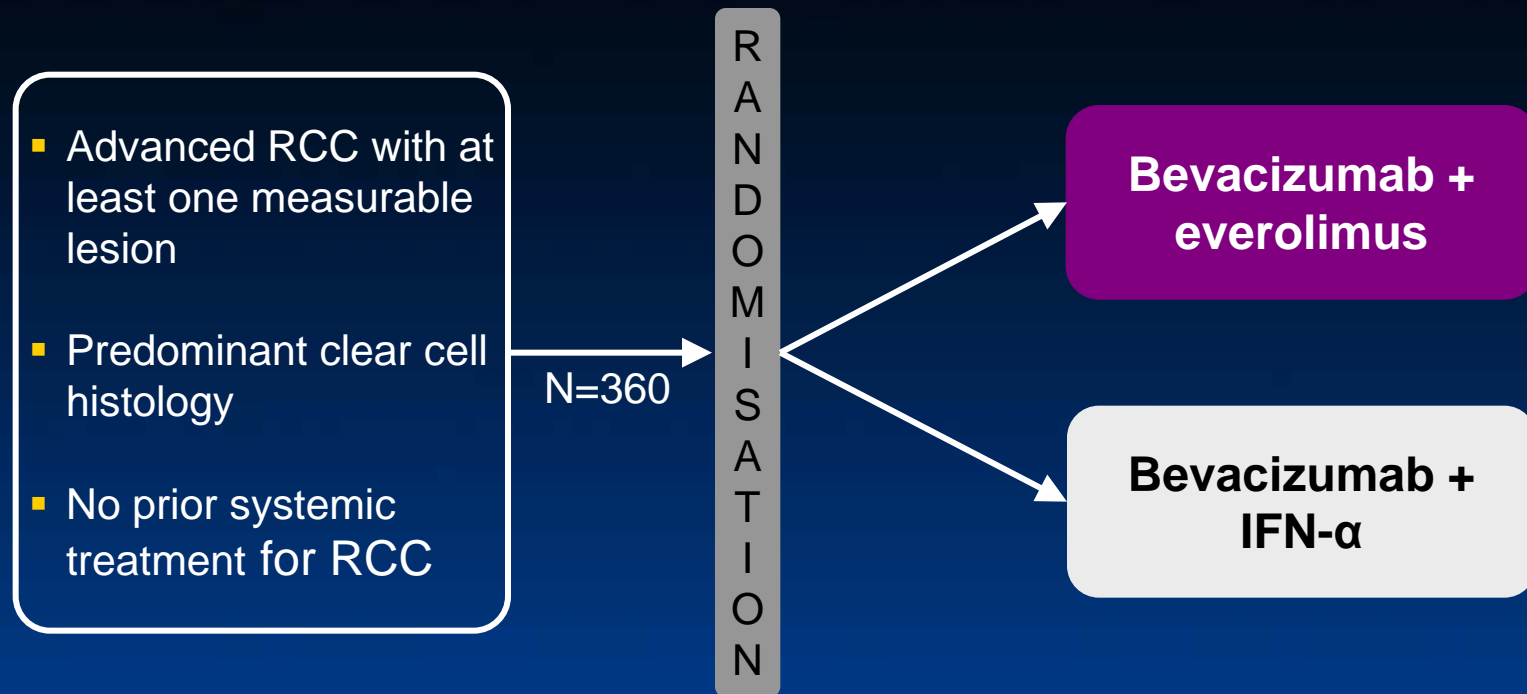
- Primary endpoint: tumour measurements and survival status
- Secondary endpoints: safety, investigator-assessed PFS, ORR, survival

# Phase II study of VEGF, RAF kinase and mTOR combination therapy: BeST



- Primary endpoint: PFS
- Secondary endpoints: Safety, OS, ORR, number and percentage of patients with SD at 6 months

# Phase II combination study: RECORD-2

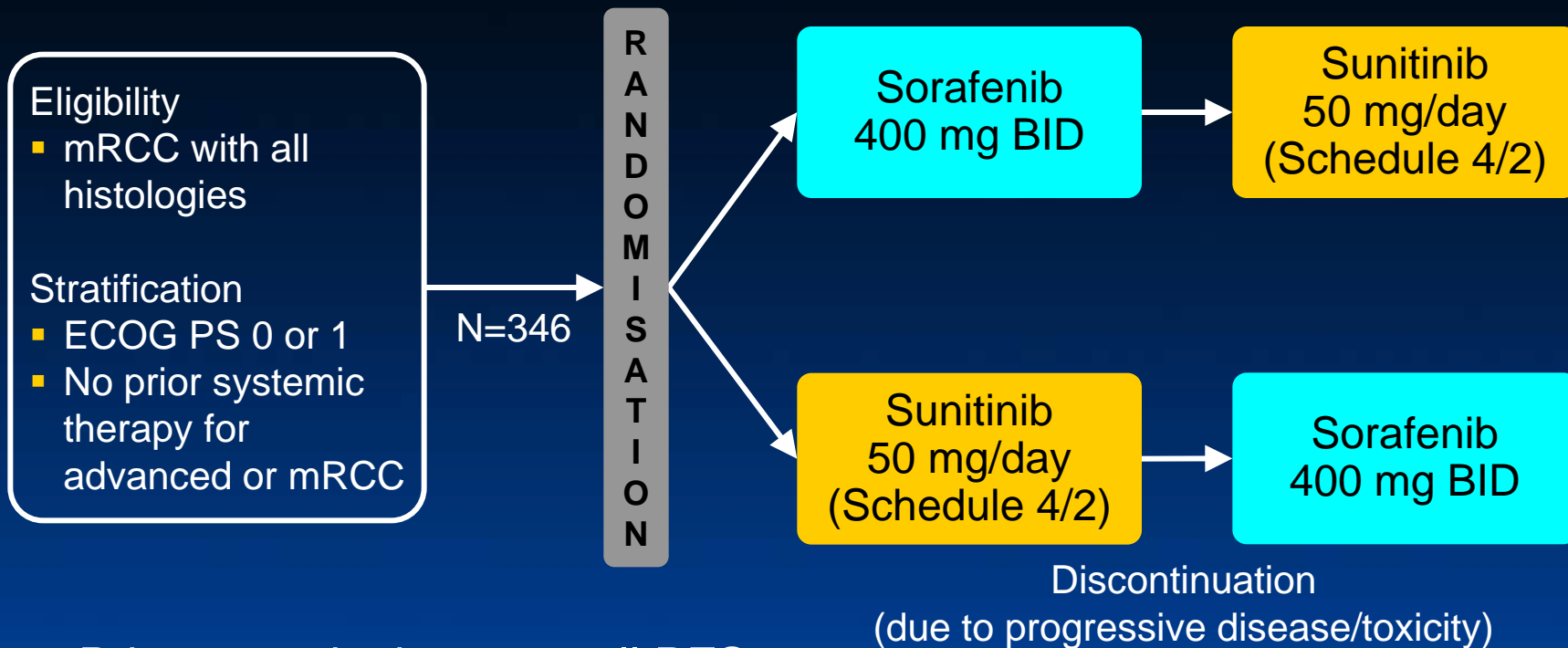


- Primary endpoint: PFS
- Secondary endpoints: OS, ORR, response duration, safety, QoL

# Sequential therapy with current agents

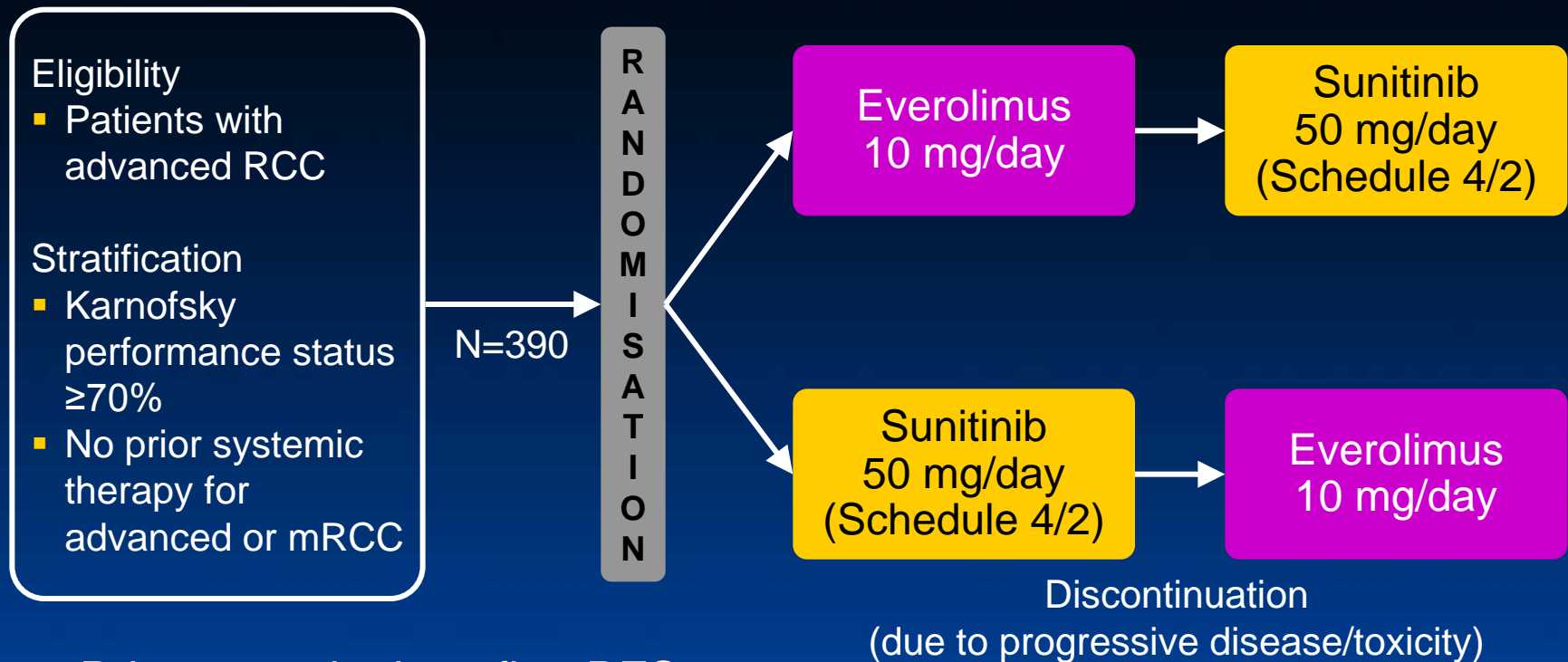
- Sequencing of therapy is commonly performed in clinical practice
  - ◆ May enable resistance to individual agents to be overcome
  - ◆ Less toxicity than combination therapy
- For patients who have progressed following a tyrosine kinase inhibitor, everolimus is currently recommended as second-line treatment
- The optimal sequence remains to be determined
  - ◆ Ongoing trials may provide further information

# SWITCH: Phase III sequential study of sorafenib and sunitinib



- Primary endpoints: overall PFS
- Secondary endpoints: total time to progression, OS, disease control rate and cardiotoxicity

# RECORD-3: Phase II sequential study of sunitinib and everolimus



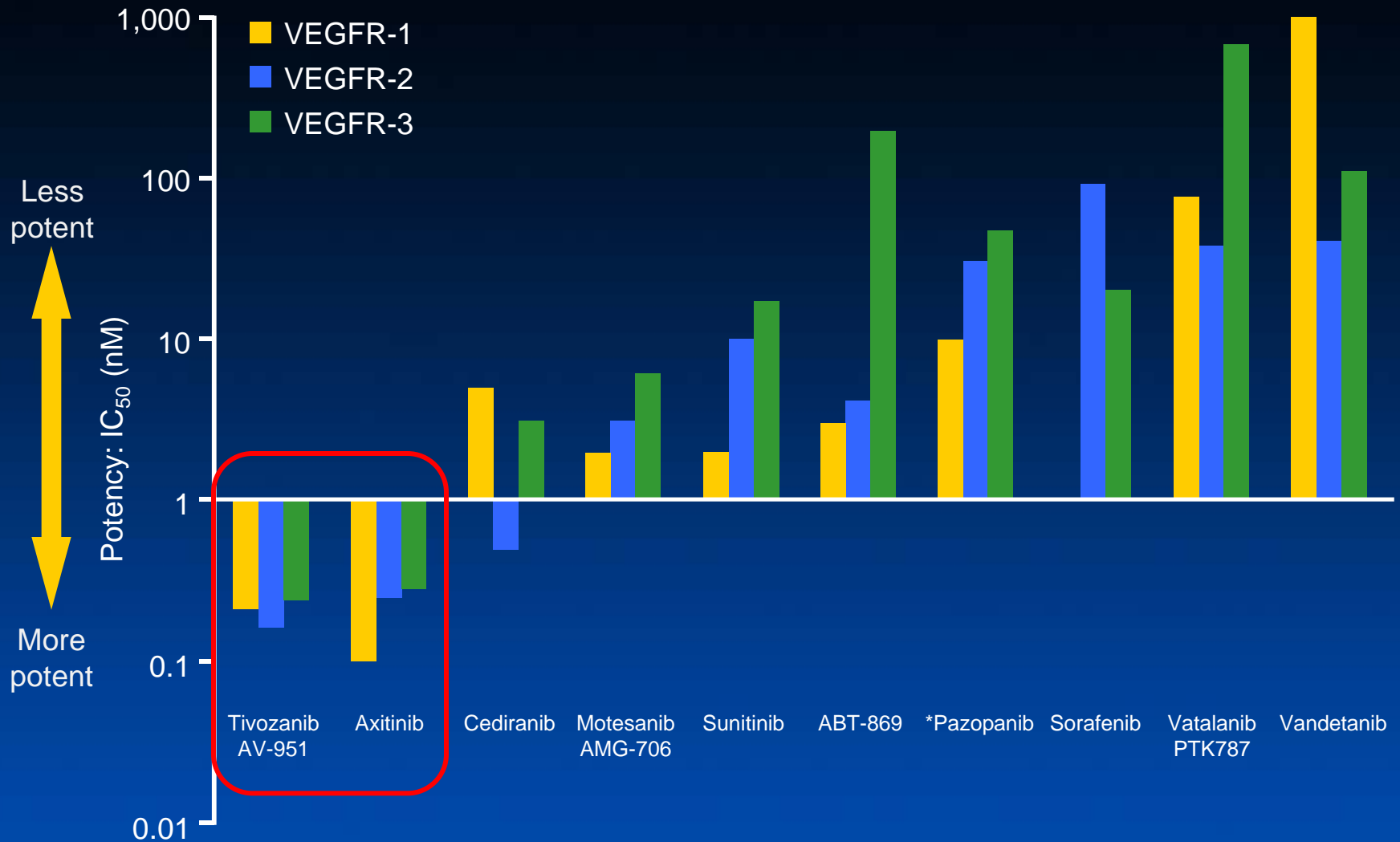
- Primary endpoints: first PFS
- Secondary endpoints: second PFS, ORR, duration of response, patient-reported outcomes, OS

## **Novel agents**

Tyrosine kinase inhibitors in development:  
Axitinib and Tivozanib



# Relative potency of VEGF-targeting TKIs



\*Conditionally approved

Figure modified using data from Chow LQM, Eckhardt SG. *J Clin Oncol*. 2007  
 Eskens FALM, et al. AACR 2008. Abstract LB-201; Hu-Lowe DD, *Clin Cancer Res* 2008

# Phase III study of tivozanib vs sorafenib in first- or second-line setting (TIVO-1)

## Eligibility criteria:

- Recurrent or mRCC with a clear-cell component
- Measurable disease
- Treatment-naïve or one prior treatment:
  - Cytokines
  - Investigational agent
  - Hormonal therapy
  - Chemotherapy
- ECOG PS 0 or 1

N=500

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1:1

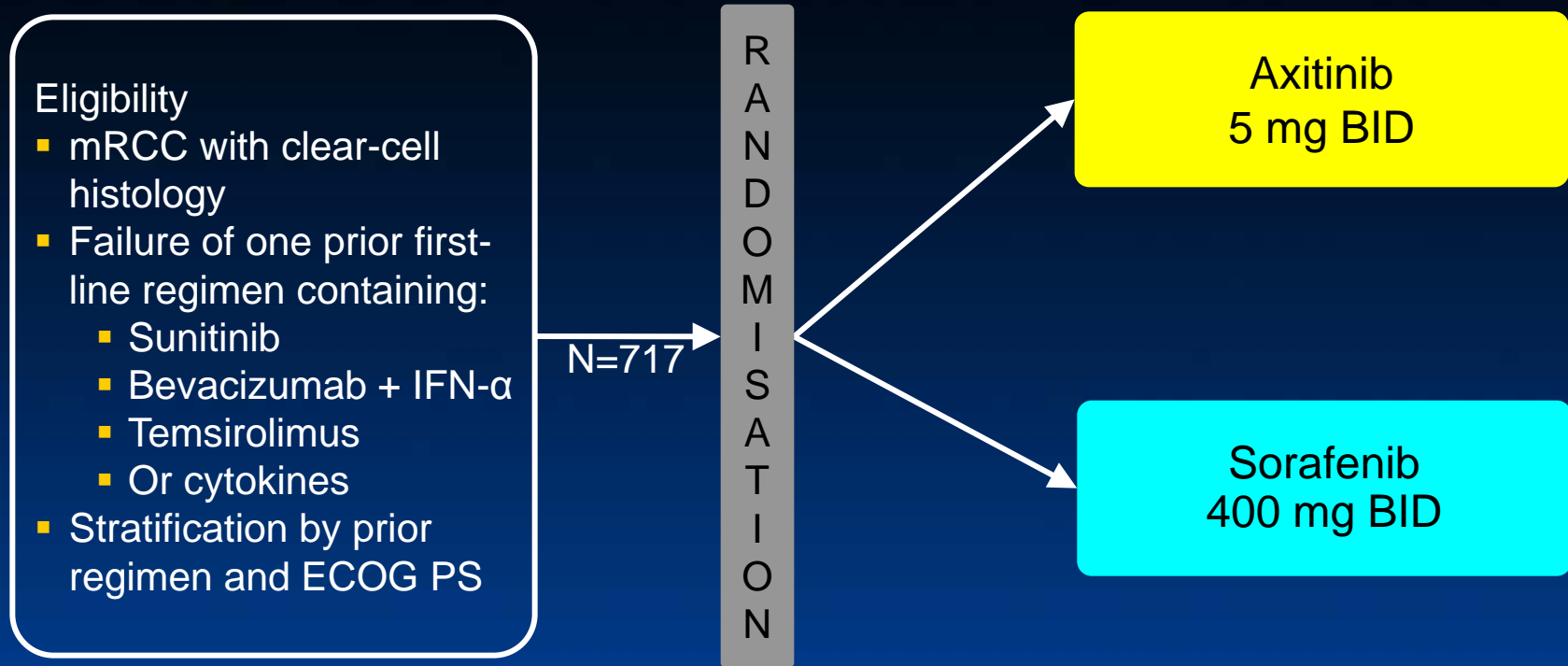
Tivozanib  
1.5 mg/day  
(3 weeks on-treatment;  
1 week off-treatment)

Extension protocol  
(NCT01076010)

Sorafenib  
400 mg BID

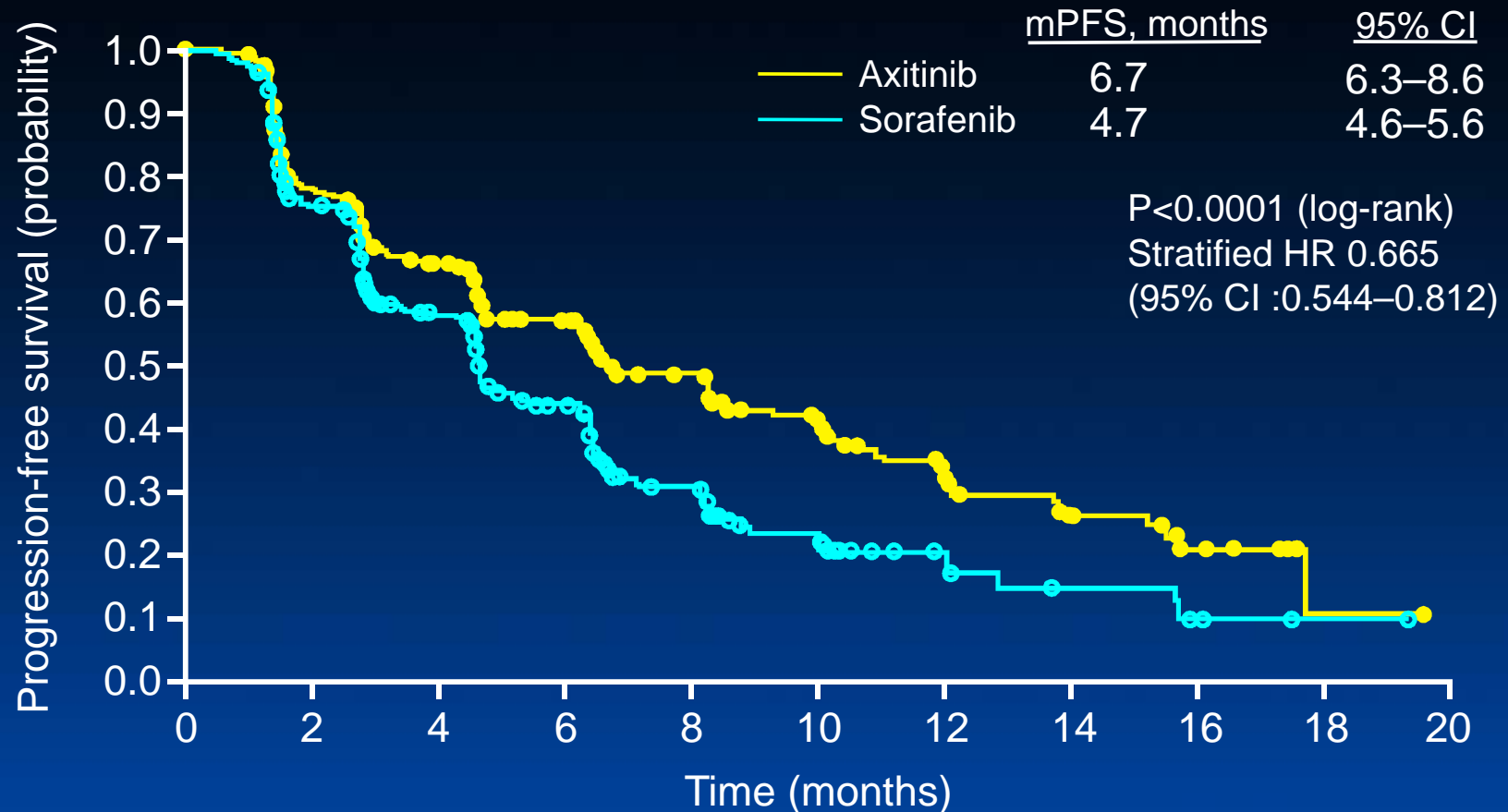
- Primary endpoint: PFS
- Secondary endpoints: OS, ORR, duration of response, safety and tolerability, kidney-specific symptoms and health outcome measurements, pharmacokinetics

# Phase III study of axitinib versus sorafenib in second-line (AXIS)



- Primary endpoints: PFS
- Secondary endpoints: OS, ORR, safety and tolerability, duration of response, patient-reported outcomes

# AXIS: Axitinib significantly prolonged PFS versus sorafenib



Subjects at risk, n

Axitinib	361	256	202	145	96	64	38	20	10	1	0
Sorafenib	362	224	157	100	51	28	12	6	3	1	0

# Phase III study of first- and second-line axitinib versus sorafenib in mRCC patients (1051)

## Eligibility Criteria:

- Histologically-confirmed mRCC with clear cell component
- Measurable disease
- No prior systemic first-line therapy or RECIST-defined progressive disease following one prior systemic first-line regimen for mRCC containing sunitinib, cytokines, or both

N=447  
2:1

R  
A  
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M  
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S  
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O  
N

Axitinib  
5 mg BID

Sorafenib  
400 mg BID

- Stratification (first line):
  - ECOG PS (0 vs. 1)
- Stratification (second line):
  - ECOG PS (0 vs. 1)
  - Prior therapy (sunitinib vs. cytokine)

**Primary endpoint:** PFS

**Secondary endpoints:** OS, response rate, safety and tolerability, duration of response, kidney specific symptoms and health status

# Conclusions

- Despite the clinical benefits observed with current targeted agents, challenges remain to further improve patient outcomes
- Evidence demonstrates sequential therapy is the preferred treatment strategy
  - ◆ Ongoing trials will offer further evidence regarding the optimal sequencing of current and future agents
- Novel agents in clinical development may also provide further treatment options
  - ◆ Axitinib has demonstrated efficacy as second-line treatment for mRCC and supports sequencing of TKI to TKI
  - ◆ Many new agents are currently in phase 3 development