KEYTRUDA® (pembrolizumab) is the First Anti-PD-1 Therapy Approved in China for Advanced Melanoma

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KEYTRUDA Approved By China National Drug Administration (CNDA) in Five Months, Accelerating Availability of Anti-PD-1 Option to Advanced Melanoma Patients in China

KENILWORTH, N.J.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Merck (NYSE:MRK), known as MSD outside the United States and Canada, today announced that KEYTRUDA®, Merck's anti-PD-1 therapy, has been approved by the China National Drug Administration (CNDA) for the treatment of adult patients with unresectable or metastatic melanoma following failure of one prior line of therapy. This is the first and only approval of an anti-PD-1 therapy for advanced melanoma in China.

"Over the past decades, we have had limited effective options in the treatment of patients with advanced melanoma," Professor Jun Guo, M.D., Ph.D., director of the Department of Melanoma & Renal Cancer, Peking University Cancer Hospital and Institute Secretary-General of the Chinese Society of Clinical Oncology, primary investigator, KEYNOTE-151. "Advanced melanoma is one of the cancers that has been most responsive to immunotherapy, and outside of China, anti-PD-1 therapies such as pembrolizumab have become the standard therapy for this disease. With the approval of pembrolizumab in China, the treatment of advanced melanoma will now be aligned with international standards."

The approval of KEYTRUDA in China was based on overall response rate (ORR) data from the Phase 1b KEYNOTE-151 study, which evaluated KEYTRUDA monotherapy in Chinese patients with previously treated locally advanced or metastatic melanoma who received one prior line of systemic therapy. In 2018, the CNDA granted priority review status to KEYTRUDA, which accelerated the approval process by allowing for simultaneous clinical validation for the first time – creating an industry leading approval turnaround time for imported cancer medicine in China.

"Merck is committed to bringing new treatment advances, like KEYTRUDA, to cancer patients in China," said Dr. Roy Baynes, senior vice president and head of global clinical development, chief medical officer, Merck Research Laboratories. "The approval of KEYTRUDA in China, for this first indication, was made possible through extensive collaborative effort with the Chinese patients and investigators who participated in KEYNOTE-151, as well as the regulatory and government authorities who prioritized this filing. We appreciate their commitment to bringing forward the first anti-PD-1 therapy for advanced melanoma in China."

"The approval of our anti-PD-1 therapy reflects the Chinese government’s strong commitment to expedite the introduction of innovative therapies to Chinese patients," said Joseph Romanelli, president of MSD China. "The approval of KEYTRUDA in advanced melanoma marks the sixth new product approval for MSD China in 2018. We are encouraged that our scientific advancements are leading to new options for patients and their families."

About Melanoma in China

Malignant melanoma, the most serious form of skin cancer, is characterized by the uncontrolled growth of pigment-producing cells. The incidence of melanoma has been increasing over the past four decades – approximately 232,000 new cases were diagnosed worldwide in 2012. Melanoma is one of the fastest growing malignant cancers in China, increasing at an annual rate of 3-5 percent, which makes it one of the deadliest diseases in the country. Research data has shown that once the disease metastasizes, the five-year survival rate for metastatic melanoma in Chinese patients is only 4.6 percent.

About KEYNOTE-151

KEYNOTE-151 is an open-label, single-arm, multi-center, Phase 1b trial evaluating KEYTRUDA monotherapy in 103 Chinese patients with previously treated locally advanced or metastatic melanoma who received one prior line of systemic therapy. Patients were enrolled to receive KEYTRUDA at a dose of 2 mg/kg every three weeks. The primary efficacy outcome measure was ORR as assessed by Blinded Independent Central Review (BICR) using RECIST 1.1. Secondary efficacy outcome measures were duration of response (DOR) and progression-free survival (PFS; as assessed by BICR per RECIST 1.1 and irRECIST), ORR (as assessed by BICR per irRECIST) and overall survival (OS).
KEYTRUDA® (pembrolizumab) Injection, 100mg

KEYTRUDA is an anti-PD-1 therapy that works by increasing the ability of the body's immune system to help detect and fight tumor cells. KEYTRUDA is a humanized monoclonal antibody that blocks the interaction between PD-1 and its ligands, PD-L1 and PD-L2, thereby activating T lymphocytes which may affect both tumor cells and healthy cells.

Merck has the industry’s largest immuno-oncology clinical research program, which currently involves more than 750 trials studying KEYTRUDA across a wide variety of cancers and treatment settings. The KEYTRUDA clinical program seeks to understand the role of KEYTRUDA across cancers and the factors that may predict a patient’s likelihood of benefiting from treatment with KEYTRUDA, including exploring several different biomarkers.

KEYTRUDA (pembrolizumab) Indications and Dosing in the U.S.

Melanoma

KEYTRUDA is indicated for the treatment of patients with unresectable or metastatic melanoma at a fixed dose of 200 mg every three weeks until disease progression or unacceptable toxicity.

Lung Cancer

KEYTRUDA, as a single agent, is indicated for the first-line treatment of patients with metastatic non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC) whose tumors have high PD-L1 expression [tumor proportion score (TPS) ≥50%] as determined by an FDA-approved test, with no EGFR or ALK genomic tumor aberrations.

KEYTRUDA, as a single agent, is also indicated for the treatment of patients with metastatic NSCLC whose tumors express PD-L1 (TPS ≥1%) as determined by an FDA-approved test, with disease progression on or after platinum-containing chemotherapy. Patients with EGFR or ALK genomic tumor aberrations should have disease progression on FDA-approved therapy for these aberrations prior to receiving KEYTRUDA.

KEYTRUDA, in combination with pemetrexed and carboplatin, is indicated for the first-line treatment of patients with metastatic nonsquamous NSCLC. This indication is approved under accelerated approval based on tumor response rate and progression-free survival. Continued approval for this indication may be contingent upon verification and description of clinical benefit in the confirmatory trials.

In metastatic NSCLC, KEYTRUDA is administered at a fixed dose of 200 mg every three weeks until disease progression, unacceptable toxicity, or up to 24 months in patients without disease progression.

When administering KEYTRUDA in combination with chemotherapy, KEYTRUDA should be administered prior to chemotherapy when given on the same day. See also the Prescribing Information for pemetrexed and carboplatin.

Head and Neck Cancer

KEYTRUDA is indicated for the treatment of patients with recurrent or metastatic head and neck squamous cell carcinoma (HNSCC) with disease progression on or after platinum-containing chemotherapy. This indication is approved under accelerated approval based on tumor response rate and durability of response. Continued approval for this indication may be contingent upon verification and description of clinical benefit in the confirmatory trials. In HNSCC, KEYTRUDA is administered at a fixed dose of 200 mg every three weeks until disease progression, unacceptable toxicity, or up to 24 months in patients without disease progression.

Classical Hodgkin Lymphoma

KEYTRUDA is indicated for the treatment of adult and pediatric patients with refractory classical Hodgkin lymphoma (cHL), or who have relapsed after three or more prior lines of therapy. This indication is approved under accelerated approval based on tumor response rate and durability of response. Continued approval for this indication may be contingent upon verification and description of clinical benefit in the confirmatory trials. In adults with cHL, KEYTRUDA is administered at a fixed dose of 200 mg every three weeks until disease progression or unacceptable toxicity, or up to 24 months in patients without disease progression. In pediatric patients with cHL, KEYTRUDA is administered at a dose of 2 mg/kg (up to a maximum of 200 mg) every three weeks until disease progression or unacceptable toxicity, or up to 24 months in patients without disease progression.

Primary Mediastinal Large B-Cell Lymphoma

KEYTRUDA is indicated for the treatment of adult and pediatric patients with refractory primary mediastinal large B-cell lymphoma (PMBCL), or who have relapsed after 2 or more prior lines of therapy. This indication is approved under accelerated approval based on tumor response rate and durability of response. Continued approval for this indication may be contingent upon verification and description of clinical benefit in confirmatory trials. KEYTRUDA is not recommended for the treatment of patients with PMBCL who require urgent cytoreductive therapy. In adults with PMBCL, KEYTRUDA is administered at a fixed dose of 200 mg every three weeks until disease progression, unacceptable toxicity, or up to 24 months in patients without disease progression. In pediatric patients with PMBCL, KEYTRUDA is administered at a dose of 2 mg/kg (up to a maximum of 200 mg) every three weeks until disease progression or unacceptable toxicity, or up to 24 months in patients without disease progression.

Urothelial Carcinoma

KEYTRUDA is indicated for the treatment of patients with locally advanced or metastatic urothelial carcinoma (mUC) who are not eligible for cisplatin-containing chemotherapy and whose tumors express PD-L1 [Combined Positive Score (CPS) ≥10], or in patients who are not eligible for any platinum-containing chemotherapy regardless of PD-L1 status. This indication is approved under accelerated approval based on tumor response rate and duration of response. Continued approval for this indication may be contingent upon verification and description of clinical benefit in the confirmatory trials.
KEYTRUDA is also indicated for the treatment of patients with locally advanced or metastatic urothelial carcinoma (mUC) who have disease progression during or following platinum-containing chemotherapy or within 12 months of neoadjuvant or adjuvant treatment with platinum-containing chemotherapy.

In locally advanced or metastatic urothelial carcinoma, KEYTRUDA is administered at a fixed dose of 200 mg every three weeks until disease progression or unacceptable toxicity, or up to 24 months in patients without disease progression.

**Microsatellite Instability-High (MSI-H) Cancer**

KEYTRUDA is indicated for the treatment of adult and pediatric patients with unresectable or metastatic microsatellite instability-high (MSI-H) or mismatch repair deficient (dMMR)

- solid tumors that have progressed following prior treatment and who have no satisfactory alternative treatment options, or
- colorectal cancer that has progressed following treatment with fluoropyrimidine, oxaliplatin, and irinotecan.

This indication is approved under accelerated approval based on tumor response rate and durability of response. Continued approval for this indication may be contingent upon verification and description of clinical benefit in the confirmatory trials. The safety and effectiveness of KEYTRUDA in pediatric patients with MSI-H central nervous system cancers have not been established. In adult patients with MSI-H cancer, KEYTRUDA is administered at a fixed dose of 200 mg every three weeks until disease progression, unacceptable toxicity, or up to 24 months in patients without disease progression. In children with MSI-H cancer, KEYTRUDA is administered at a dose of 2 mg/kg (up to a maximum of 200 mg) every three weeks until disease progression or unacceptable toxicity, or up to 24 months in patients without disease progression.

**Gastric Cancer**

KEYTRUDA is indicated for the treatment of patients with recurrent locally advanced or metastatic gastric or gastroesophageal junction (GEJ) adenocarcinoma whose tumors express PD-L1 [Combined Positive Score (CPS) ≥1] as determined by an FDA-approved test, with disease progression on or after two or more prior lines of therapy including fluoropyrimidine- and platinum-containing chemotherapy and if appropriate, HER2/neu-targeted therapy. This indication is approved under accelerated approval based on tumor response rate and durability of response. Continued approval for this indication may be contingent upon verification and description of clinical benefit in the confirmatory trials. The recommended dose of KEYTRUDA is 200 mg every three weeks until disease progression, unacceptable toxicity, or up to 24 months in patients without disease progression.

**Cervical Cancer**

KEYTRUDA is indicated for the treatment of patients with recurrent or metastatic cervical cancer with disease progression on or after chemotherapy whose tumors express PD-L1 (CPS ≥1) as determined by an FDA-approved test. This indication is approved under accelerated approval based on tumor response rate and durability of response. Continued approval for this indication may be contingent upon verification and description of clinical benefit in the confirmatory trials. The recommended dose of KEYTRUDA is 200 mg every three weeks until disease progression, unacceptable toxicity or up to 24 months in patients without disease progression.

**Selected Important Safety Information for KEYTRUDA**

KEYTRUDA can cause immune-mediated pneumonitis, including fatal cases. Pneumonitis occurred in 94 (3.4%) of 2799 patients receiving KEYTRUDA, including Grade 1 (0.8%), 2 (1.3%), 3 (0.9%), 4 (0.3%), and 5 (0.1%) pneumonitis, and occurred more frequently in patients with a history of prior thoracic radiation (6.9%) compared to those without (2.9%). Monitor patients for signs and symptoms of pneumonitis. Evaluate suspected pneumonitis with radiographic imaging. Administer corticosteroids for Grade 2 or greater pneumonitis. Withhold KEYTRUDA for Grade 2; permanently discontinue KEYTRUDA for Grade 3 or 4 or recurrent Grade 2 pneumonitis.

KEYTRUDA can cause immune-mediated colitis. Colitis occurred in 48 (1.7%) of 2799 patients receiving KEYTRUDA, including Grade 2 (0.4%), 3 (1.1%), and 4 (<0.1%) colitis. Monitor patients for signs and symptoms of colitis. Administer corticosteroids for Grade 2 or greater colitis. Withhold KEYTRUDA for Grade 2 or 3; permanently discontinue KEYTRUDA for Grade 4 colitis.

KEYTRUDA can cause immune-mediated hepatitis. Hepatitis occurred in 19 (0.7%) of 2799 patients receiving KEYTRUDA, including Grade 2 (0.1%), 3 (0.4%), and 4 (<0.1%) hepatitis. Monitor patients for changes in liver function. Administer corticosteroids for Grade 2 or greater hepatitis and, based on severity of liver enzyme elevations, withhold or discontinue KEYTRUDA.

KEYTRUDA can cause hypophysitis. Hypophysitis occurred in 17 (0.6%) of 2799 patients receiving KEYTRUDA, including Grade 2 (0.2%), 3 (0.3%), and 4 (<0.1%) hypophysitis. Monitor patients for signs and symptoms of hypophysitis (including hypopituitarism and adrenal insufficiency). Administer corticosteroids and hormone replacement as clinically indicated. Withhold KEYTRUDA for Grade 2; withhold or discontinue for Grade 3 or 4 hypophysitis.

KEYTRUDA can cause thyroid disorders, including hyperthyroidism, hypothyroidism, and thyroiditis. Hyperthyroidism occurred in 96 (3.4%) of 2799 patients receiving KEYTRUDA, including Grade 1 (0.8%) and 2 (0.1%) hyperthyroidism. Hypothyroidism occurred in 237 (8.5%) of 2799 patients receiving KEYTRUDA, including Grade 2 (6.2%) and 3 (0.1%) hypothyroidism. The incidence of new or worsening hypothyroidism was higher in patients with HNSCC, occurring in 28 (15%) of 192 patients with HNSCC, compared to those without HNSCC, occurring in 30 (2.9%) of 1013 patients. Monitor patients for changes in thyroid function (at the start of treatment, periodically during treatment, and as indicated based on clinical evaluation) and for clinical signs and symptoms of thyroid disorders. Administer replacement hormones for hypothyroidism and manage hyperthyroidism with thiouamides and beta-blockers as appropriate. Withhold or discontinue KEYTRUDA for Grade 3 or 4 hyperthyroidism.

KEYTRUDA can cause type 1 diabetes mellitus, including diabetic ketoacidosis, which have been reported in 6 (0.2%) of 2799
KEYTRUDA can cause immune-mediated nephritis. Nephritis occurred in 9 (0.3%) of 2799 patients receiving KEYTRUDA, including Grade 2 (0.1%), 3 (0.1%), and 4 (<0.1%) nephritis. Monitor patients for changes in renal function. Administer corticosteroids for Grade 2 or greater nephritis. Withhold KEYTRUDA for Grade 2; permanently discontinue KEYTRUDA for Grade 3 or 4 nephritis.

Immune-mediated rashes, including Stevens-Johnson syndrome (SJS), toxic epidermal necrolysis (TEN) (some cases with fatal outcome), exfoliative dermatitis, and bullous pemphigoid, can occur. Monitor patients for suspected severe skin reactions and based on the severity of the adverse reaction, withhold or permanently discontinue KEYTRUDA and administer corticosteroids. For signs or symptoms of SJS or TEN, withhold KEYTRUDA and refer the patient for specialized care for assessment and treatment. If SJS or TEN is confirmed, permanently discontinue KEYTRUDA.

Immune-mediated adverse reactions, which may be severe or fatal, can occur in any organ system or tissue in patients receiving KEYTRUDA. While immune-mediated adverse reactions usually occur during treatment with PD-1/PD-L1 blocking antibodies, they may occur after discontinuation of treatment. For suspected immune-mediated adverse reactions, ensure adequate evaluation to confirm etiology or exclude other causes. Based on the severity of the adverse reaction, withhold KEYTRUDA and administer corticosteroids. Upon improvement to Grade 1 or less, initiate corticosteroid taper and continue to taper over at least 1 month. Based on limited data from clinical studies in patients whose immune-related adverse reactions could not be controlled with corticosteroid use, administration of other systemic immunosuppressants can be considered. Resume KEYTRUDA when the adverse reaction remains at Grade 1 or less following corticosteroid taper. Permanently discontinue KEYTRUDA for any Grade 3 immune-mediated adverse reaction that recurs and for any life-threatening immune-mediated adverse reaction.

The following clinically significant immune-mediated adverse reactions occurred in less than 1% (unless otherwise indicated) of 2799 patients: arthritis (1.5%), uveitis, myositis, Guillain-Barré syndrome, myasthenia gravis, vasculitis, pancreatitis, hemolytic anemia, sarcoidosis, and encephalitis. In addition, myelitis and myocarditis were reported in other clinical trials, including chL and postmarketing use.

Solid organ transplant rejection has been reported in postmarketing use of KEYTRUDA. Treatment with KEYTRUDA may increase the risk of rejection in solid organ transplant recipients. Consider the benefit of treatment with KEYTRUDA vs the risk of possible organ rejection in these patients.

KEYTRUDA can cause severe or life-threatening infusion-related reactions, including hypersensitivity and anaphylaxis, which have been reported in 6 (0.2%) of 2799 patients. Monitor patients for signs and symptoms of infusion-related reactions, including rigors, chills, wheezing, pruritus, flushing, rash, hypotension, hypoxemia, and fever. For Grade 3 or 4 reactions, stop infusion and permanently discontinue KEYTRUDA.

Immune-mediated complications, including fatal events, occurred in patients who underwent allogeneic hematopoietic stem cell transplantation (HSCT) after treatment with KEYTRUDA. Of 23 patients with chL who proceeded to allogeneic HSCT after KEYTRUDA, 6 developed graft-versus-host disease (GVHD) (one fatal case), and two developed severe hepatic veno-occlusive disease (VOD) after reduced-intensity conditioning (one fatal case). Cases of fatal hyperacute GVHD after allogeneic HSCT have also been reported in patients with lymphoma who received a PD-1 receptor-blocking antibody before transplantation. Follow patients closely for early evidence of transplant-related complications such as hyperacute GVHD, Grade 3 to 4 acute GVHD, steroid-requiring febrile syndrome, hepatic VOD, and other immune-mediated adverse reactions, and intervene promptly.

In patients with a history of allogeneic HSCT, acute GVHD, including fatal GVHD, has been reported after treatment with KEYTRUDA. Patients who experienced GVHD after their transplant procedure may be at increased risk for GVHD after KEYTRUDA. Consider the benefit of KEYTRUDA vs the risk of GVHD in these patients.

In clinical trials in patients with multiple myeloma, the addition of KEYTRUDA to a thalidomide analogue plus dexamethasone resulted in increased mortality. Treatment of these patients with a PD-1 or PD-L1 blocking antibody in this combination is not recommended outside of controlled clinical trials.

Based on its mechanism of action, KEYTRUDA can cause fatal harm when administered to a pregnant woman. If used during pregnancy, or if the patient becomes pregnant during treatment, apprise the patient of the potential hazard to a fetus. Advise females of reproductive potential to use highly effective contraception during treatment and for 4 months after the last dose of KEYTRUDA.

In KEYNOTE-006, KEYTRUDA was discontinued due to adverse reactions in 9% of 555 patients with advanced melanoma; adverse reactions leading to discontinuation in more than one patient were colitis (1.4%), autoimmune hepatitis (0.7%), allergic reaction (0.4%), polyneuropathy (0.4%), and cardiac failure (0.4%). Adverse reactions leading to interruption of KEYTRUDA occurred in 21% of patients; the most common (≥1%) was diarrhea (2.5%). The most common adverse reactions with KEYTRUDA vs ipilimumab were fatigue (28% vs 28%), diarrhea (26% with KEYTRUDA), rash (24% vs 23%), and nausea (21% with KEYTRUDA). Corresponding incidence rates are listed for ipilimumab only for those adverse reactions that occurred at the same or lower rate than with KEYTRUDA.

In KEYNOTE-010, KEYTRUDA monotherapy was discontinued due to adverse reactions in 8% of 682 patients with metastatic NSCLC. The most common adverse event resulting in permanent discontinuation of KEYTRUDA was pneumonitis (1.8%). Adverse reactions leading to interruption of KEYTRUDA occurred in 23% of patients; the most common (≥1%) were diarrhea (1%), fatigue (1.3%), pneumonia (1%), liver enzyme elevation (1.2%), decreased appetite (1.3%), and pneumonitis (1%). The most common adverse reactions (occurring in at least 20% of patients and at a higher incidence than with docetaxel) were decreased appetite (25% vs 23%), dyspnea (23% vs 20%), and nausea (20% vs 18%).

In KEYNOTE-021(G1), when KEYTRUDA was administered in combination with carboplatin and pemetrexed (carbo/pem) in advanced nonsquamous NSCLC, KEYTRUDA was discontinued in 10% of 59 patients. The most common adverse reaction resulting in discontinuation of KEYTRUDA (≥2%) was acute kidney injury (3.4%). Adverse reactions leading to interruption of
KEYTRUDA occurred in 39% of patients; the most common (≥2%) were fatigue (8%), neutrophil count decreased (8%), anemia (5%), dyspnea (3.4%), and pneumonitis (3.4%). The most common adverse reactions (≥20%) with KEYTRUDA compared to carbo/pem alone were fatigue (71% vs 50%), nausea (68% vs 56%), constipation (51% vs 37%), rash (42% vs 21%), vomiting (39% vs 27%), dyspnea (39% vs 21%), diarrhea (37% vs 23%), decreased appetite (31% vs 23%), headache (31% vs 16%), cough (24% vs 18%), dizziness (24% vs 16%), insomnia (24% vs 15%), pruritus (24% vs 4.8%), peripheral edema (22% vs 18%), dysgeusia (20% vs 11%), alopecia (20% vs 3.2%), upper respiratory tract infection (20% vs 3.2%), and arthralgia (15% vs 24%). This study was not designed to demonstrate a statistically significant difference in adverse reaction rates for KEYTRUDA compared to carbo/pem alone for any specified adverse reaction.

In KEYNOTE-012, KEYTRUDA was discontinued due to adverse reactions in 17% of 192 patients with HNSCC. Serious adverse reactions occurred in 45% of patients. The most frequent serious adverse reactions reported in at least 2% of patients were pneumonia, dyspnea, confusion, state, vomiting, pleural effusion, and respiratory failure. The most common adverse reactions (reported in at least 20% of patients) were fatigue, decreased appetite, and dyspnea. Adverse reactions occurring in patients with HNSCC were generally similar to those occurring in patients with melanoma or NSCLC, with the exception of increased incidences of facial edema (10% all Grades; 2.1% Grades 3 or 4) and new or worsening hypothyroidism.

In KEYNOTE-087, KEYTRUDA was discontinued due to adverse reactions in 5% of 210 patients with cHL, and treatment was interrupted due to adverse reactions in 26% of patients. Fifteen percent (15%) of patients had an adverse reaction requiring systemic corticosteroid therapy. Serious adverse reactions occurred in 16% of patients. The most frequent serious adverse reactions (≥1%) included pneumonia, pneumonitis, pyrexia, dyspnea, GVHD, and herpes zoster. Two patients died from causes other than disease progression; one from GVHD after subsequent allogeneic HSCT and one from septic shock. The most common adverse reactions (occurring in ≥20% of patients) were fatigue (26%), pyrexia (24%), cough (24%), musculoskeletal pain (21%), diarrhea (20%), and rash (20%).

In KEYNOTE-170, KEYTRUDA was discontinued due to adverse reactions in 8% of 53 patients with PMBCL, and treatment was interrupted due to adverse reactions in 15%. Twenty-five percent (25%) of patients had an adverse reaction requiring systemic corticosteroid therapy. Serious adverse reactions occurred in 26% of patients and included: arrhythmia (4%), cardiac tamponade (2%), myocardial infarction (2%), pericardial effusion (2%), and pericarditis (2%). Six (11%) patients died within 30 days of start of treatment. The most common adverse reactions (occurring in ≥20% of patients) were musculoskeletal pain (30%), upper respiratory tract infection and pyrexia (28% each), cough (26%), fatigue (23%), and dyspnea (21%).

In KEYNOTE-052, KEYTRUDA was discontinued due to adverse reactions in 11% of 370 patients with locally advanced or metastatic urothelial carcinoma. The most common adverse reactions (in ≥20% of patients) were fatigue (38%), musculoskeletal pain (24%), decreased appetite (22%), constipation (21%), rash (21%), and diarrhea (20%). Eighteen patients (5%) died from causes other than disease progression. Five patients (1.4%) who were treated with KEYTRUDA experienced sepsis which led to death, and 3 patients (0.8%) experienced pneumonia which led to death. Adverse reactions leading to interruption of KEYTRUDA occurred in 22% of patients; the most common (≥1%) were liver enzyme increase, diarrhea, urinary tract infection, acute kidney injury, fatigue, joint pain, and pneumonia. Serious adverse reactions occurred in 42% of patients, the most frequent (≥2%) of which were urinary tract infection, hematuria, acute kidney injury, pneumonia, and urosepsis.

In KEYNOTE-045, KEYTRUDA was discontinued due to adverse reactions in 8% of 266 patients with locally advanced or metastatic urothelial carcinoma. The most common adverse reaction resulting in permanent discontinuation of KEYTRUDA was pneumonitis (1.9%). Adverse reactions leading to interruption of KEYTRUDA occurred in 20% of patients; the most common (≥1%) were urinary tract infection (1.5%), diarrhea (1.5%), and colitis (1.1%). The most common adverse reactions (≥20%) in patients who received KEYTRUDA vs those who received chemotherapy were fatigue (38% vs 56%), musculoskeletal pain (32% vs 27%), pruritus (23% vs 6%), decreased appetite (21% vs 21%), nausea (21% vs 29%), and rash (20% vs 13%). Serious adverse reactions occurred in 39% of KEYTRUDA-treated patients, the most frequent (≥2%) of which were urinary tract infection, pneumonia, anemia, and pneumonitis.

In KEYNOTE-158, KEYTRUDA was discontinued due to adverse reactions in 8% of 98 patients (in Cohort E) with recurrent or metastatic cervical cancer. Serious adverse reactions occurred in 39% of patients receiving KEYTRUDA. The most frequent serious adverse reactions reported included anemia (7%), fistula, hemorrhage, and infections [except urinary tract infections] (4.1% each). The most common adverse reactions (occurring in ≥20% of patients) were fatigue (43%), musculoskeletal pain (27%), diarrhea (23%), pain and abdominal pain (22% each), and decreased appetite (21%).

It is not known whether KEYTRUDA is excreted in human milk. Because many drugs are excreted in human milk, instruct women to discontinue nursing during treatment with KEYTRUDA and for 4 months after the final dose.

There is limited experience in pediatric patients. In a study, 40 pediatric patients (16 children aged 2 years to younger than 12 years and 24 adolescents aged 12 years to 18 years) with advanced melanoma, lymphoma, or PD-L1–positive advanced, relapsed, or refractory solid tumors were administered KEYTRUDA 2 mg/kg every 3 weeks. Patients received KEYTRUDA for a median of 3 doses (range 1–17 doses), with 34 patients (85%) receiving 2 doses or more. The safety profile in these pediatric patients was similar to that seen in adults treated with KEYTRUDA. Toxicities that occurred at a higher rate (≥15% difference) in these patients when compared to adults under 65 years of age were fatigue (45%), vomiting (38%), abdominal pain (28%), hyperransaminasemia (28%), and hyponatremia (18%).

**Merck’s Focus on Cancer**

Our goal is to translate breakthrough science into innovative oncology medicines to help people with cancer worldwide. At Merck, the potential to bring new hope to people with cancer drives our purpose and supporting accessibility to our cancer medicines is our commitment.

As part of our focus on cancer, Merck is committed to exploring the potential of immuno-oncology with one of the largest development programs in the industry across more than 30 tumor types. We also continue to strengthen our portfolio through strategic acquisitions and are prioritizing the development of several promising oncology candidates with the potential to improve the treatment of advanced cancers.
About Merck

For more than a century, Merck, a leading global biopharmaceutical company known as MSD outside of the United States and Canada, has been inventing for life, bringing forward medicines and vaccines for many of the world’s most challenging diseases. Through our prescription medicines, vaccines, biologic therapies and animal health products, we work with customers and operate in more than 140 countries to deliver innovative health solutions. We also demonstrate our commitment to increasing access to health care through far-reaching policies, programs and partnerships. Today, Merck continues to be at the forefront of research to advance the prevention and treatment of diseases that threaten people and communities around the world - including cancer, cardio-metabolic diseases, emerging animal diseases, Alzheimer’s disease and infectious diseases including HIV and Ebola. For more information, visit www.merck.com and connect with us on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and LinkedIn.

Forward-Looking Statement of Merck & Co., Inc., Kenilworth, N.J., USA

This news release of Merck & Co., Inc., Kenilworth, N.J., USA (the “company”) includes “forward-looking statements” within the meaning of the safe harbor provisions of the U.S. Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. These statements are based upon the current beliefs and expectations of the company’s management and are subject to significant risks and uncertainties. There can be no guarantees with respect to pipeline products that the products will receive the necessary regulatory approvals or that they will prove to be commercially successful. If underlying assumptions prove inaccurate or risks or uncertainties materialize, actual results may differ materially from those set forth in the forward-looking statements.

Risks and uncertainties include but are not limited to, general industry conditions and competition; general economic factors, including interest rate and currency exchange rate fluctuations; the impact of pharmaceutical industry regulation and health care legislation in the United States and internationally; global trends toward health care cost containment; technological advances, new products and patents attained by competitors; challenges inherent in new product development, including obtaining regulatory approval; the company’s ability to accurately predict future market conditions; manufacturing difficulties or delays; financial instability of international economies and sovereign risk; dependence on the effectiveness of the company’s patents and other protections for innovative products; and the exposure to litigation, including patent litigation, and/or regulatory actions.

The company undertakes no obligation to publicly update any forward-looking statement, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise. Additional factors that could cause results to differ materially from those described in the forward-looking statements can be found in the company’s 2017 Annual Report on Form 10-K and the company’s other filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) available at the SEC’s Internet site (www.sec.gov).


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