

# Beyond ADC target expression: Understanding ADC properties and pharmacology

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ADC Therapeutic Development  
Zymeworks

## Raffaele Colombo

*I have the following relevant financial relationships to disclose:*

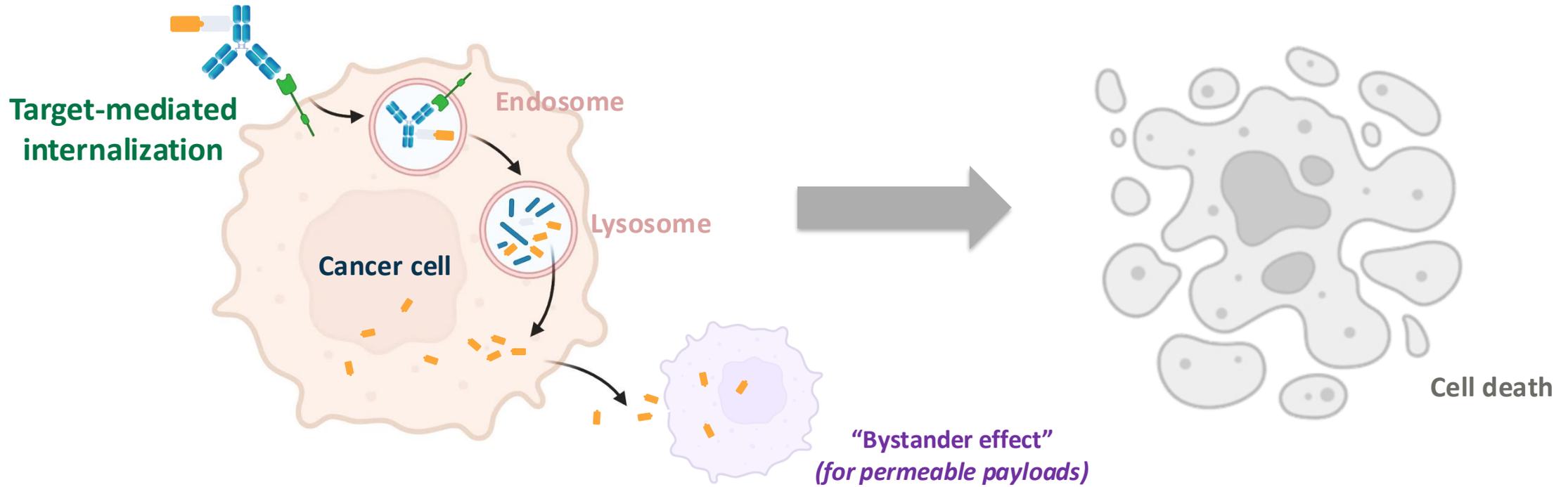
**Employee of: Zymeworks Inc.**

**Stockholder in: Zymeworks Inc., AstraZeneca**

*In addition:*

**I will not discuss side effects or endorse any of the drugs mentioned in this presentation**

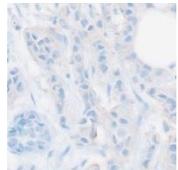
# ADC target expression: an elusive biomarker?



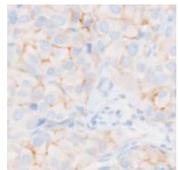
- ***Does target expression correlate with ADC response?***
- ***Are there alternative mechanisms for ADCs over and above direct tumor targeting?***

# Different scores are used to represent target expression based on immunohistochemical (IHC) staining

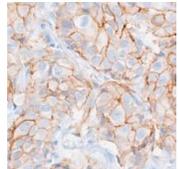
## IHC (0-3+)



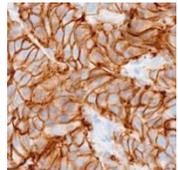
IHC = 0



IHC = 1+



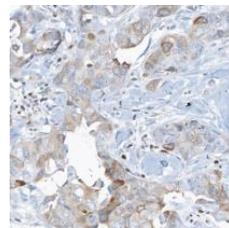
IHC = 2+



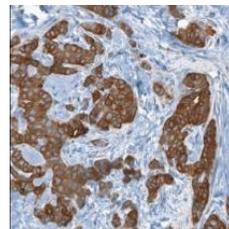
IHC = 3+

*IHC 0 (no staining), IHC 1+ (weak staining), IHC 2+ (moderate staining), and IHC 3+ (strong staining)*

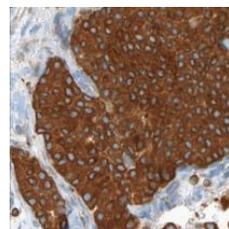
## H-score (0-300)



H-score = 50



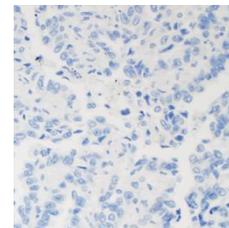
H-score = 150



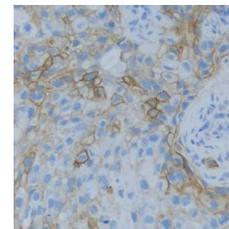
H-score = 270

*H-score = (1 × percentage of weak staining) + (2 × percentage of moderate staining) + (3 × percentage of strong staining)*

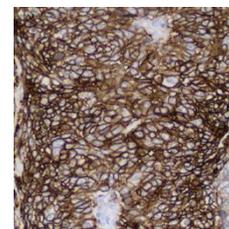
## TPS (0-100)



TPS = 3



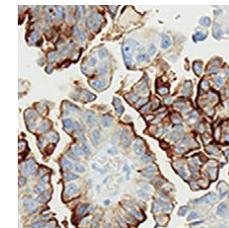
TPS = 40



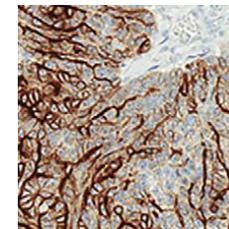
TPS = 100

*Tumor proportion score (TPS) = percentage of viable tumor cells with partial or complete membrane staining at any intensity*

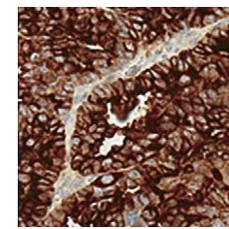
## PS2+ (0-100)



PS2+ = 30



PS2+ = 60

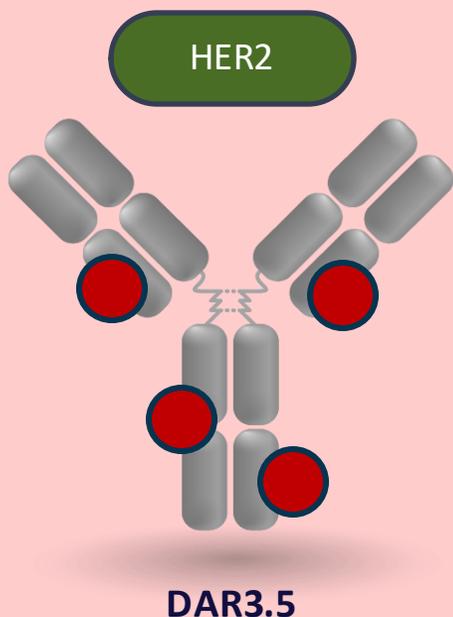


PS2+ = 95

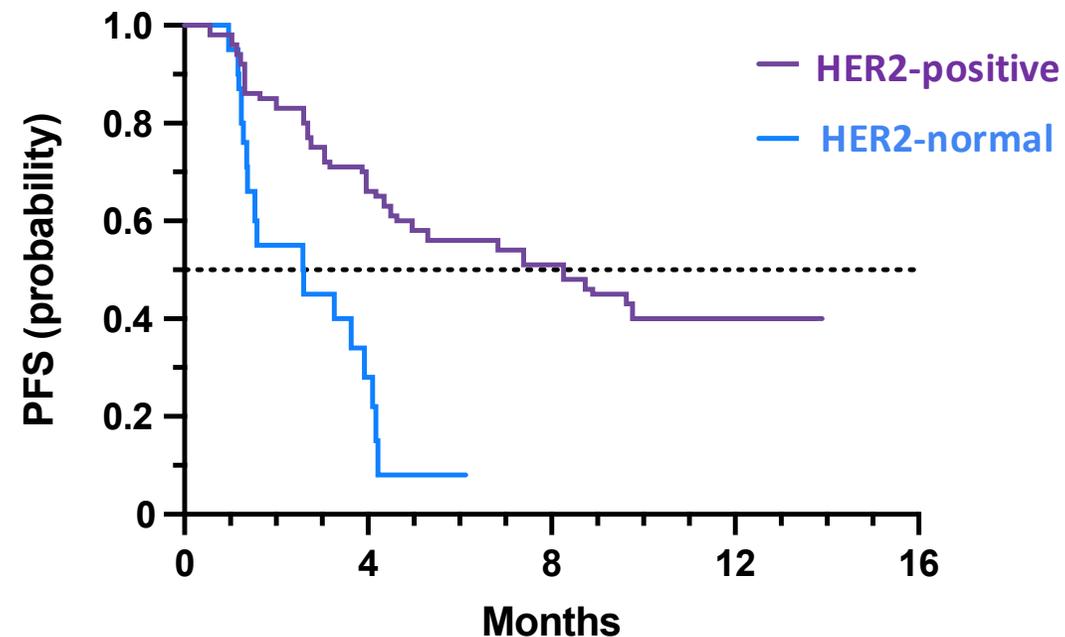
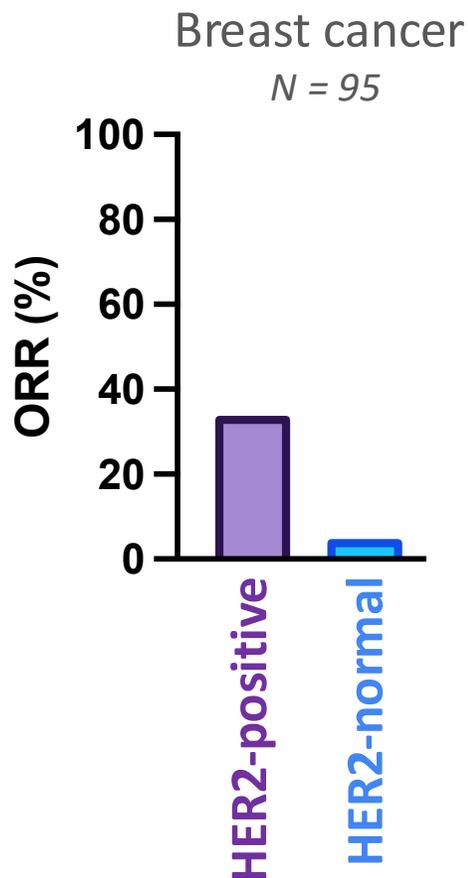
*PS2+ scoring = percentage of viable tumor cells with moderate [2+] or strong [3+] staining intensity*

# T-DM1 showed clear benefits in patients with HER2-positive breast cancer

## Trastuzumab emtansine (T-DM1)



**DM1 (maytansinoid)**  
Non-cleavable linker

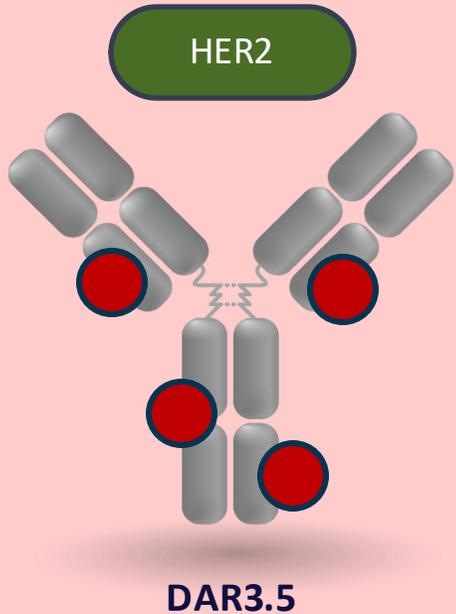


HER2-positive = IHC 3+ or IHC 2+/FISH+

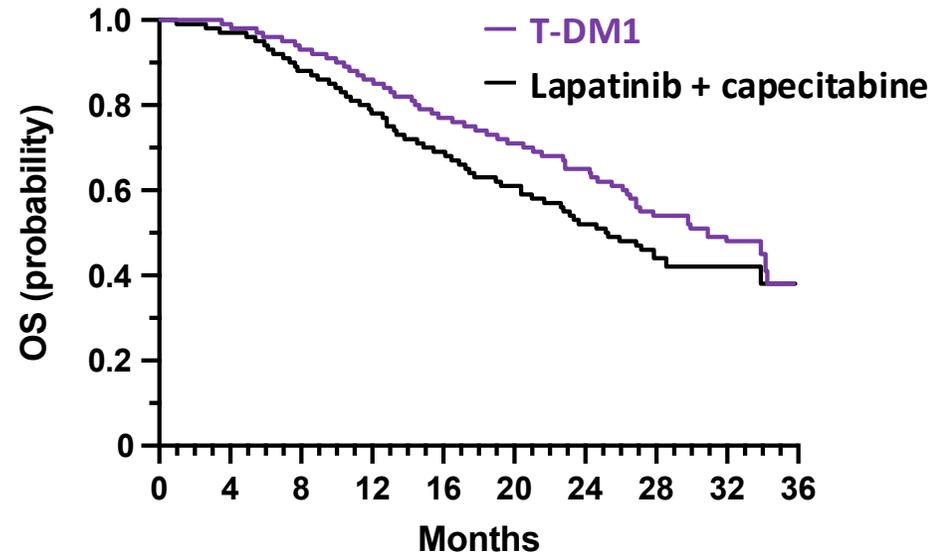
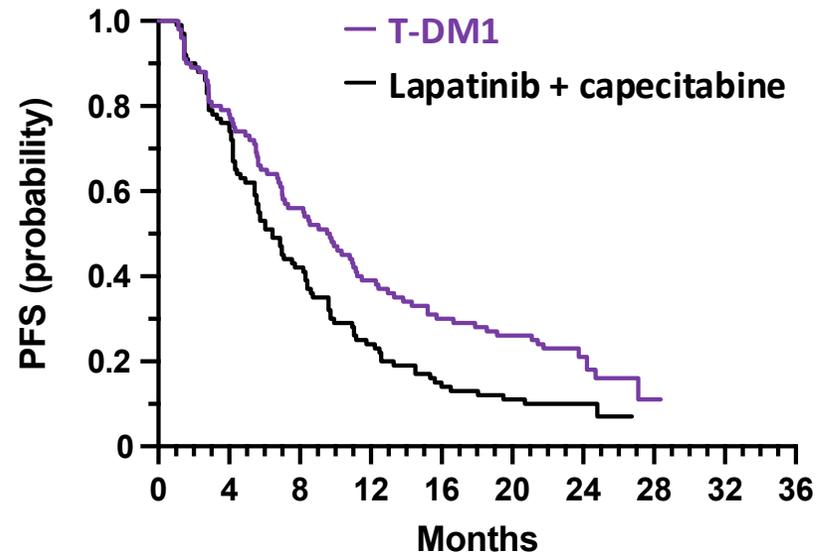
HER2-normal = IHC 2+/FISH- or IHC 1+ or IHC 0

# T-DM1 showed clear benefits in patients with HER2-positive breast cancer

## Trastuzumab emtansine (T-DM1)



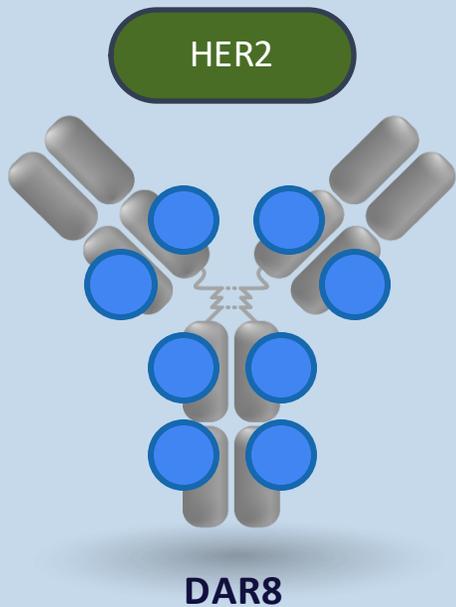
## EMILIA trial (HER2-positive breast cancer) N = 991



... which led to the approval of T-DM1 for patients with HER2-positive breast cancer!

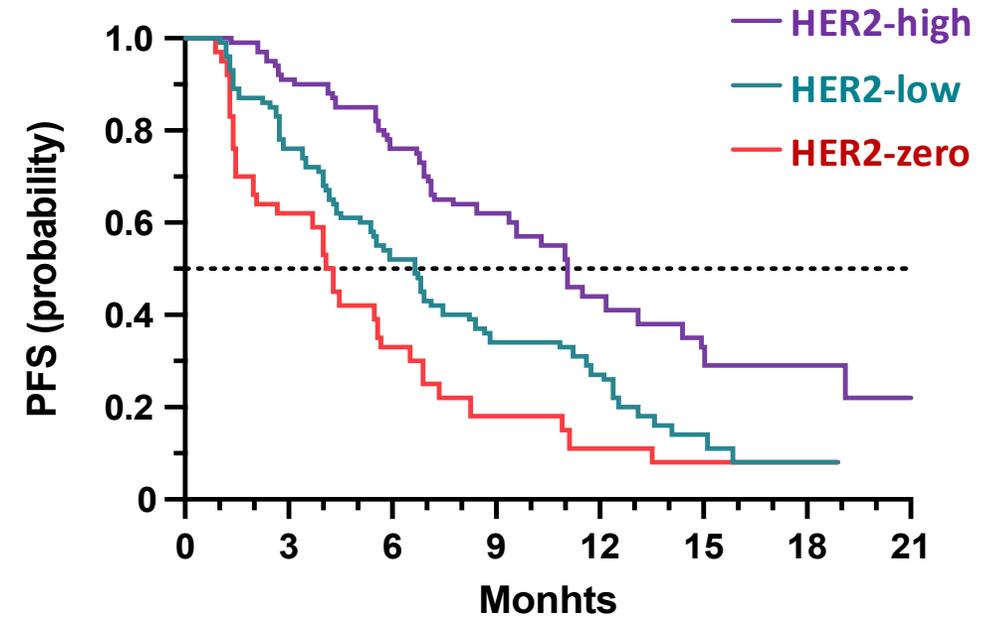
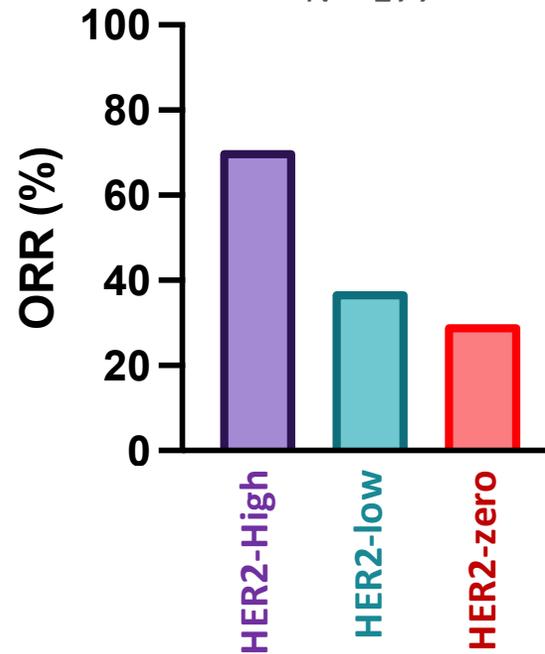
# T-DXd showed benefits across all HER2-expressions, but better efficacy in patients with HER2-high breast cancer

## Trastuzumab deruxtecan (T-DXd)



## DAISY trial

N = 177



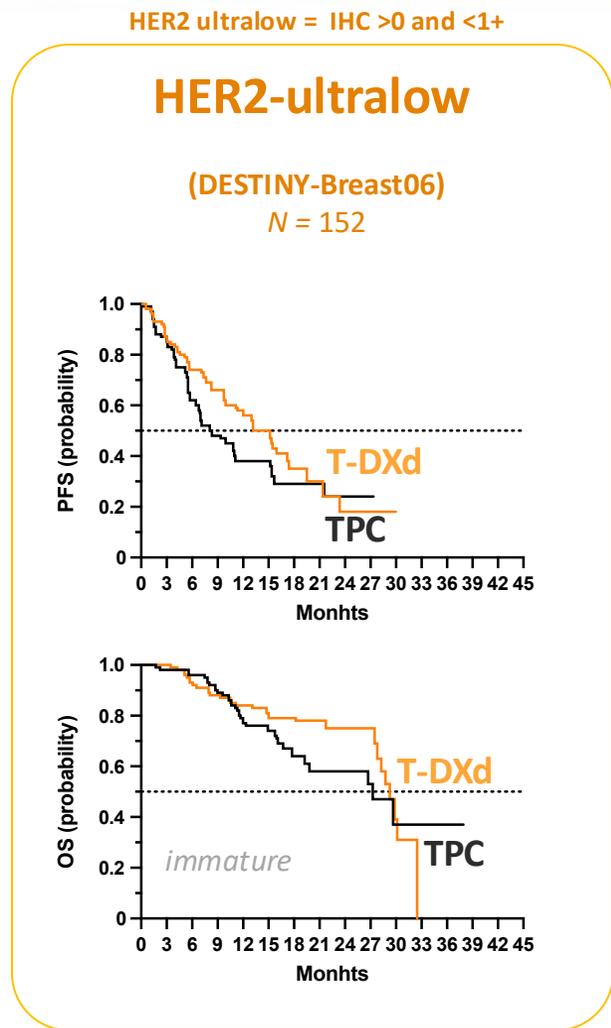
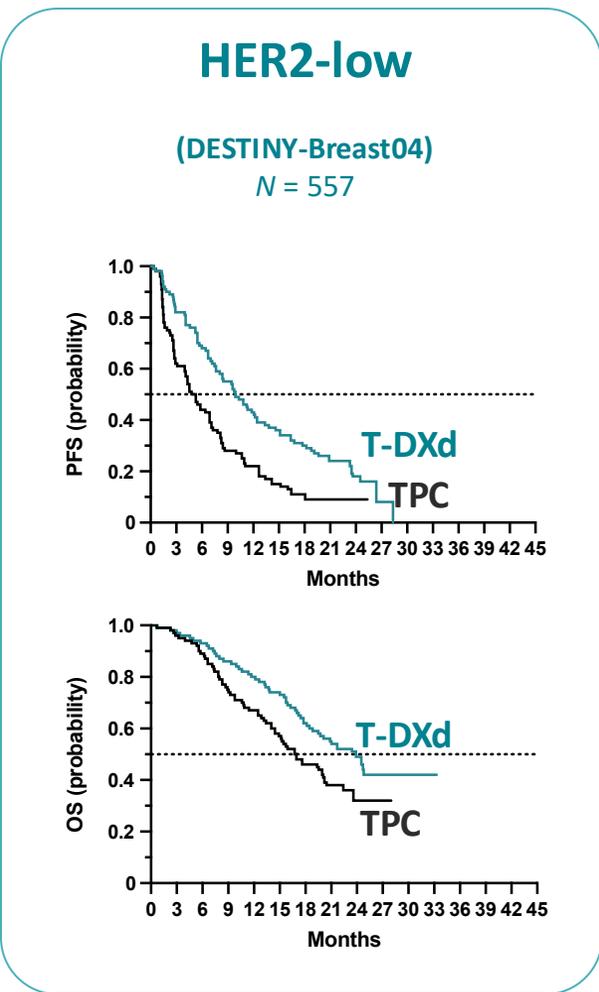
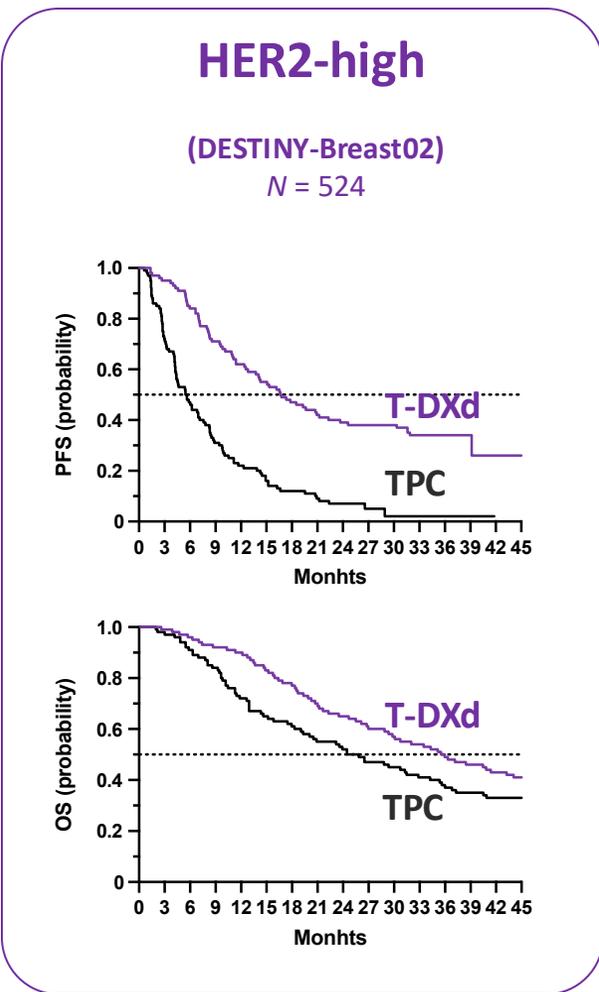
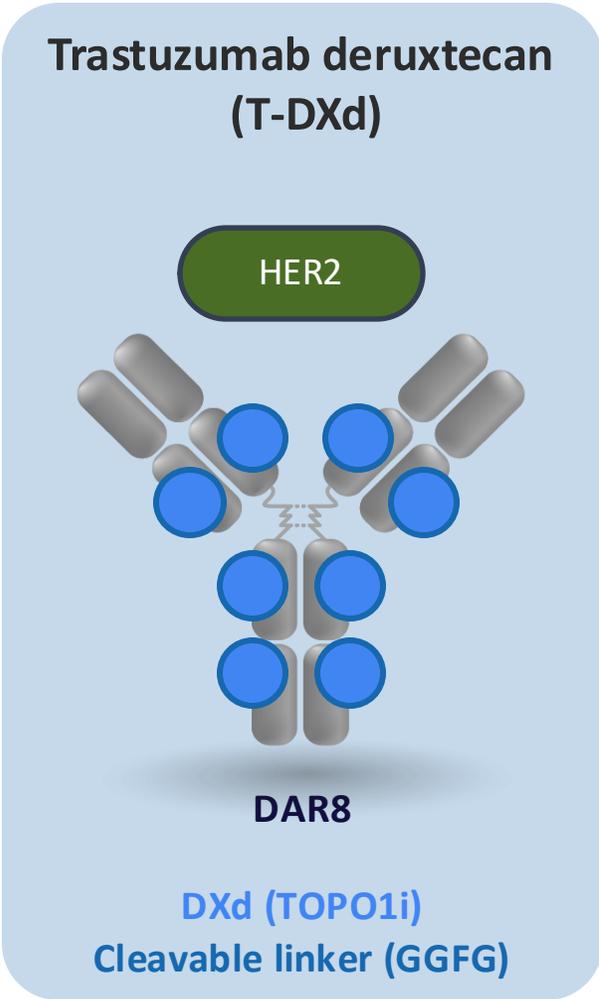
HER2-high = IHC 3+ or IHC 2+/FISH+

HER2-low = IHC 2+/FISH- or IHC 1+

HER2-zero = IHC 0

Similar trend observed for OS, with median OS of 31, 19, and 12 months for patients with HER2-high, HER2-low, and HER2-zero, respectively

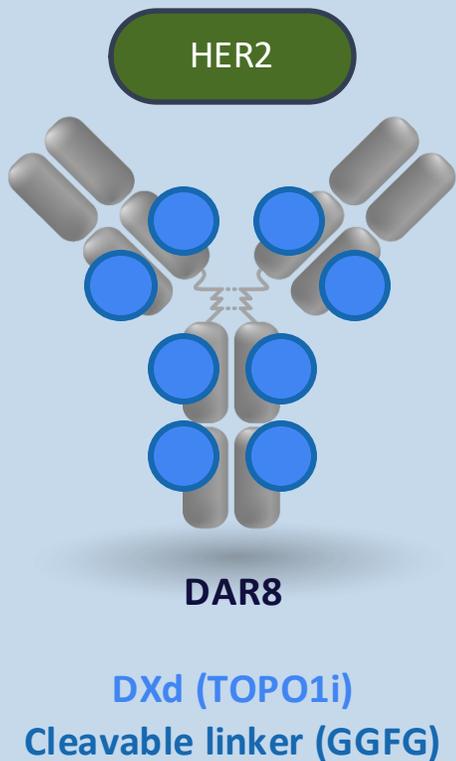
# Benefits observed for T-DXd vs treatment of physician's choice in patients with HER2-high, low, and ultralow breast cancer



TPC = treatment of physician's choice

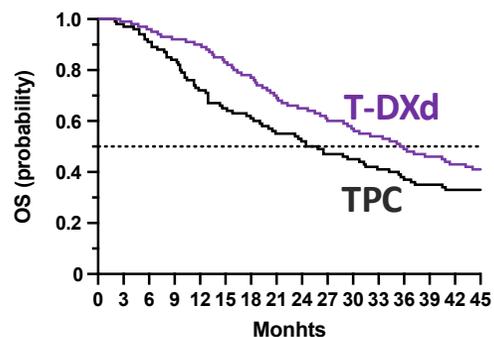
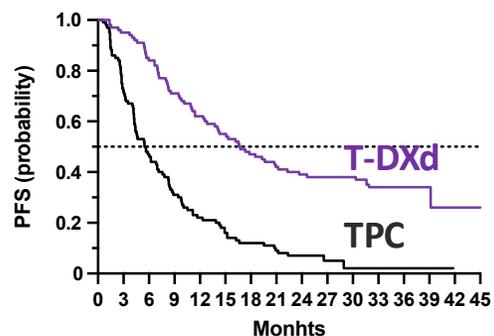
# Benefits observed for T-DXd vs treatment of physician's choice in patients with HER2-high, low, and ultralow breast cancer

## Trastuzumab deruxtecan (T-DXd)



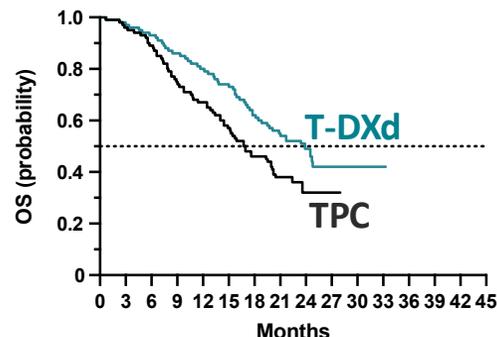
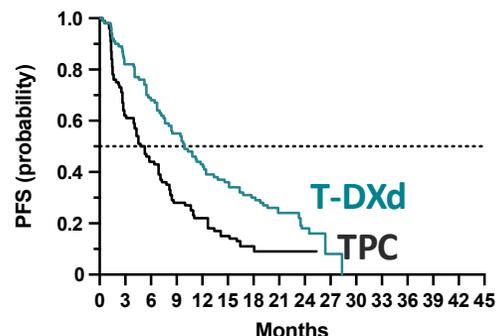
### HER2-high

(DESTINY-Breast02)  
N = 524



### HER2-low

(DESTINY-Breast04)  
N = 557



### HER2-zero

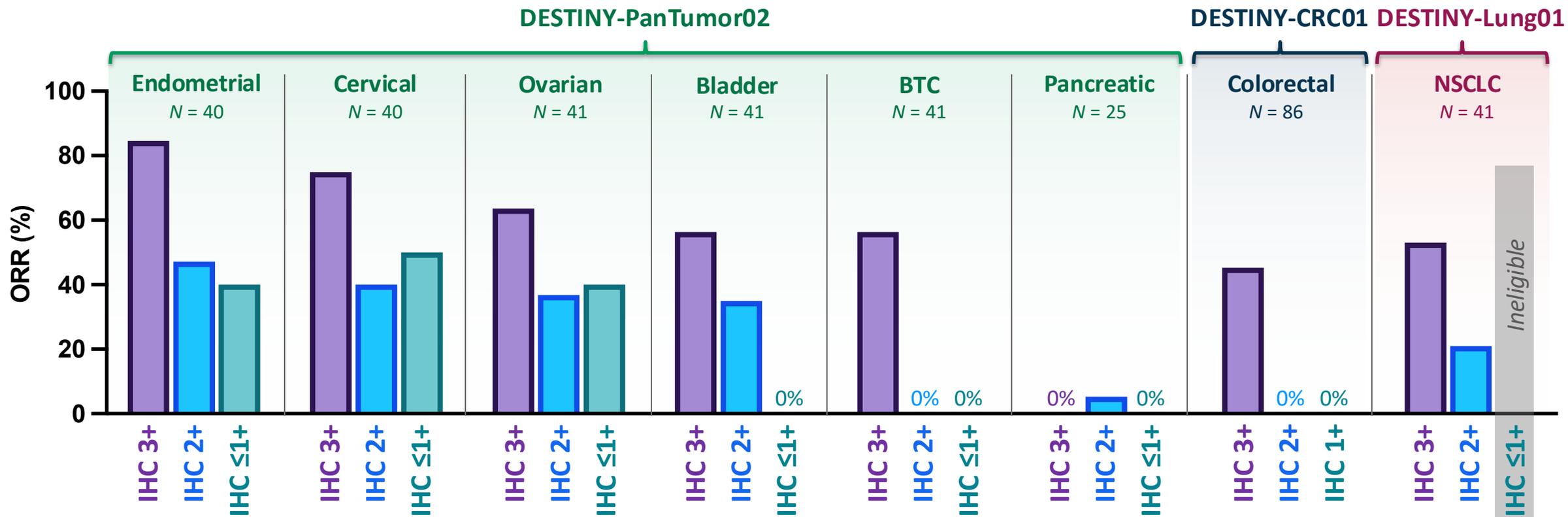
(DESTINY-Breast15)



NCT05950945

TPC = treatment of physician's choice

# Additional trials reinforce the increased activity observed with T-DXd in HER2-high (IHC 3+) vs HER2-low/zero



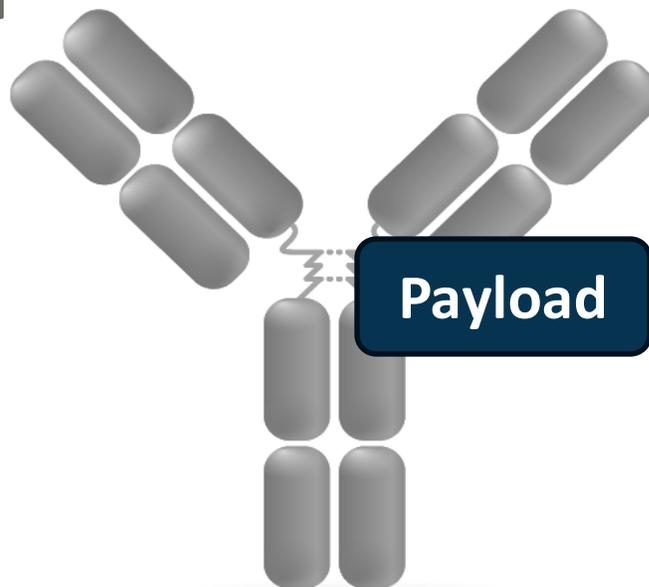
*...which led to the accelerated approval of T-DXd in “IHC 3+” solid tumors!*

# Dissecting the contributions of ADC components

## Antibody contribution

Can the antibody deliver more payload to high expressing cells?

Can the antibody contribute to efficacy itself?



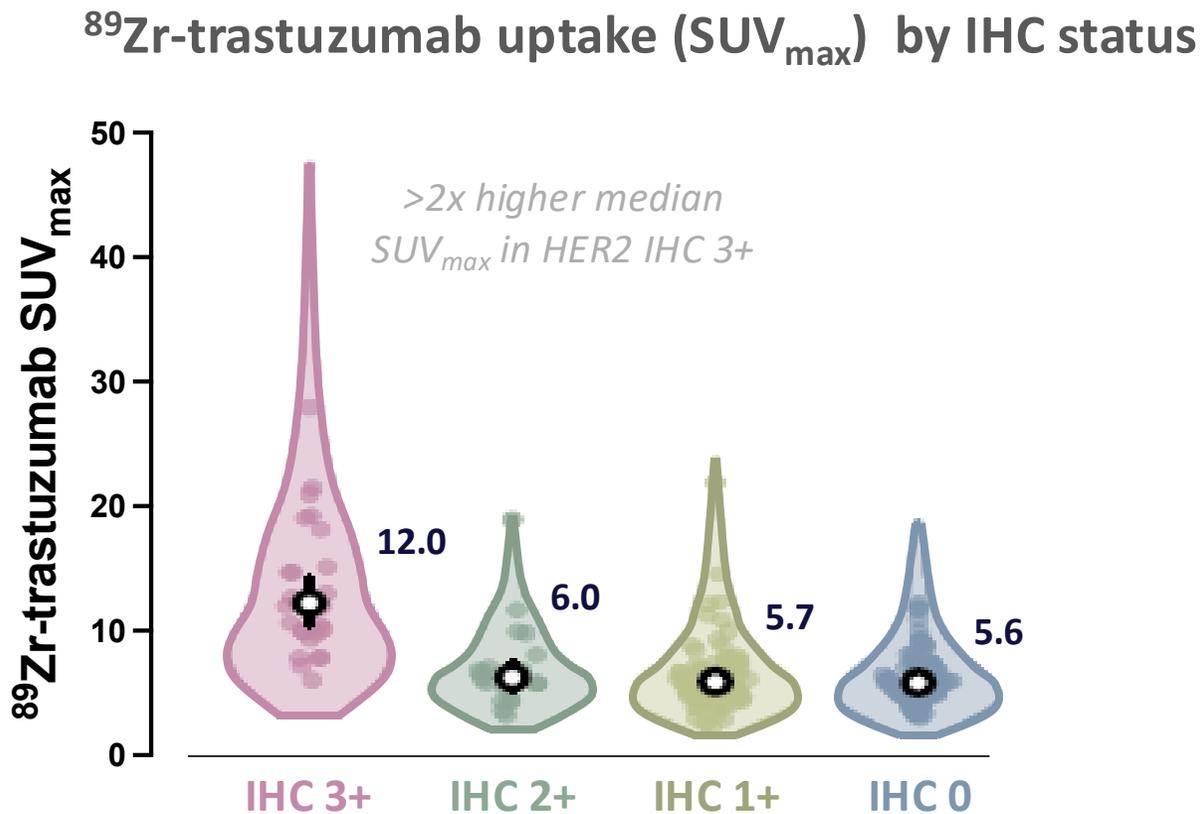
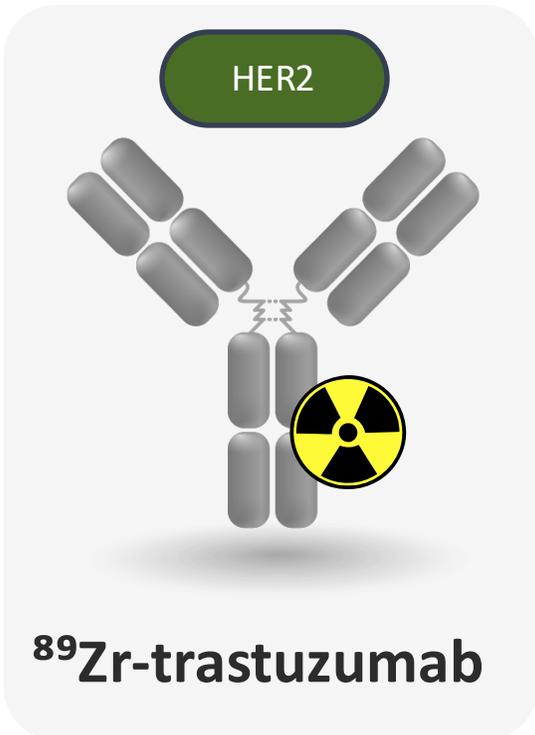
## Payload contribution

Can systemic payload exposure contribute to efficacy?

Are certain tumors more sensitive to certain payloads?

*(linker stability for another time)*

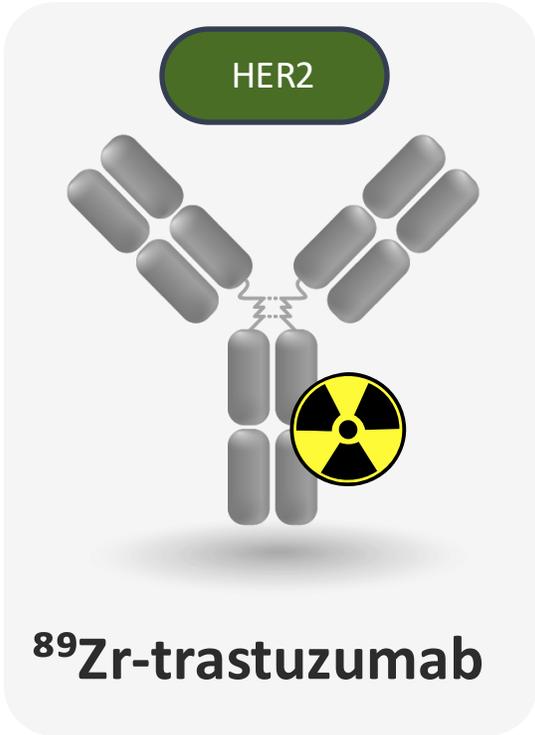
# <sup>89</sup>Zr-trastuzumab showed better uptake (SUV<sub>max</sub>) in HER2-high (IHC 3+) lesions



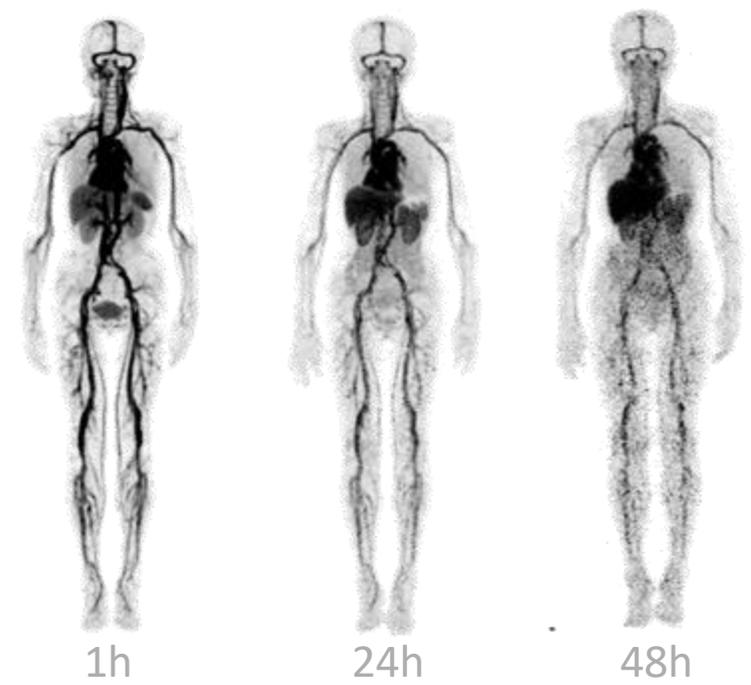
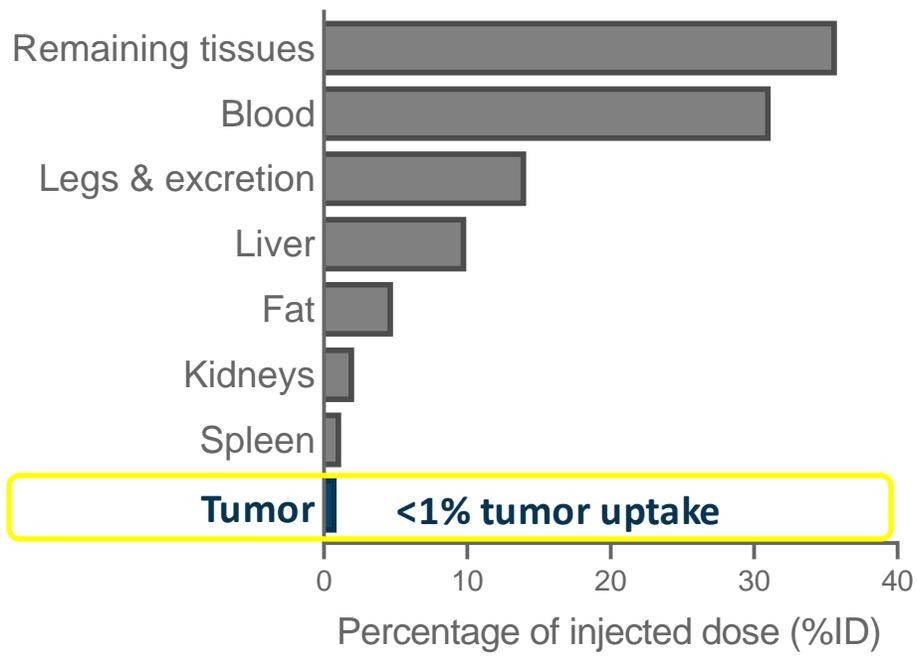
$$\text{Standardized Uptake Value (SUV)} = \frac{Ac \cdot BW}{ID \cdot 2^{(-\Delta t/t_{1/2})}}$$

Ac = active concentration (Bq/mL)  
ID = injected dose (Bq)  
BW = body weight (g)  
 $\Delta t$  = delay between injection time and scan time (s)  
 $t_{1/2}$  = radionuclide decay half-life (s)

# <sup>89</sup>Zr-trastuzumab showed better uptake (SUV<sub>max</sub>) in HER2-high (IHC 3+) lesions... but low absolute uptake

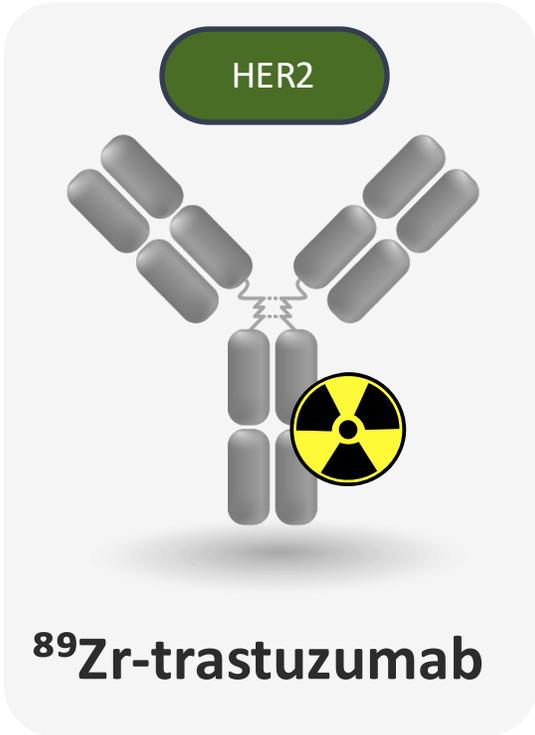


## Low absolute uptake (%ID) in tumor lesions

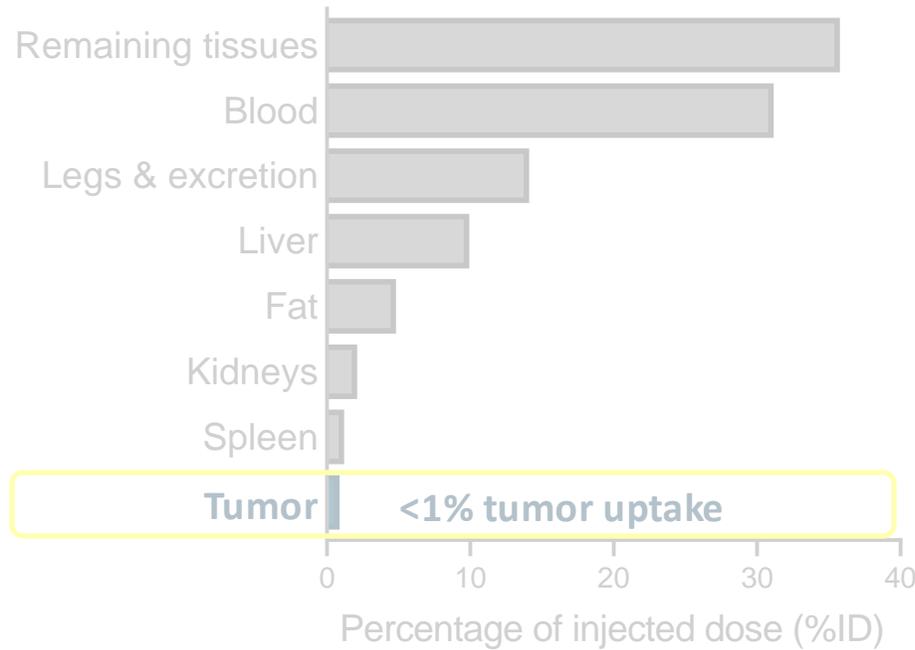


PET acquisition at 4 days after dosing

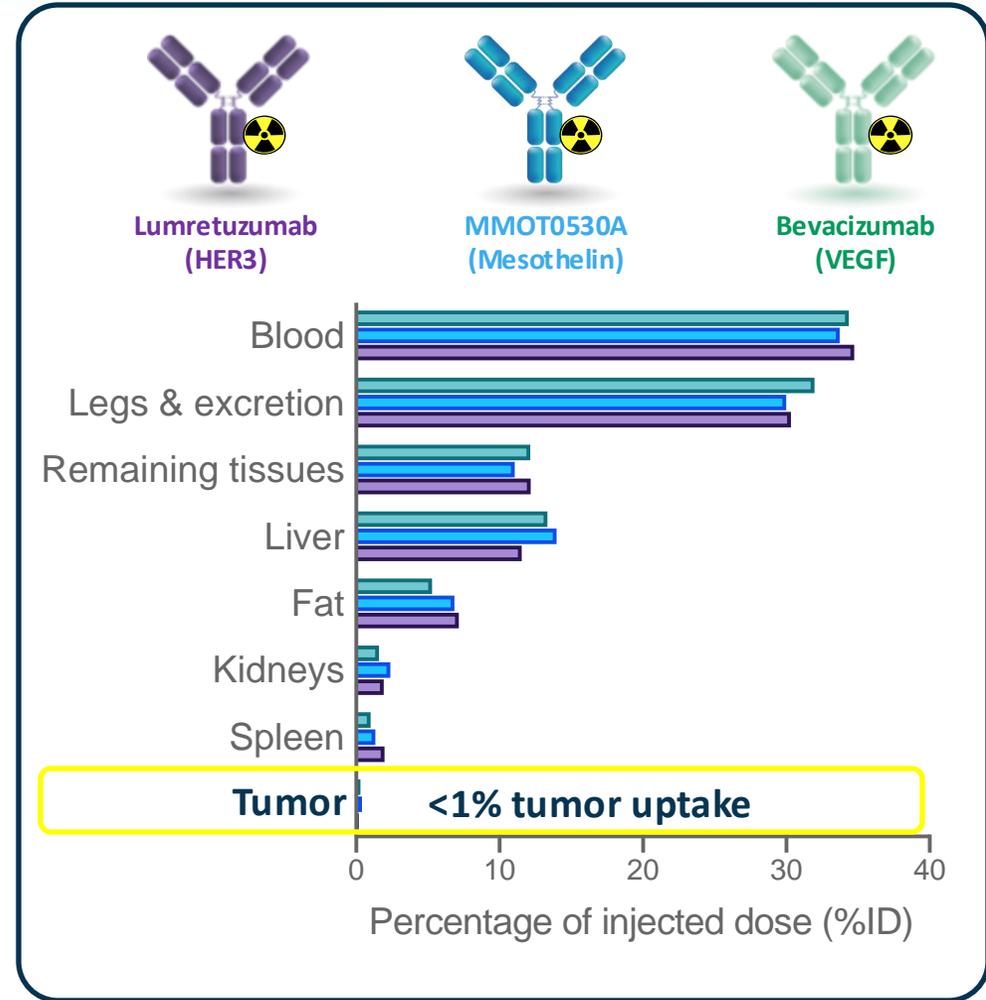
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## Low absolute uptake (%ID) in tumor lesions



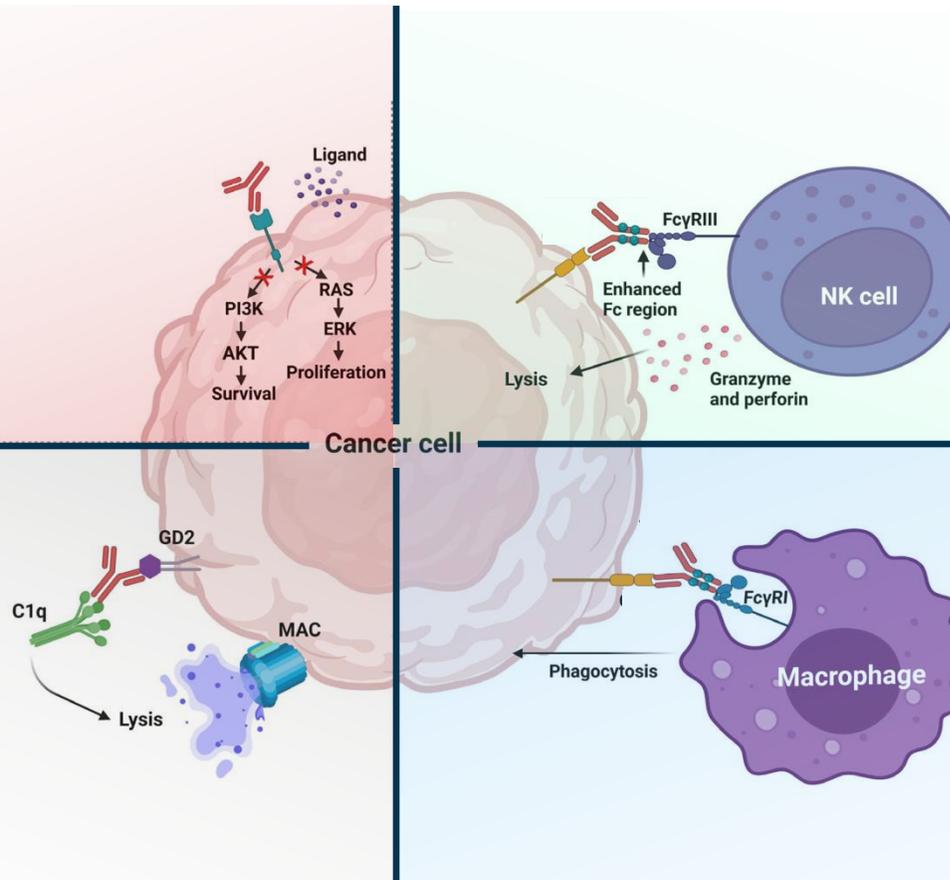
PET acquisition at 4 days after dosing



# Antibody component can be more than just a carrier

**Antibody can induce an antitumor effect via different mechanisms!**

**Blocking the downstream signaling pathways**



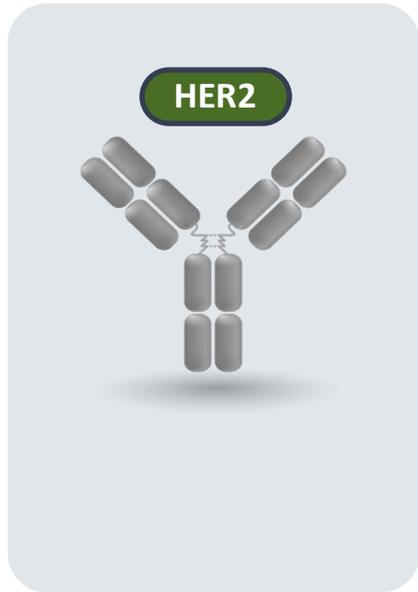
**Antibody-dependent cellular cytotoxicity (ADCC)**

**Complement-dependent cytotoxicity (CDC)**

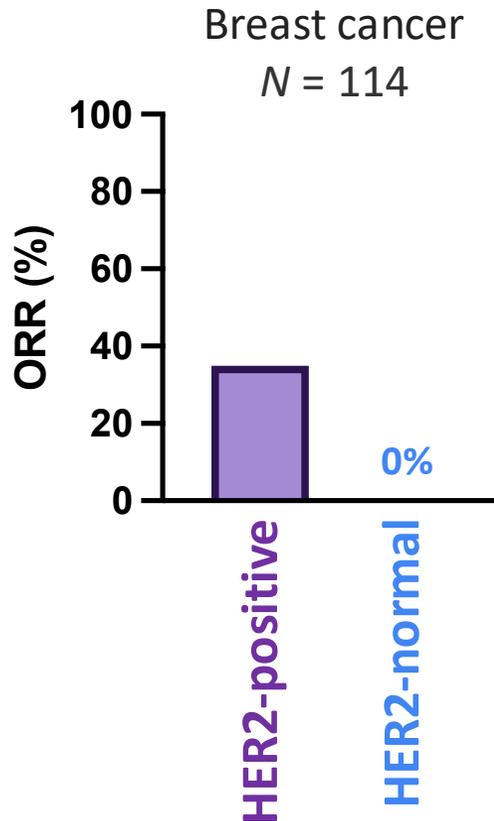
**Antibody-dependent cellular phagocytosis (ADCP)**

# “Naked” trastuzumab showed benefits in HER2-positive vs HER2-normal, highlighting the antibody contribution

## Trastuzumab (“naked”)



Tras: 4 mg/kg QW

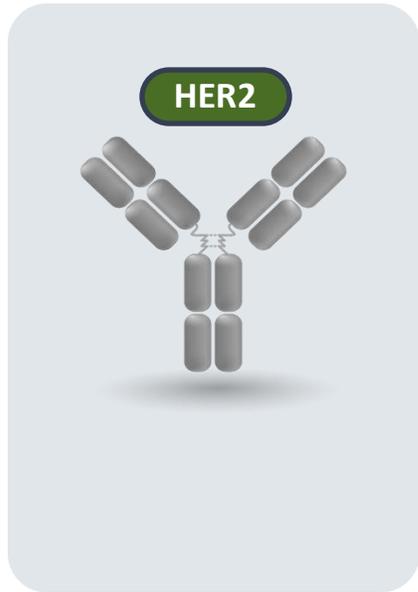


HER2-positive = IHC 3+ or IHC 2+/FISH+

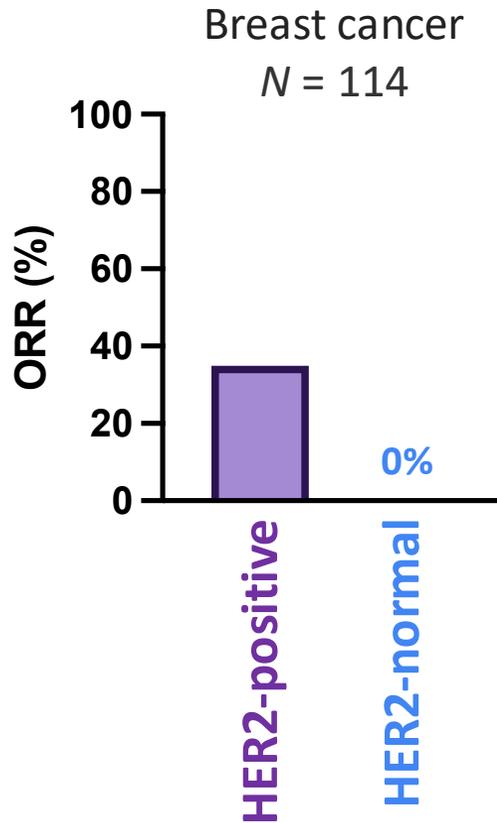
HER2-normal = IHC 2+/FISH- or IHC ≤1+

# “Naked” trastuzumab showed benefits in HER2-positive vs HER2-normal, highlighting the antibody contribution

## Trastuzumab (“naked”)



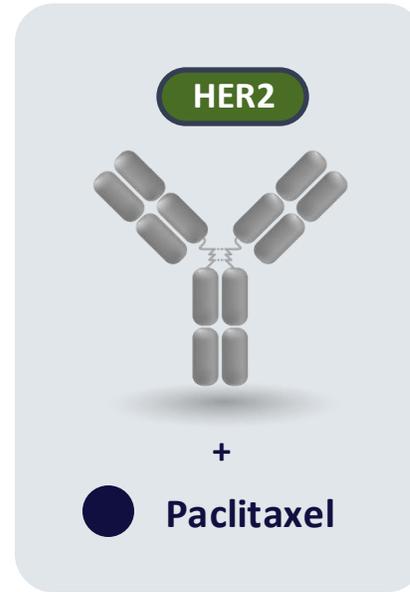
Tras: 4 mg/kg QW



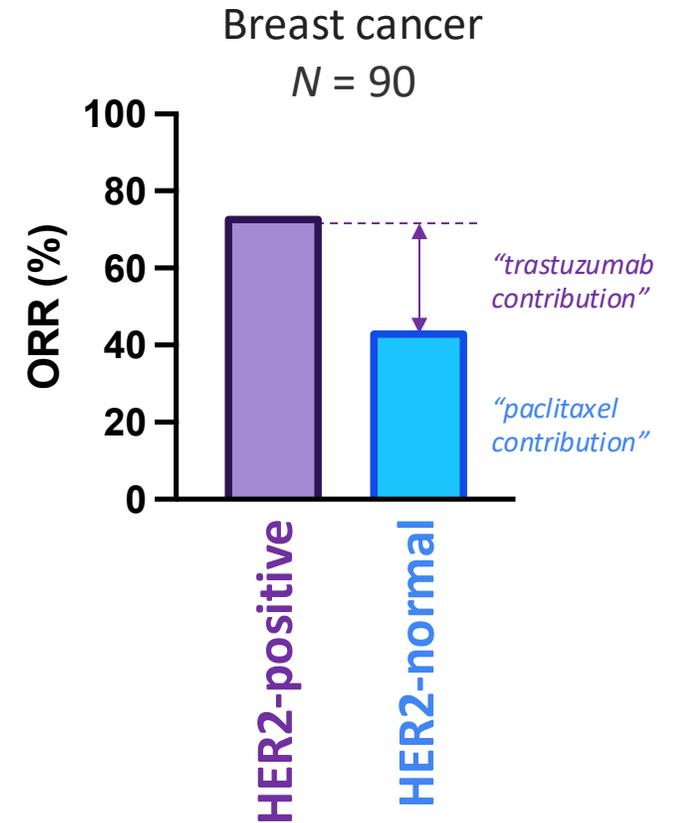
HER2-positive = IHC 3+ or IHC 2+/FISH+

HER2-normal = IHC 2+/FISH- or IHC ≤1+

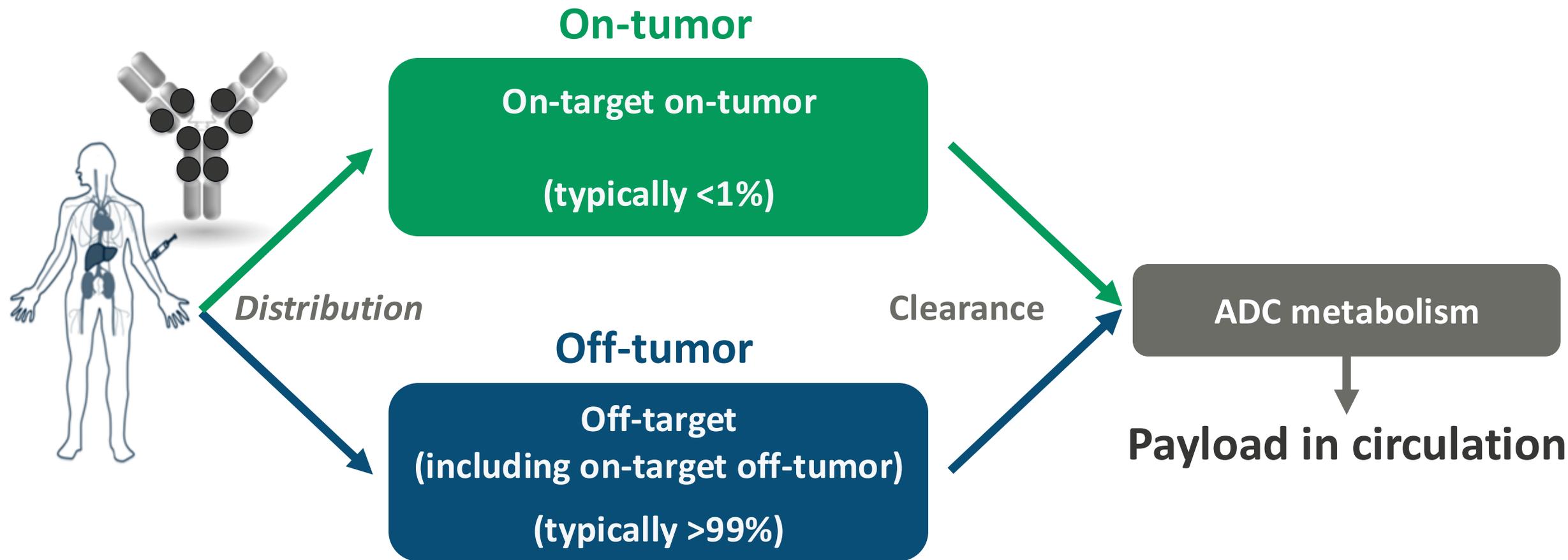
## Trastuzumab (“naked”) + paclitaxel combination



Tras: 2 mg/kg QW  
Paclitaxel: 90 mg/m<sup>2</sup> QW

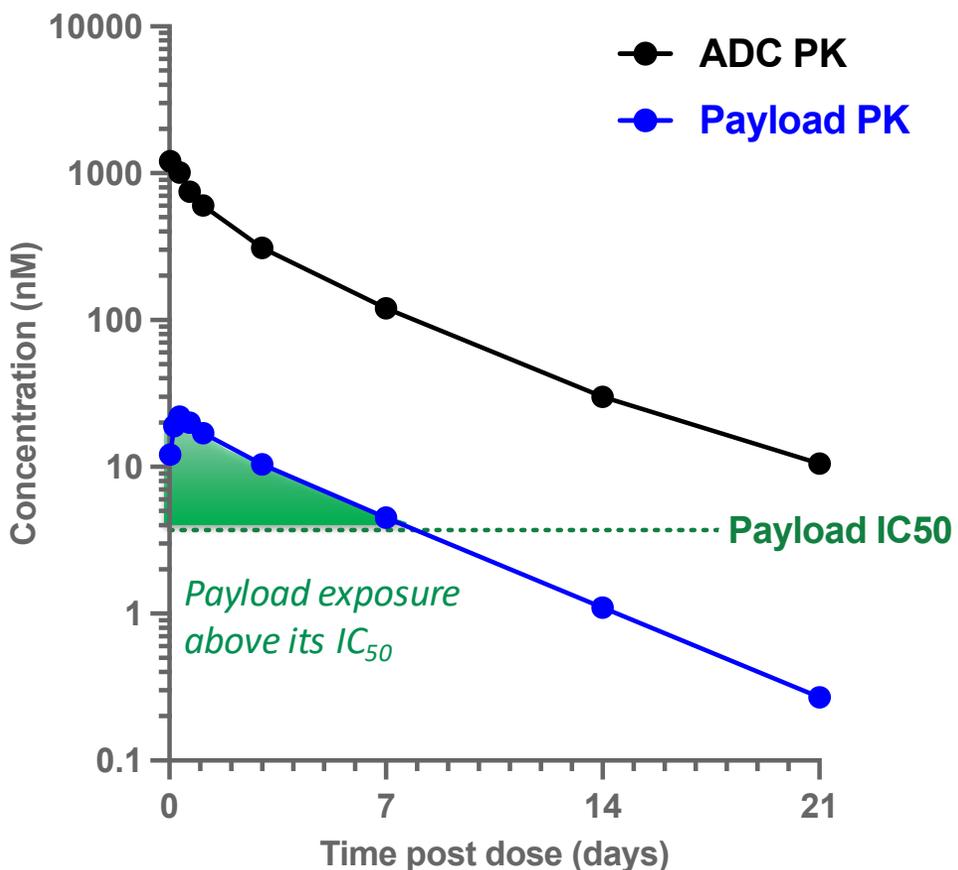


# On-tumor and off-tumor ADC disposition generates free payload in circulation



# Circulating payload concentrations achieve pharmacologically active levels in humans

PK data for T-DXd and DXd from DESTINY-Gastric01



For ADCs with bystander active (= permeable) payloads:

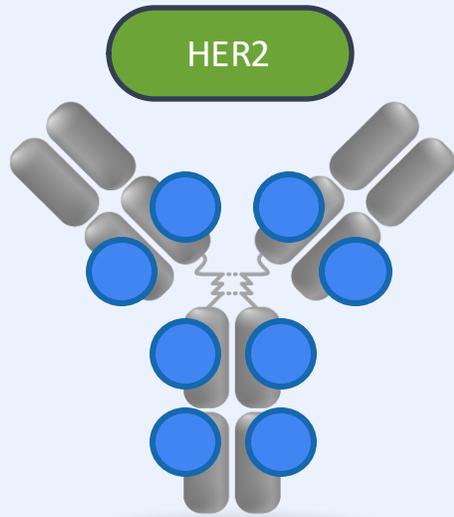
- in addition to ADC **direct target delivery**
- in addition to **bystander killing** (payload released in the TME or in heterogeneous tumor)



**Systemic payload exposure likely contributes to efficacy observed in patients with low or even absent antigen expression**

# T-DXd showed better efficacy in patients with HER2-high, but benefits observed across all HER2-expressions

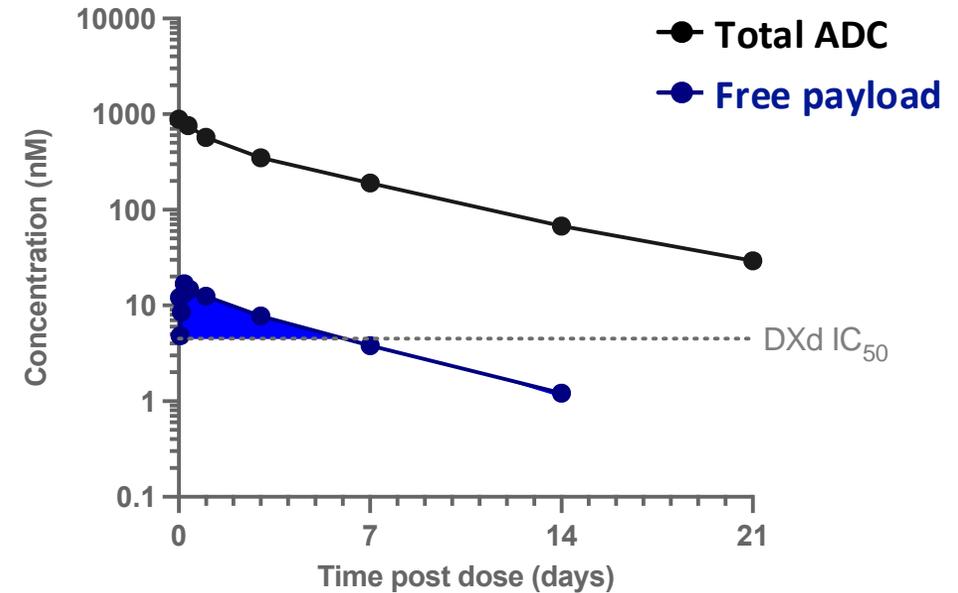
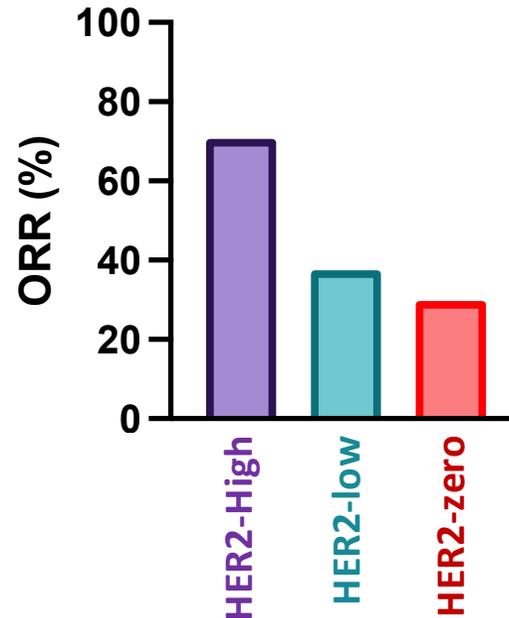
## Trastuzumab deruxtecan (T-DXd)



DAR8

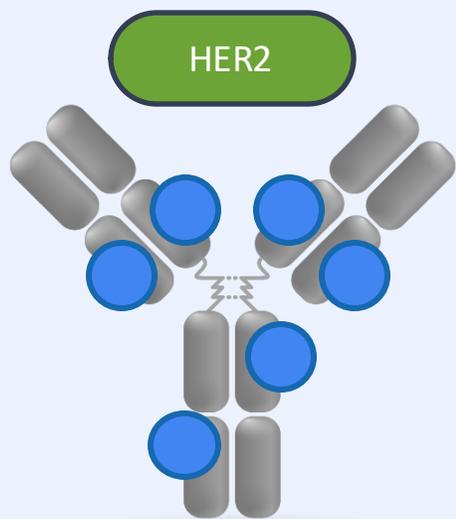
DXd (TOPO1i)  
Cleavable linker (GGFG)

## Breast cancer (DAISY study) N = 177



# Trastuzumab rezetecan (T-DXh) showed trends similar to trastuzumab deruxtecan (T-DXd)

## Trastuzumab rezetecan (SHR-A1811)

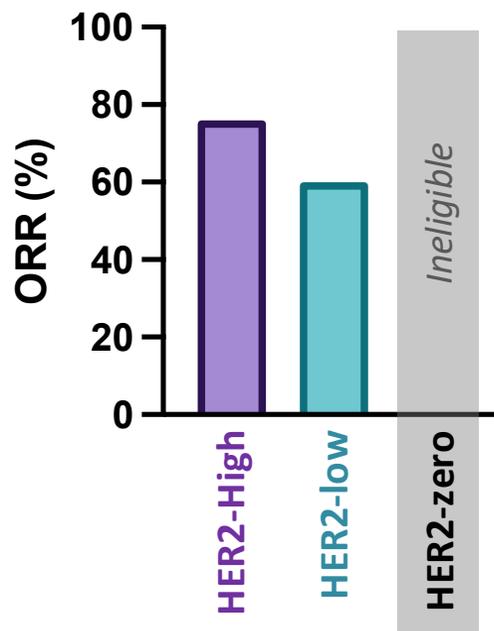


DAR5.7

DXh (TOPO1i)  
Cleavable linker (GGFG)

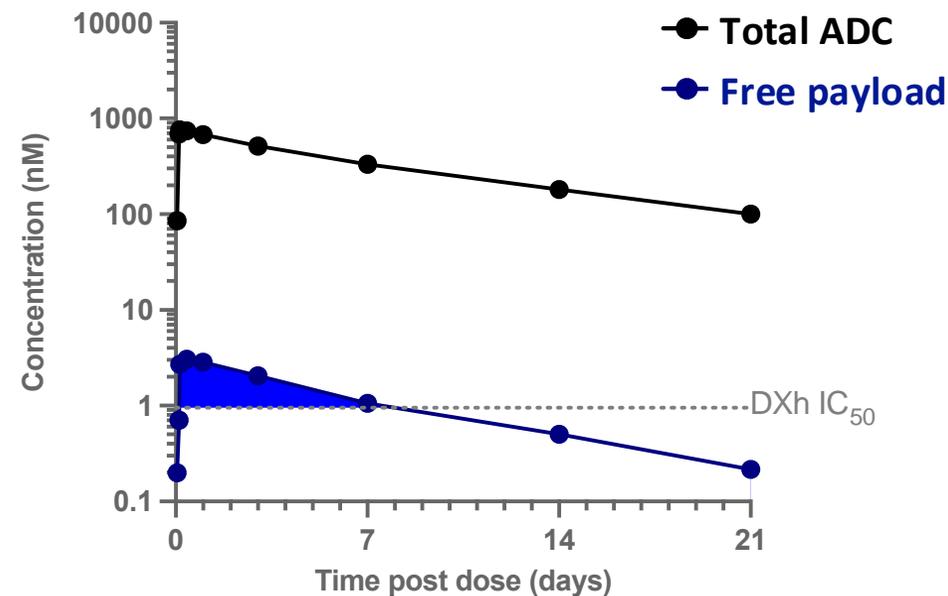
## Breast cancer

N = 202



Doses 1-8 mg/kg Q3W (majority ≥4.8 mg/kg)

## PK for 5.6 mg/kg

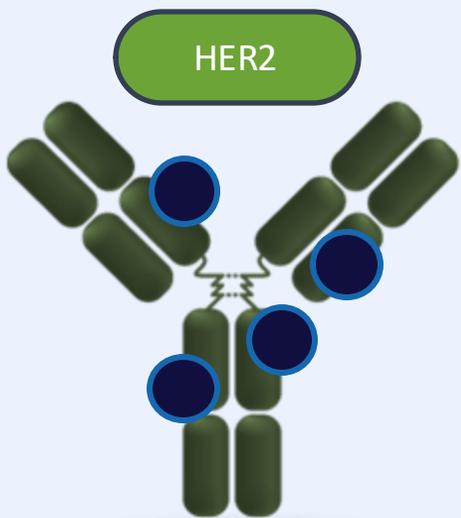


HER2-high, 114 patients; HER2-low, 88 patients.

H. Yao et al. *J. Clin. Oncol.* 2024, 42, 3453-3465. Similar trends observed in other solid tumors.

# Disitamab vedotin showed efficacy in patients with HER2-high and low breast cancer

Disitamab vedotin (DV)

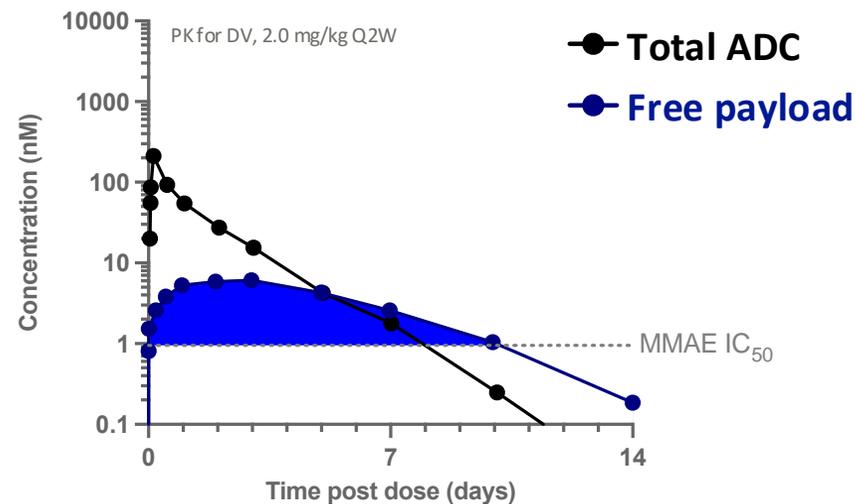
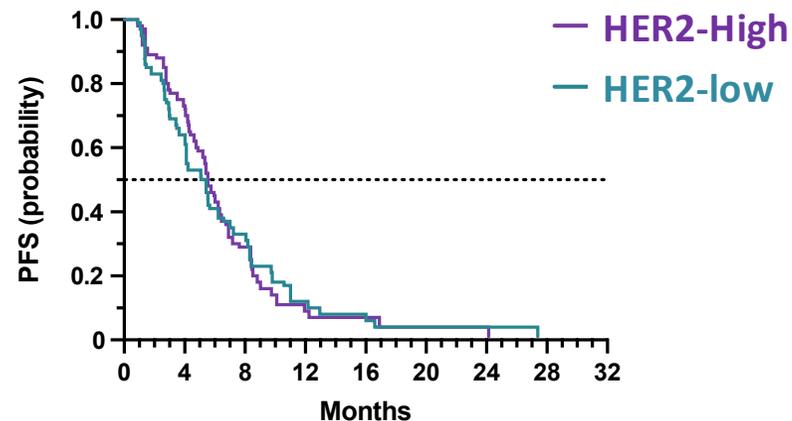
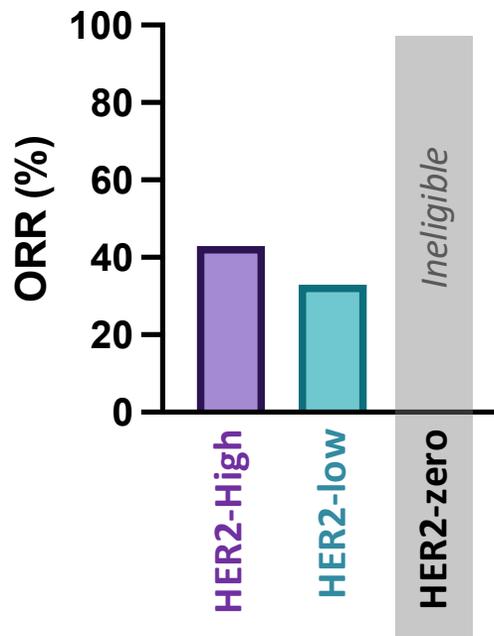


DAR4

MMAE (auristatin)  
Cleavable linker (Val-Cit)

Breast cancer

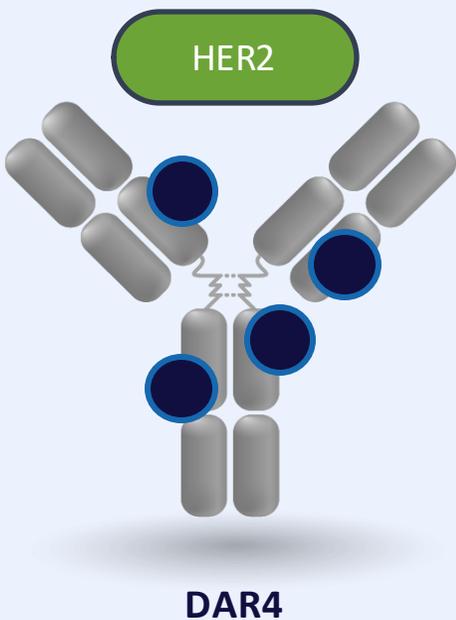
N = 136



HER2-high (IHC 3+ or IHC 2+/ISH+), 70 patients. HER2-low (IHC 1+ or IHC 2+/ISH-), 66 patients.  
 Doses: 1.5-2.5 mg/kg Q2W. RP2D 2.0 mg/kg Q2W. J. Wang et al. *Cancer Commun.* **2024**, *44*, 833-851.

# Trastuzumab vedotin showed efficacy in patients with HER2-high and low breast cancer

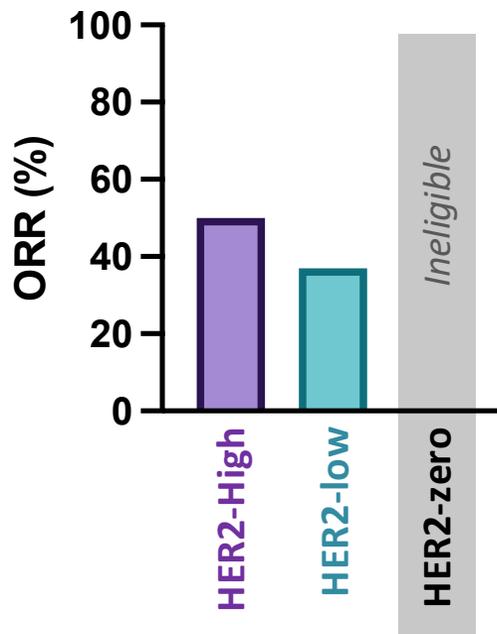
Trastuzumab vedotin  
(MRG002)



MMAE (auristatin)  
Cleavable linker (Val-Cit)

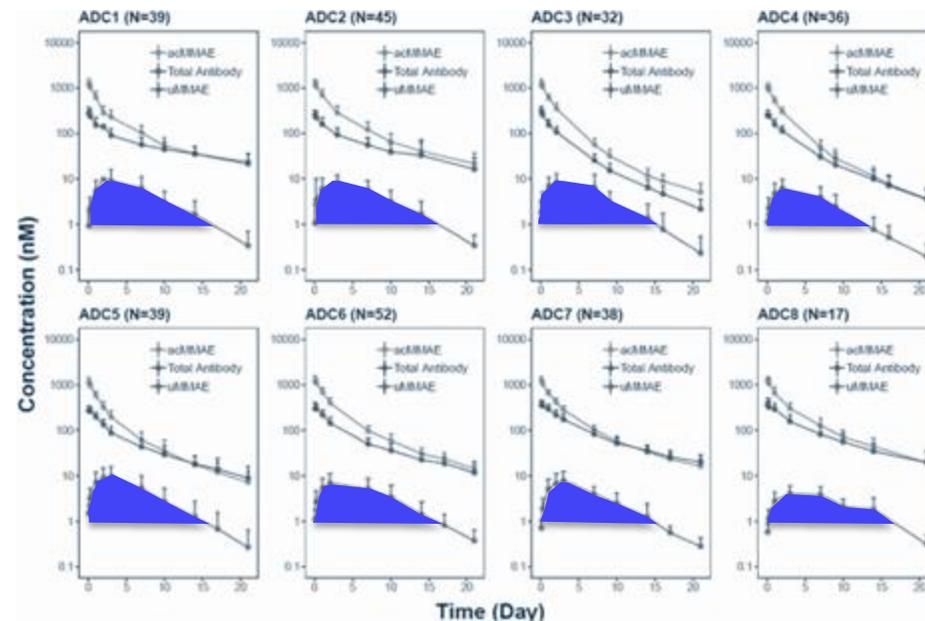
Breast cancer

N = 81



No PK reported (yet) for MRG002

... but stochastic DAR4 vedotin ADCs have similar payload PK across multiple targets and indications



## Antibody component

Can deliver more payload to high-expressing cells

*If target is expressed high enough. But overall low absolute uptake (typically <1%)*

Can inhibit intracellular signaling cascades

*If the antibody is active as single agent and the ADC is dosed at a relevant antibody dose.*

Can induce ADCC, ADCP, CDC

*If Fc-mediated effector functions are preserved*



*(linker stability for another time)*

## Payload component

May contribute to efficacy via localized (TME release, bystander) and/or systemic exposure

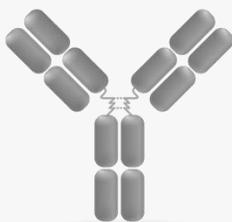
*If the payload and/or payload metabolite(s) are bystander active / permeable*

May be more efficacious in tumors with higher sensitivity to its mechanism of action

# Same antibody but different “active drugs” lead to different clinical outcome

Naked antibody

**Trastuzumab**



**Antibody dose**  
 6 mg/kg Q3W  
 (2 mg/kg QW)

**Clinical benefits**

*Responses only  
in HER2-high*

**Antibody contribution**



**Direct payload delivery**



**Chemo exposure**



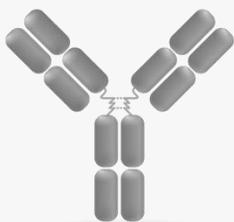
-  = contribution
-  = limited contribution
-  = not a contribution

\*For T-DM1, the major active metabolite generated from ADC catabolism is Lys-MCC-DM1 (less permeable, non-bystander active)

# Same antibody but different “active drugs” lead to different clinical outcome

Naked antibody

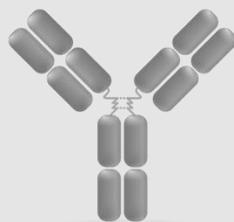
**Trastuzumab**



6 mg/kg Q3W  
(2 mg/kg QW)

Naked antibody +  
permeable MTI combo

**Trastuzumab  
+ paclitaxel**



+



6 mg/kg Q3W  
(2 mg/kg QW)

**Antibody dose**

**Clinical benefits**

*Responses only  
in HER2-high*

*Responses in HER2-high,  
low, and zero; higher  
responses in HER2-high*

**Antibody contribution**



**Direct payload delivery**



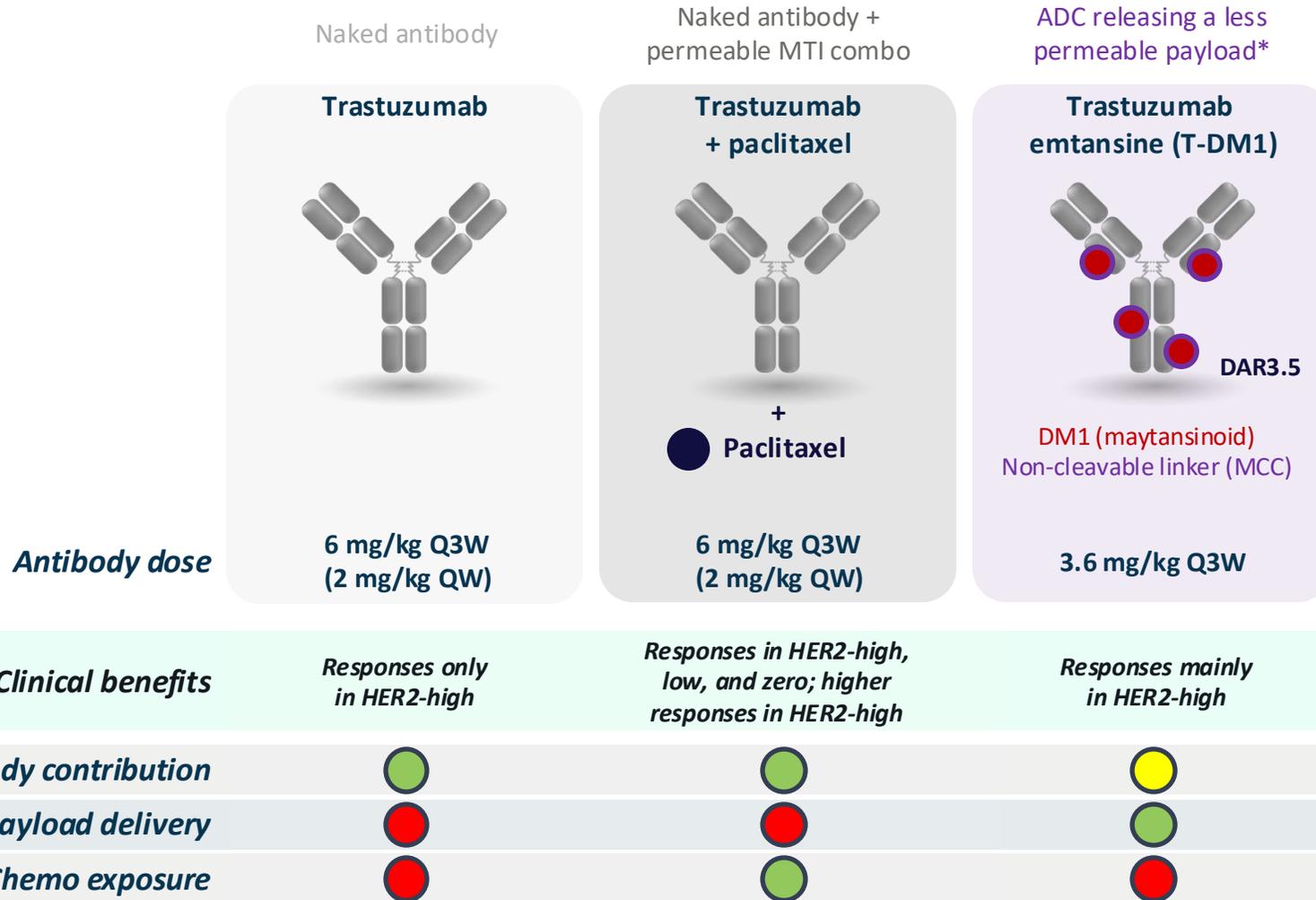
**Chemo exposure**



- = contribution
- = limited contribution
- = not a contribution

\*For T-DM1, the major active metabolite generated from ADC catabolism is Lys-MCC-DM1 (less permeable, non-bystander active)

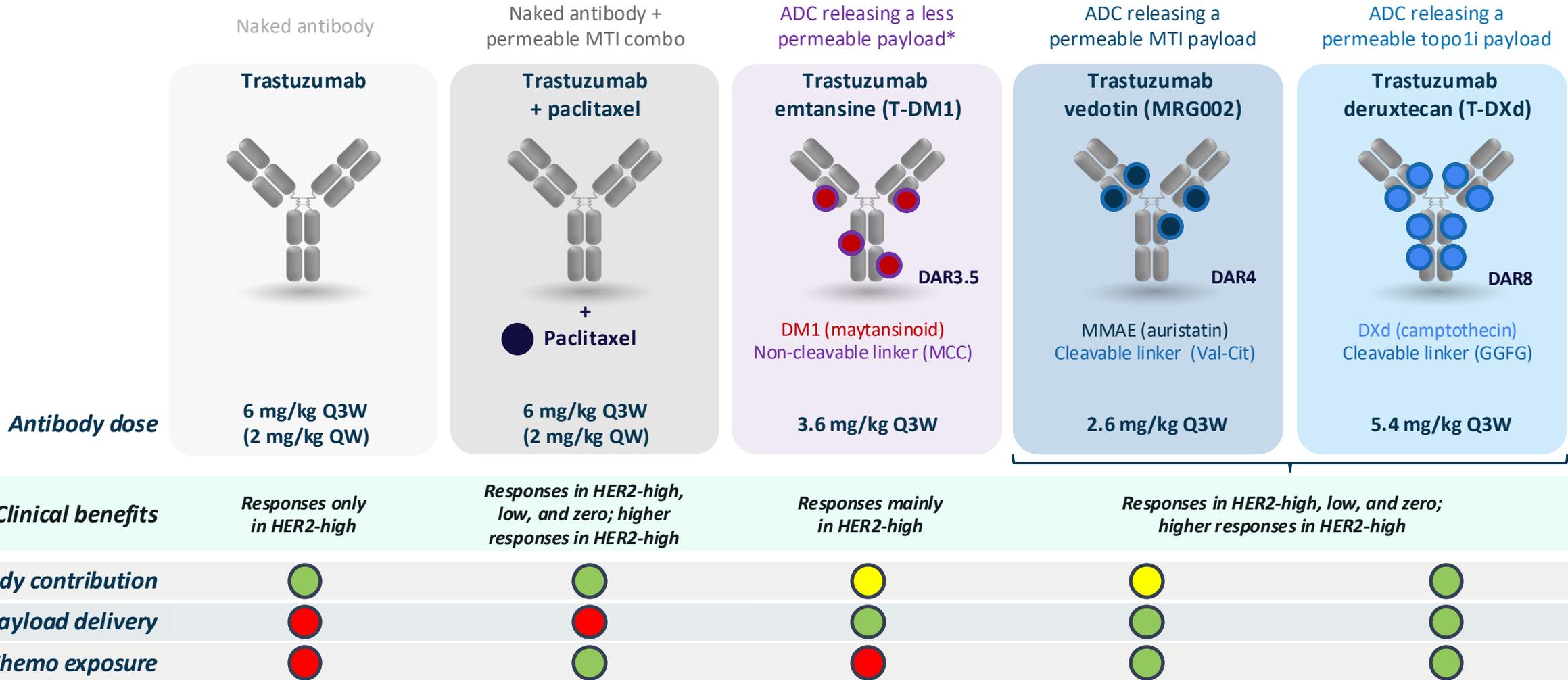
# Same antibody but different “active drugs” lead to different clinical outcome



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# Same antibody but different “active drugs” lead to different clinical outcome

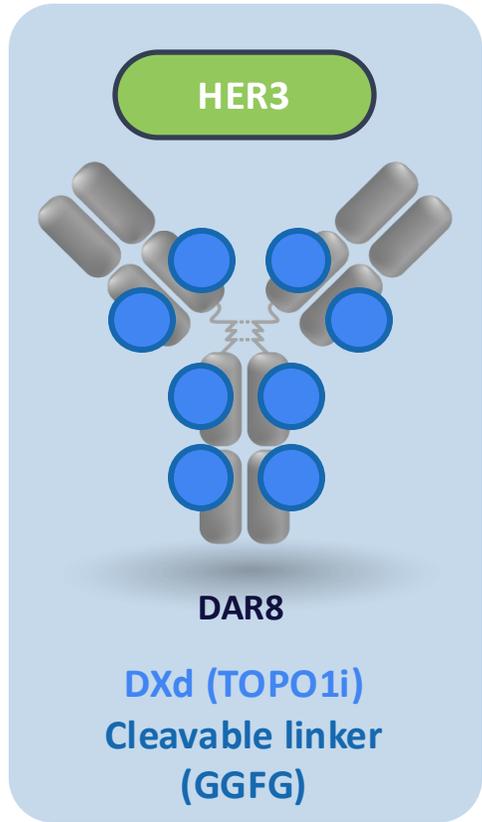


● = contribution  
● = limited contribution  
● = not a contribution

\*For T-DM1, the major active metabolite generated from ADC catabolism is Lys-MCC-DM1 (less permeable, non-bystander active)



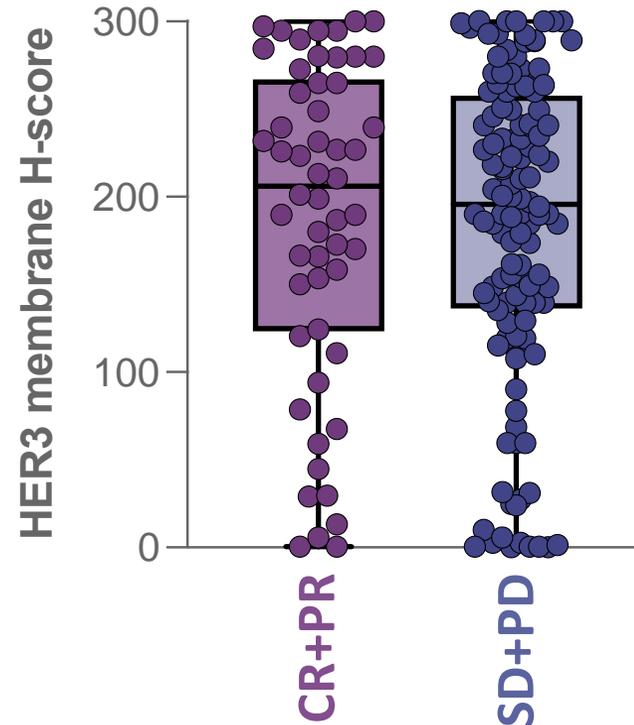
# Benefits observed with HER3-DXd in patients across all HER3-expressions in different indications



Patritumab deruxtecan

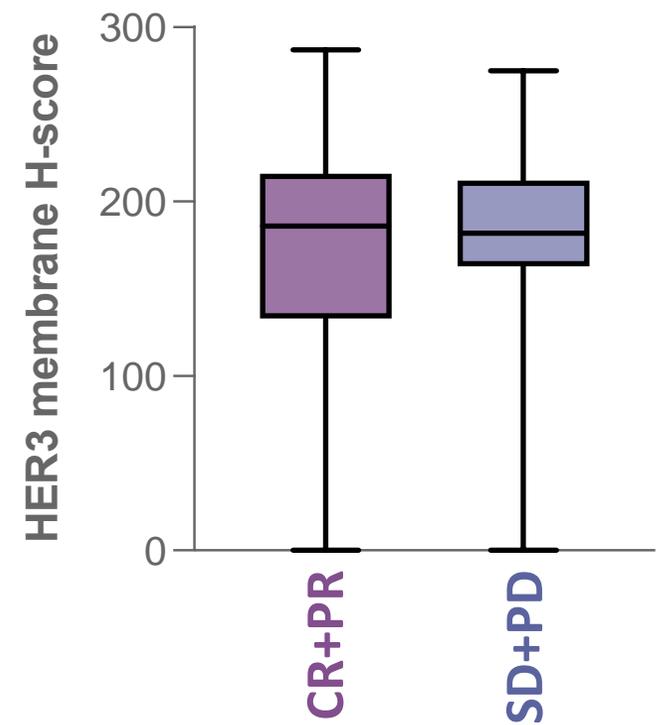
## HERTHENA-Lung01 (Lung cancer)

N = 209



## ICARUS-BREAST01 (Breast cancer)

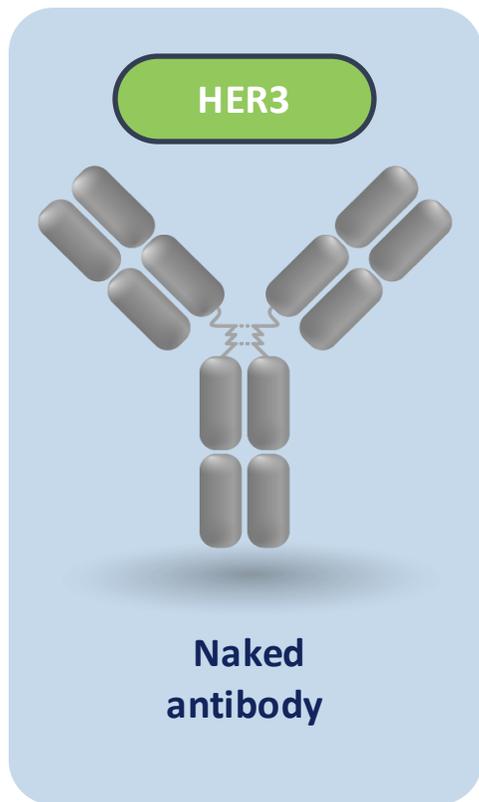
N = 72



CR = complete response; PR = partial response; SD = stable disease; PD = progressive disease

HERTHENA-Lung01: H. A. Yu et al. *J. Clin. Oncol.* **2023**, *41*, 5363-5375; ICARUS-BREAST01: B. Pistilli et al. 3400, *ESMO24*.

# No benefits observed with HER3 naked antibodies as single agents or in combinations

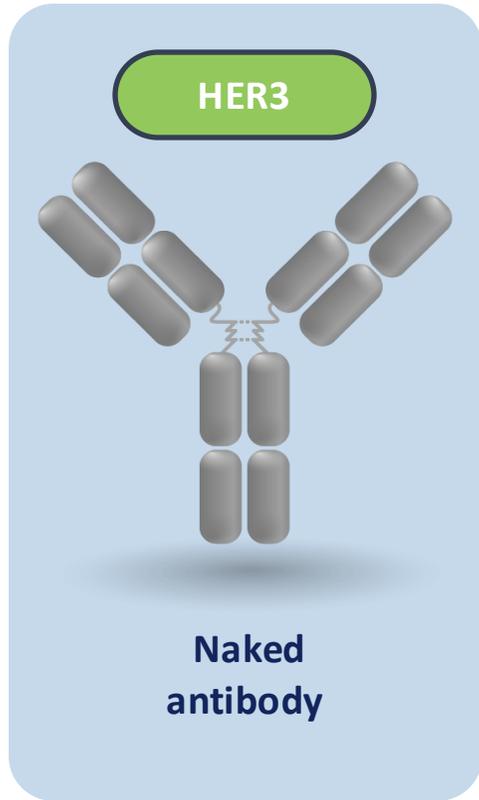


**Patritumab**

	Dose	Monotherapy	+ erlotinib	+ cetuximab and platinum
<b>Patritumab</b>	9 mg/kg Q3W	<b>No objective responses</b>	<b>No improvements over erlotinib alone</b>	<b>No improvements over cetuximab + platinum doublet</b>

In advance solid tumors, including lung, breast, and head and neck cancers

# No benefits observed with HER3 naked antibodies as single agents or in combinations

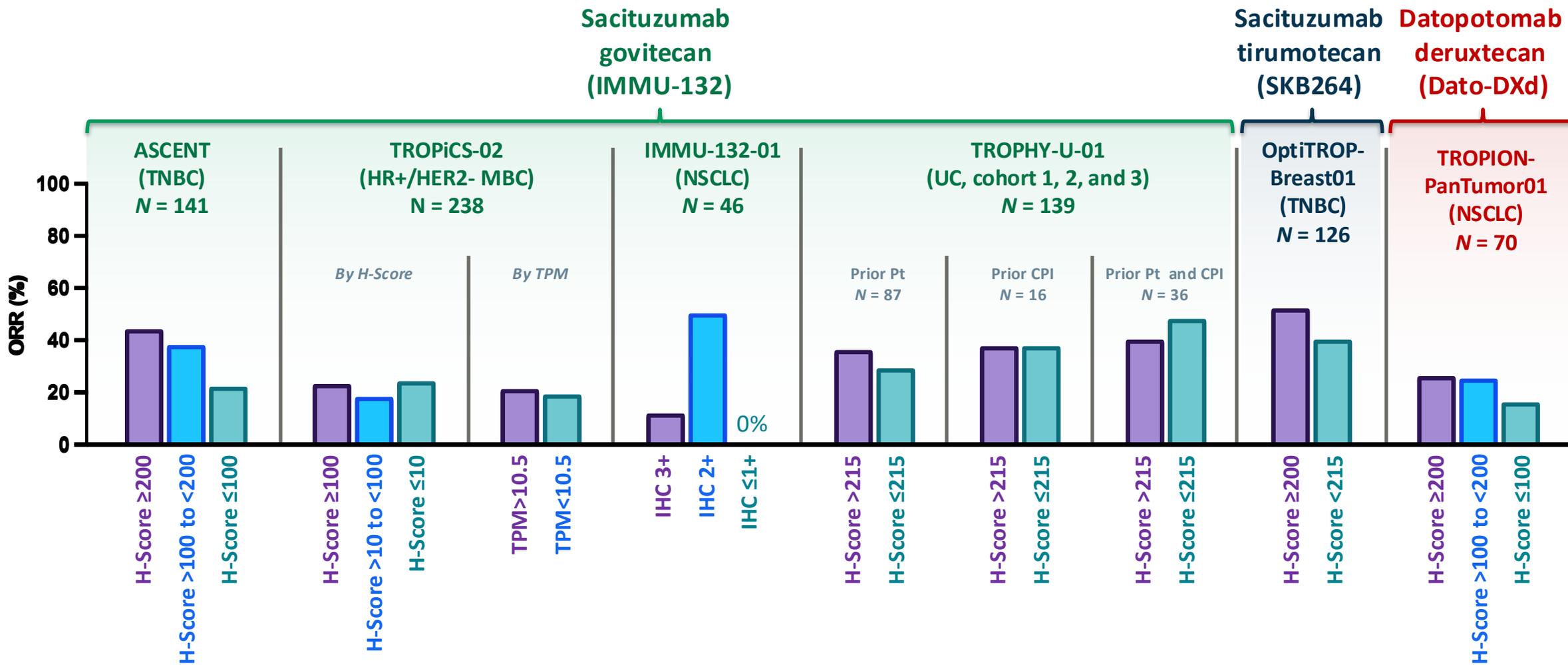


**Patritumab**  
 ... and others

	Dose	Monotherapy	+ erlotinib	+ cetuximab and platinum
<b>Patritumab</b>	9 mg/kg Q3W	<b>No objective responses</b>	<b>No improvements over erlotinib alone</b>	<b>No improvements over cetuximab + platinum doublet</b>
Lumretuzumab	800 mg Q3W	No responses		
Barecetamab	20 mg/kg Q3W	No responses		
GSK2849330	30 mg/kg QW	3% ORR		
Seribantumab	20 mg/kg QW	No responses		
CDX-3379	12 mg/kg Q3W	4% ORR		
Elgemtumab	40 mg/kg QW	No responses		
AV-203	20 mg/kg Q2W	5% ORR		
REGN1400	20 mg/kg Q2W	No responses		

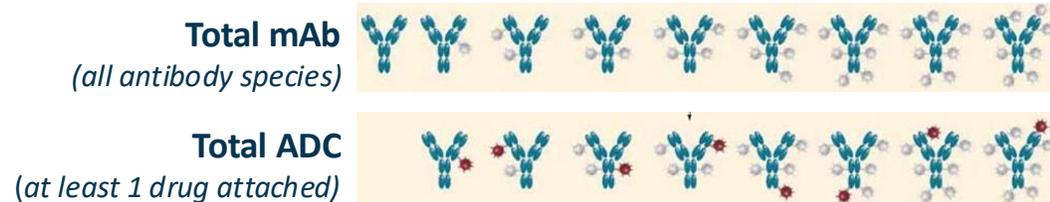
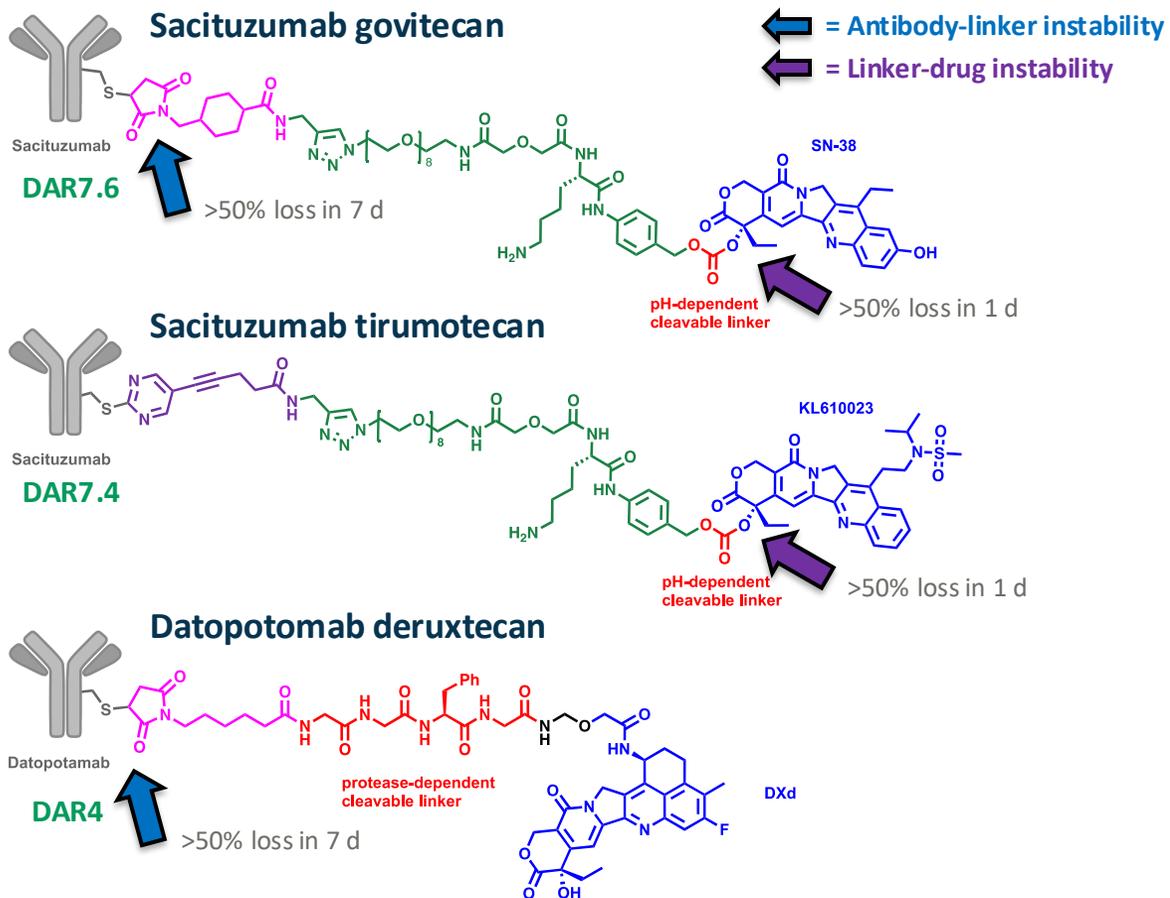
In advance solid tumors, including lung, breast, and head and neck cancers

# No clear relationship between TROP2 expression and responses with TROP2 ADCs



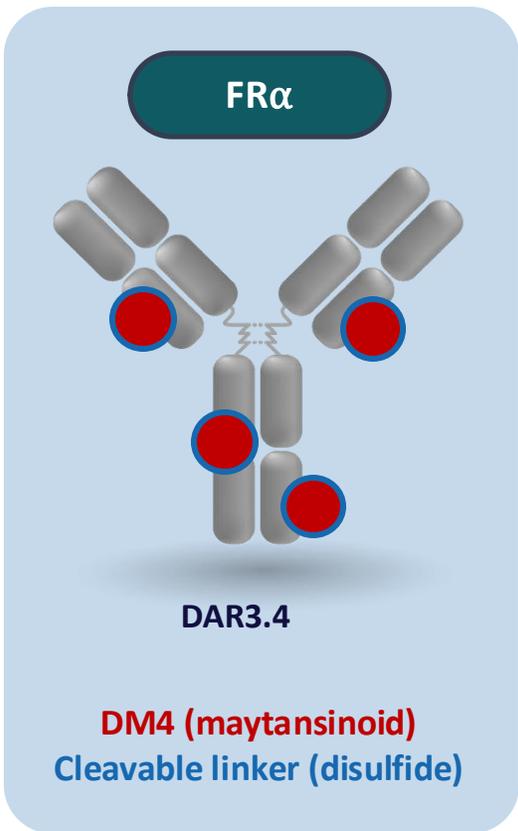
A. Bardia et al. *Ann. Oncol.*, 2021, 32, 1148-1156; H. Rugo et al. *Cancer Res.* 2023, 83(5\_Supplement): GS1-11; A. Bardia et al. *J. Clin. Oncol.* 2023, 41, 1082-1082; R. S. Heist et al. *J. Clin. Oncol.* 2017, 35, 2790-2797; Y. Loriot et al. *J. Clin. Oncol.* 2023, 41, 4579-4579; U-01; Binghe Xu et al. *J. Clin. Oncol.* 2024, 42, 104-104; T. Shimizu et al. *J. Clin. Oncol.* 2023, 41, 4678-4687

# Comparisons for TROP2 ADCs are complicated by different linker stabilities

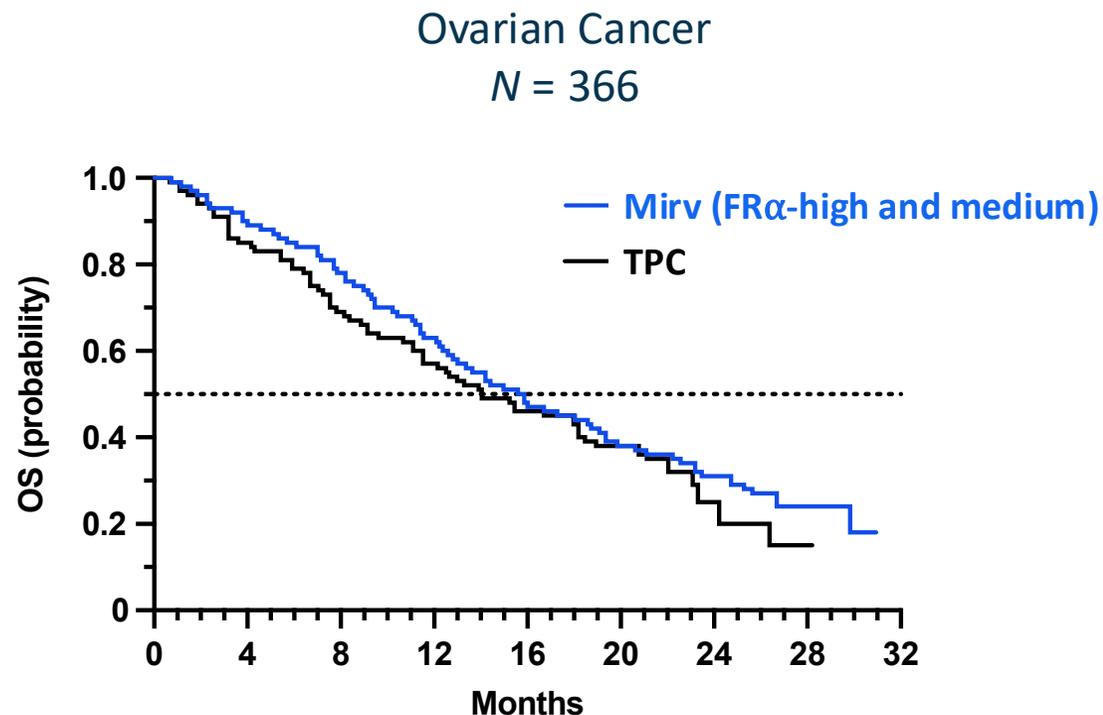
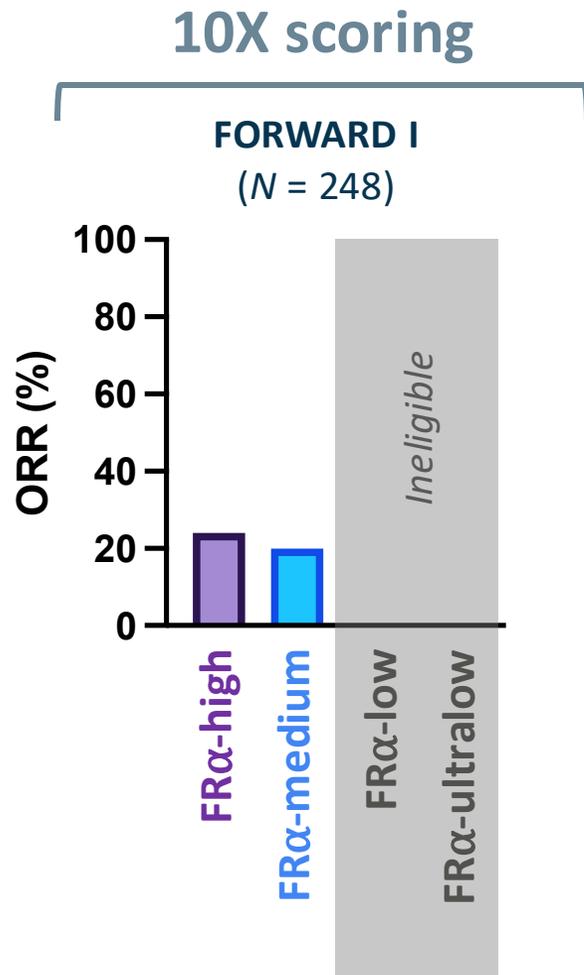


	Total antibody half-life	Total ADC half-life
Sacituzumab govitecan (SG)	6 days	0.7 days
Sacituzumab tirumotecan (sac-TMT)	Not reported	1.5 days
Datopotomab deruxtecan (Dato-DXd)	5.3 days	4.9 days

# Mirvetuximab soravtansine didn't show a statistically significant improvement in OS using FR $\alpha$ "10X Scoring"



Mirvetuximab soravtansine (Mirv)

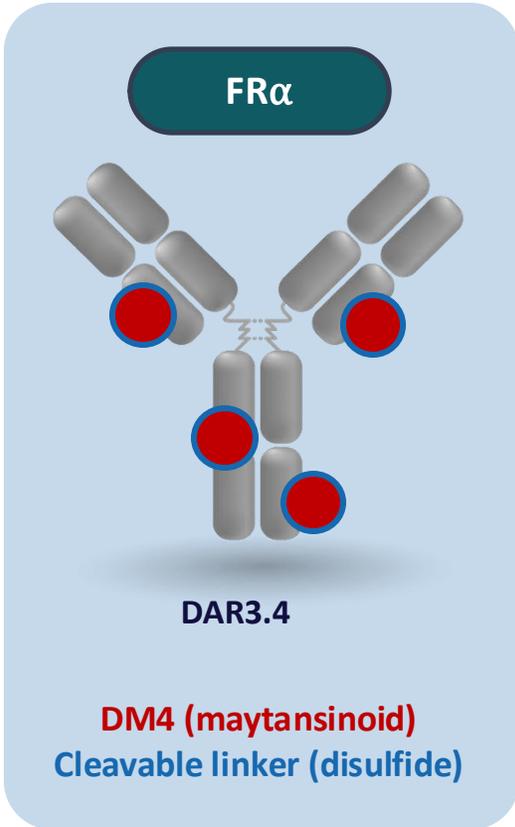


**10X Scoring:** percentage of tumor cells with FR $\alpha$  membrane staining visible at 10X microscope objective

FR $\alpha$ -high = 10X scoring  $\geq 75\%$

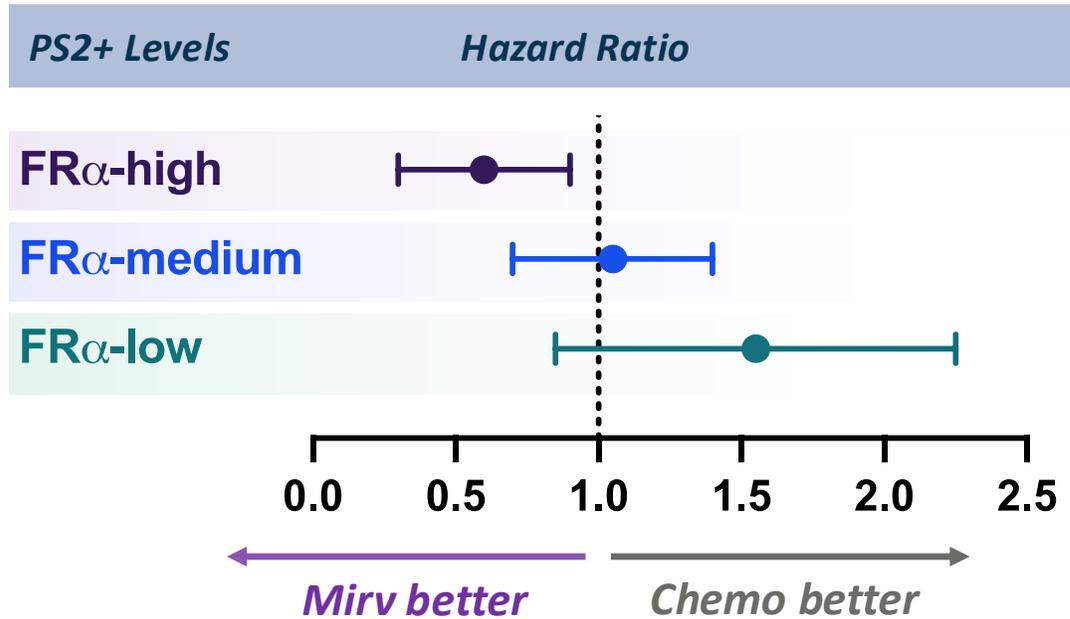
FR $\alpha$ -medium = 10X scoring  $\geq 50\%$  and  $< 75\%$

# Mirvetuximab soravtansine showed better PFS in patients with FR $\alpha$ -high (using PS2+ Scoring)



Mirvetuximab soravtansine  
(Mirv)

FORWARD I (N = 248)  
PFS Hazard Ratio Plot



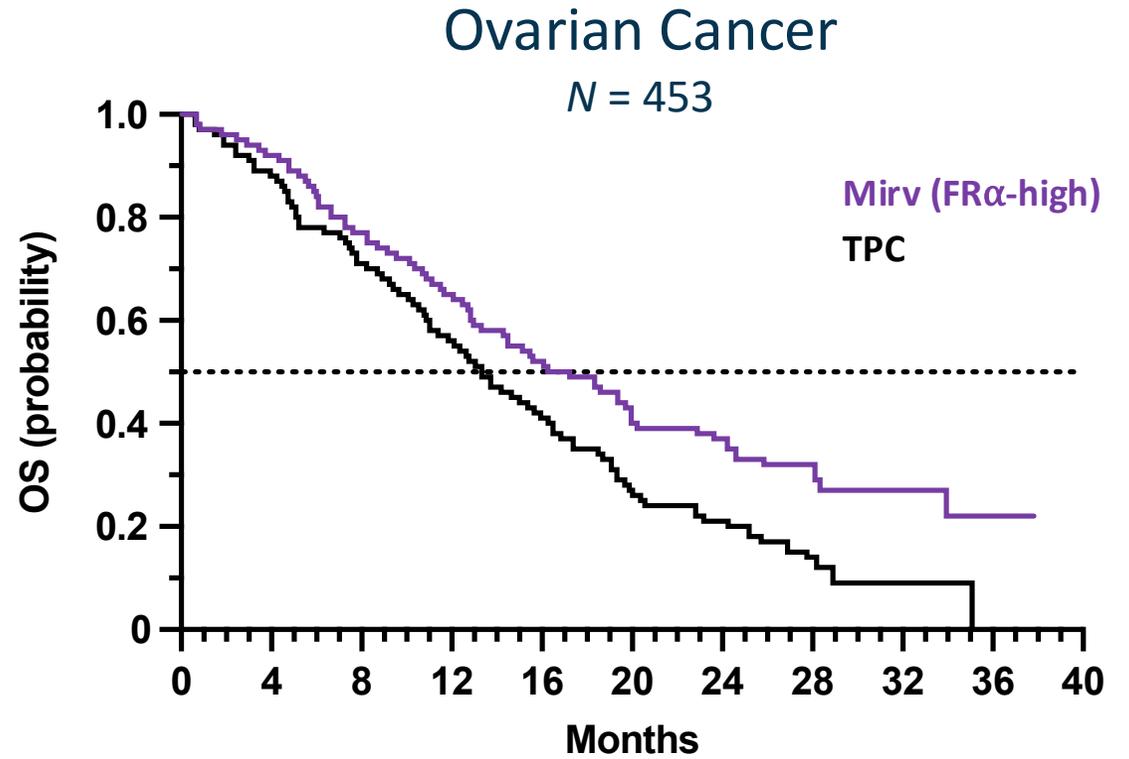
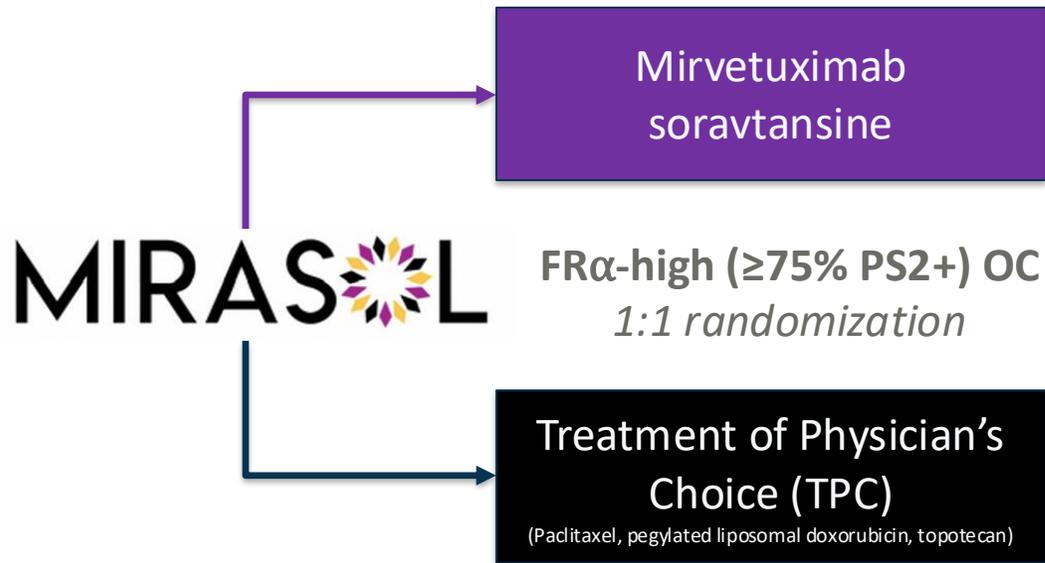
**PS2+ scoring:** percentage of viable tumor cells with moderate [2+] or strong [3+] staining intensity:

FR $\alpha$ -high = PS2+  $\geq$ 75%

FR $\alpha$ -medium = PS2+  $\geq$ 50% and <75%

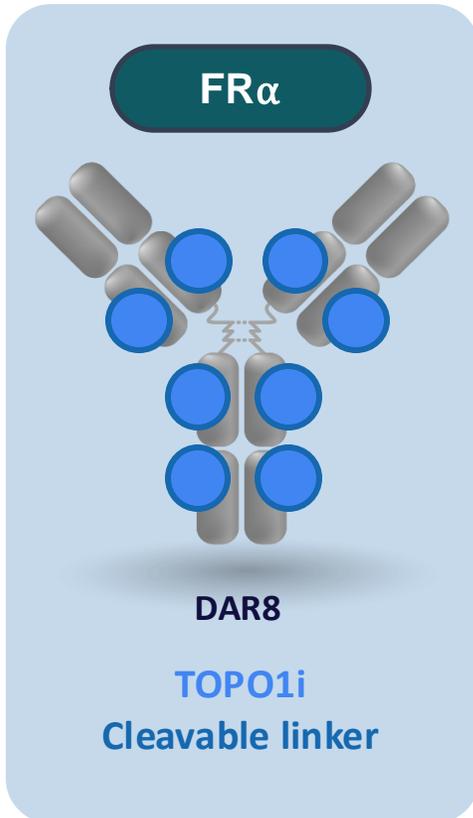
FR $\alpha$ -low = PS2+  $\geq$ 25% and <50%

# Mirvetuximab soravtansine showed better OS than TPC in patients with FR $\alpha$ -high ( $\geq 75\%$ PS2+) ovarian cancer



....which led to the approval of Mirv for patients with “FR $\alpha$ -high” (PS2+  $\geq 75\%$ ) ovarian cancer

# Emerging data for novel TOPO1i ADCs suggest responses across all FR $\alpha$ expressions



**BAT8006:** “Preliminary efficacy in all PROC patients regardless of FR $\alpha$  expression”

**PRO1184:** “Responses in patients with OC were observed regardless of FR $\alpha$  expression levels”

**AZD5335:** “Objective responses observed in patients with FR $\alpha$ -high and FR $\alpha$ -low”

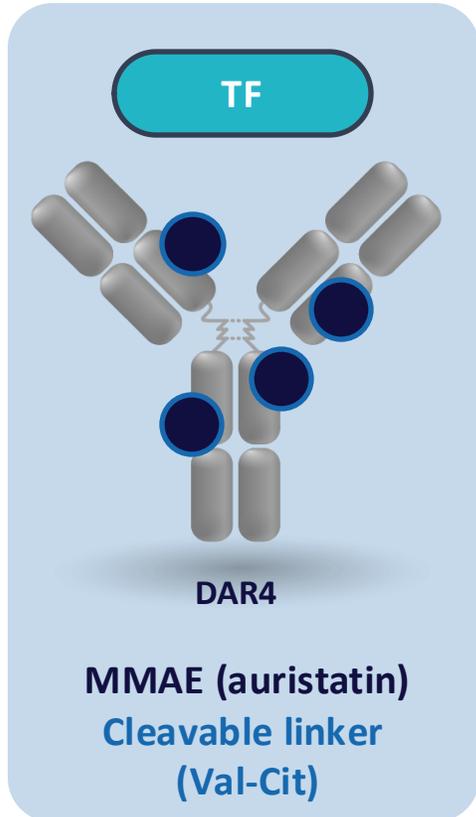
data are immature and no PFS/OS reported

**BAT8006:** H Jia et al. Presented at ASCO24

**PRO1184:** E. K. Lee et al. Presented at ESMO24

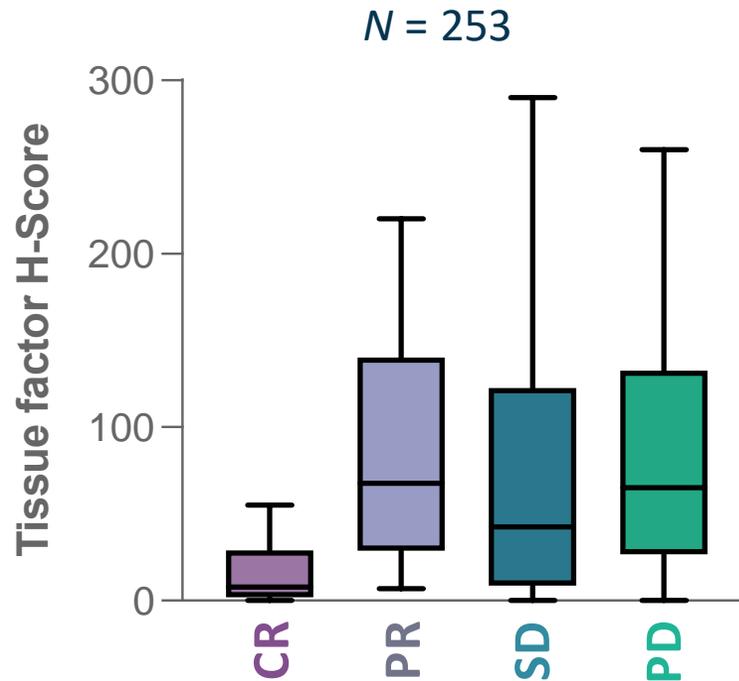
**AZD5335:** R. Shapira-Frommer et al. Presented at ESMO24

# Tisotumab vedotin showed no association between TF expression and tumor response in cervical cancer



**Tisotumab vedotin (TV)**

## InnovaTV 301 (cervical cancer)



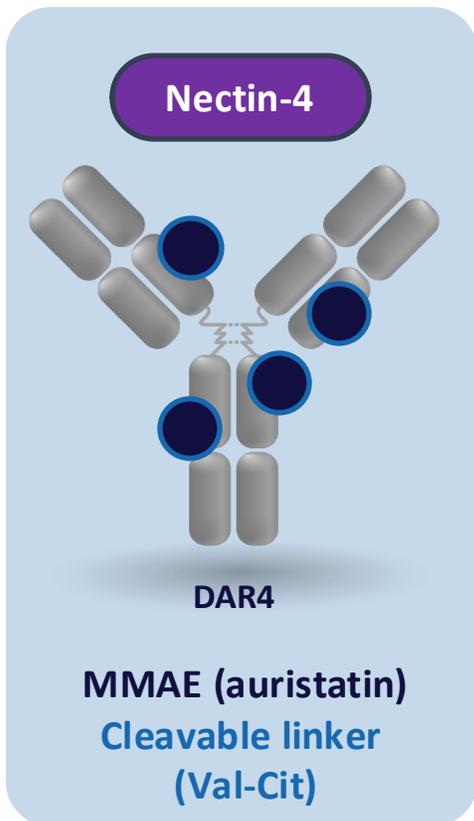
CR = complete response; PR = partial response; SD = stable disease; PD = progressive disease.


**MULTI-DISCIPLINE REVIEW**  
 761208Orig1s000

*“Response to tisotumab vedotin was observed irrespective of the level of membrane tissue factor expression”*

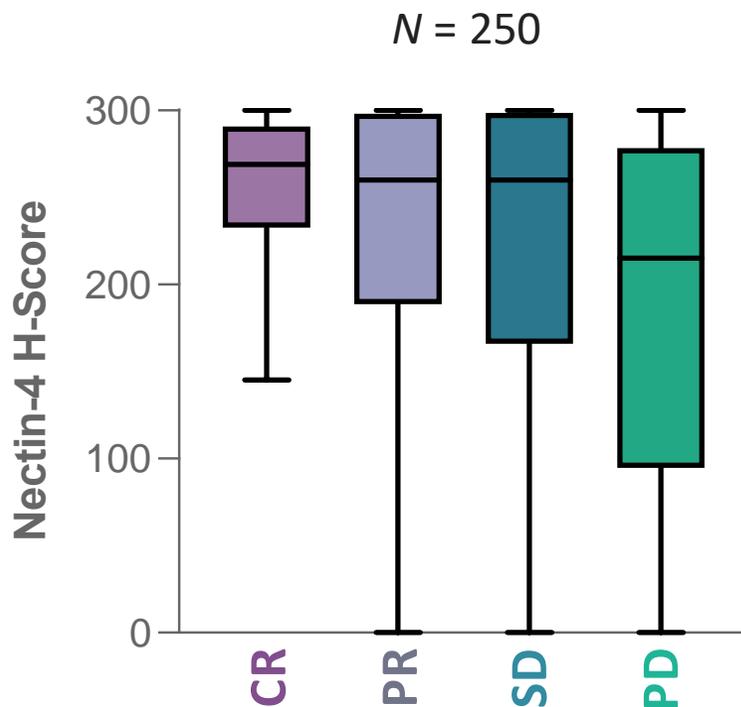
*Based on the data available, a companion diagnostic is not needed to select patients”*

# Enfortumab vedotin showed responses across all nectin-4 expression levels in urothelial carcinoma



**Enfortumab vedotin (EV)**

## EV-301 (urothelial carcinoma)



CR = complete response; PR = partial response; SD = stable disease; PD = progressive disease.

**FDA** MULTI-DISCIPLINE REVIEW  
761137Orig1s000

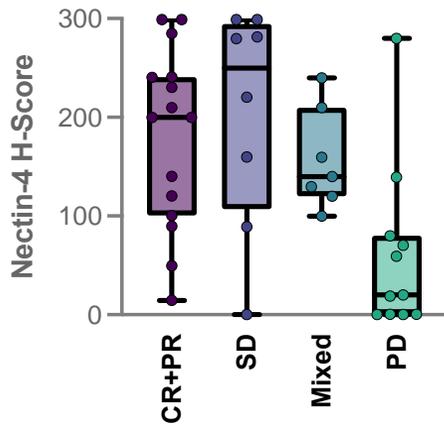
*“There is likely no lower H-score cutoff for nectin-4 expression below which patients would not be expected to benefit from treatment with enfortumab vedotin”*

*“Patient selection for treatment with enfortumab vedotin based on Nectin-4 expression levels is not warranted.”*

# Better efficacy in patients with nectin-4 high or amplified treated with enfortumab vedotin (retrospective study)

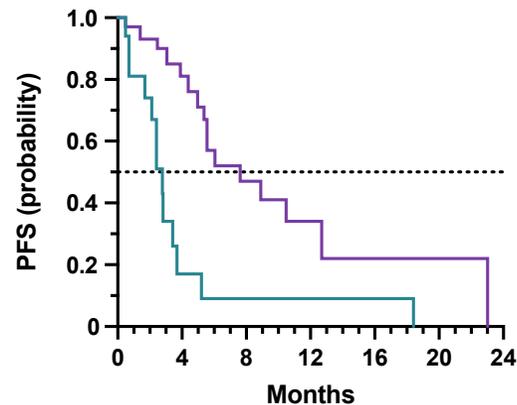
A different nectin-4 antibody was used for IHC, highlighting well-known IHC challenges, including sensitivity, specificity, and dynamic range

Responses based on nectin-4 H-Score  
N = 47



CR = complete response; PR = partial response; SD = stable disease; Mixed = mixed responses; PD = progressive disease

Nectin-4 H-score  $\geq 100$   
vs H-score  $< 100$   
N = 47

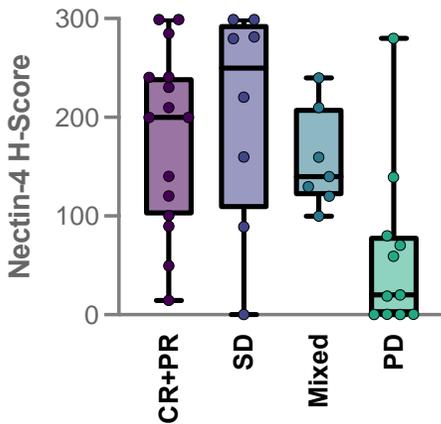


“The assumption of widespread nectin-4 expression in urothelial carcinoma requires re-evaluation”

# Better efficacy in patients with nectin-4 high or amplified treated with enfortumab vedotin (retrospective study)

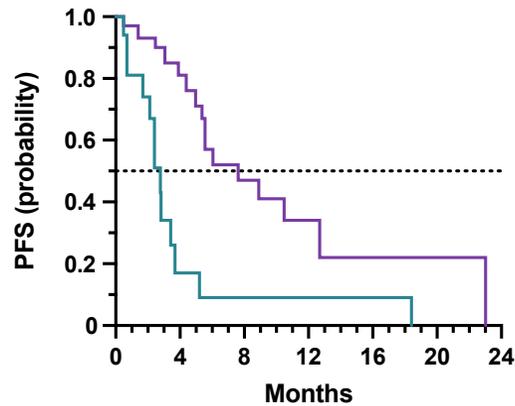
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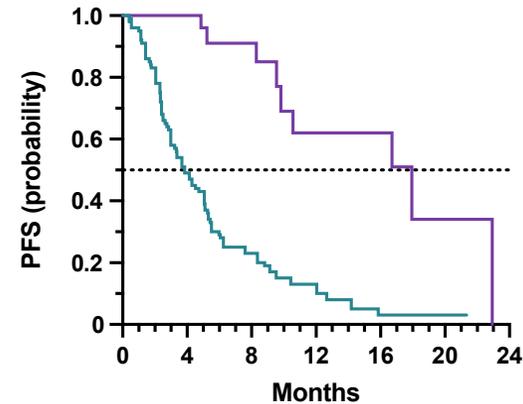
CR = complete response; PR = partial response; SD = stable disease; Mixed = mixed responses; PD = progressive disease

Nectin-4 H-score  $\geq 100$  vs H-score  $< 100$   
N = 47

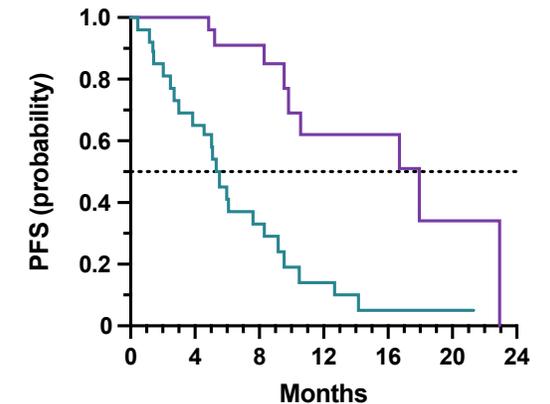


Nectin-4 amplification was determined with a newly developed fluorescence in situ hybridization (FISH) assay.

Nectin-4 amplified vs non-amplified  
N = 108



Nectin-4 amplified vs non-amplified with H-score  $\geq 200$   
N = 54



Similar trends observed for OS (not shown)

“The assumption of widespread nectin-4 expression in urothelial carcinoma requires re-evaluation”

“Nectin-4 amplification could be a predictive biomarker for EV in mUC and other tumors”

# Does target expression correlate with responses in solid tumors for approved ADCs?

	Payload	Bystander active	Target	Target/response correlation
Trastuzumab emtansine	DM1	No*	HER2	Better responses in HER2-high
Trastuzumab deruxtecan	DXd	Yes	HER2	Better responses in HER2-high, but responses observed across all HER2-expression
Mirvetuximab soravtansine	DM4	Yes <sup>#</sup>	FR $\alpha$	Better PFS and OS in FR $\alpha$ -high ( $\geq$ 75% PS2+)
Sacituzumab govitecan	SN-38	Yes	TROP2	No clear relationship
Enfortumab vedotin	MMAE	Yes	Nectin-4	Responses observed across all nectin-4 levels Emerging data suggest correlation
Tisotumab vedotin	MMAE	Yes	TF	No correlation

With over 200 ADCs currently in clinical development, the relationship between target expression and treatment efficacy will likely be better understood in the near future!

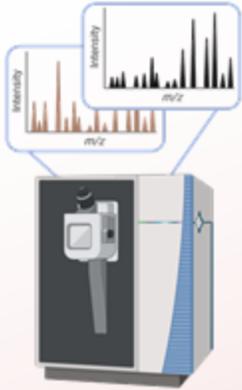
# Does target expression correlate with responses in hematological malignancies?

	Payload	Bystander active	Target	Target/response correlation
<b>Brentuximab vedotin</b>	MMAE	Yes	CD30	<b>No relationship observed in several types of non-Hodgkin lymphomas</b>
<b>Polatuzumab vedotin</b>	MMAE	Yes	CD79b	<b>Responses observed across all target levels in DLBCL</b>
<b>Loncastuximab tesirine</b>	PBD	Yes	CD19	<b>Responses observed across all target levels in DLBCL</b>
<b>Inotuzumab ozogamicin</b>	Calicheamicin	Yes	CD22	<b>No statistically significant relationship in ALL</b>
<b>Gemtuzumab ozogamicin</b>	Calicheamicin	Yes	CD33	<b>Contradictory results in AML</b>
<b>Belantamab mafodotin*</b>	MMAF	No	BCMA	<b>No relationship observed in MM</b>

\*Belantamab mafodotin has been withdrawn from the market but is currently under review by several regulatory authorities for its potential use in combination therapies

**Gemtuzumab ozogamicin responses inversely correlate with P-gp expression!**

# Where do we go next? Target(s) identification, quantification, and functionality



## Proteomics

- Mass spectrometry (MS)
- Reverse Phase Protein Array (RPPA)

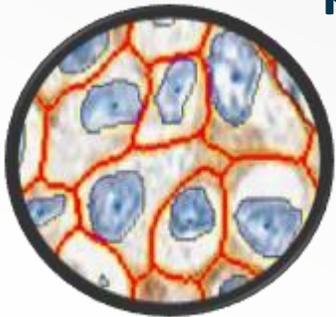
## Companion diagnostic imaging tools

- Radioconjugates (*e.g.*, radiolabeled antibody)



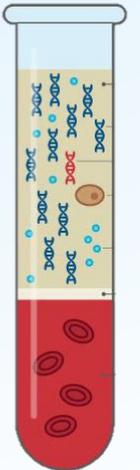
## Digital and computational pathology

- Quantitative Continue Scoring (QCS)
- Normalized Membrane Ratio (NMR)
- Proximity models



## Liquid biopsy

- *Cell-free DNA (cfDNA)*
- *Circulating tumor DNA (ctDNA)*
- *Circulating tumor cells (CTCs)*
- *Epigenomic signatures*



*...among others!*

# Key takeaways and final thoughts

- 1) ADC **target-mediated delivery is not the only way** for an ADC or its payload to get into a cell
- 2) Pharmacology of ADCs is more **complex with bystander** active payloads

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- 3) For many ADCs, **benefits are observed across all levels of target expression**
- 4) Patients with no target expression tended to be **excluded** from trials, based on the **classic view of ADCs**
- 5) Patients with low or no target expression may benefit from a certain ADC, but they might **benefit more** from another ADC with a more **optimal target or payload**

# Key takeaways and final thoughts

- 1) ADC **target-mediated delivery is not the only way** for an ADC or its payload to get into a cell
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- 4) Patients with no target expression tended to be **excluded** from trials, based on the **classic view of ADCs**
- 5) Patients with low or no target expression may benefit from a certain ADC, but they might **benefit more** from another ADC with a more **optimal target or payload**
- 6) Biomarkers for **payload sensitivity or resistance** are likely important but lag far behind
- 7) We have **limited biomarkers for toxicities** (e.g. UGT1A1)
- 8) Many biomarker/expression **analyses are not standardized** across institutions/companies and are often retrospective

# Acknowledgments



ADC Therapeutic Development  
Zymeworks

*In particular:*

**Jamie Rich**  
Senior Director, Technology

**Stuart Barnscher**  
Senior Director, Preclinical  
Programs

**Steve Seredick**  
Director, Portfolio Strategy

**Paul Moore**  
CSO