

The 2018 GIST award goes to Dr. med. Michael Montemurro, CHUV, Lausanne and SAKK

November 22, 2018 – The GIST Group Switzerland has awarded its GIST prize for the ninth time. This year's recipients are Dr. Michael Montemurro, CHUV, Lausanne and SAKK

The laudatio was held by Prof. em. Dr. Dr. h.c. Urs Metzger, member of the GIST Group Award Committee and medical advisor of the GIST- Group Switzerland.

The GIST Group Switzerland, the support group for patients with gastrointestinal stromal tumor (GIST), has awarded its science prize for the ninth time. The 2018 GIST prize, worth CHF 10,000, was awarded to Dr. Michael Montemurro for his publication on:

„Long-term outcome of dasatinib first-line treatment in GIST: A multicenter two-stage phase II trial SAKK 56/07“

M. Montemurro, A. Cioffi, J. Domont, P. Rutkowski, A.D. Roth, R. von Moos, R. Inauen, M. Toulmonde, R.O. Burkhard, C. Knuesli, S. Bauer, P. Cassier, H. Schwarb, A. Le Cesne, D. Koeberle, D. Baertschi, D. Dietrich, C. Biaggi, J. Prior, S. Leyvraz

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Overview of the study

The prognosis of patients suffering from Gastrointestinal Stromal Tumor (GIST) has been improved over the past decades, mostly due to imatinib and other tyrosine kinase inhibitors (TKI) such as sunitinib and regorafenib. However, many of the patients develop resistance to the drugs over time, and further therapies are urgently needed.

Dr. Montemurro and swiss, french, polish and german colleagues investigated the effect of dasatinib, a novel and broad TKI, in GIST patients naïve for therapies. 42 patients were eligible for the SAKK 56/07 trial. Already after one month of therapy 74% of the patients showed a partial or complete response as assessed by FDG-PET, meaning the FDG uptake decreased substantially or completely. The median time of tumor-control by dasatinib was 13.6 months. About half of the patients experienced clinically relevant side-effects, which were most frequently pulmonary or gastrointestinal.

The SAKK 56/07-trial shows that dasatinib has an effect in GIST. The group of GIST patients benefiting most from dasatinib, as well as the exact role of dasatinib in the management algorithm of GIST needs to be explored in further trials.

The award ceremony took place on 22. November 2018 at the semi-annual meeting of the Swiss Group for Clinical Cancer Research (SAKK), held in Zurich.

GISTs are very rare cancers of the gastrointestinal tract that are classified as sarcomas, a group of malignant tumors that affect connective tissue, bone and muscle. They occur in 10-15 people per one million population per year. SAKK, a non-profit organization, also conducts studies on such rare forms of cancer.

Background information

Gastrointestinal stromal tumors (GISTs)

Gastrointestinal stromal tumors are rare malignancies of the gastrointestinal tract. They are classified as sarcomas, a group of malignant tumors that affect connective tissue, bone and muscle. Some 40-70% of primary GISTs occur in the stomach, 20-40% in the small intestine and 5-15% in the colon and rectum. GISTs must not be confused with the much more common cancers of the gastrointestinal tract that are classified as carcinomas. GISTs account for only about 2% of all gastrointestinal tract cancers. Carcinoma may occur at the same sites as GISTs, but their origins and treatment are completely different.

GIST Group Switzerland

The GIST Group Switzerland is an organization for the support of those affected by gastrointestinal stromal tumors. It supports every effort to improve the treatment of GISTs. To this end, the GIST Group awards an annual prize to organizations or individuals committed to achieving this goal. The prize is awarded for lectures, publications, panel discussions, scientific or socially relevant projects. The award of CHF 10,000 is donated by the GIST Group Switzerland.

Further information: www.gist.ch, gist@gist.ch

SAKK

The Swiss Group for Clinical Cancer Research (SAKK) is a non-profit organization, which has been conducting clinical trials in oncology since 1965. Its primary objective is to research new cancer therapies, to develop existing treatments further and to improve the chances of a cure for patients with cancer. This takes place through cooperative projects within Switzerland and in collaboration with centers and study groups abroad. The SAKK is supported by a service-level agreement with the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) and also by partners such as the Swiss Cancer League and Swiss Cancer Research. For more information, go to www.sakk.ch, info@sakk.ch

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