



# Keytruda plus chemotherapy extends overall survival in recurrent ovarian cancer

Market Event Summary

Anna Duran, Ph.D. | May 2025

# Keytruda combination shows Phase 3 success in ovarian cancer

## Background

- **Ovarian cancer** is typically considered an **immunologically "cold" tumor** with low immune cell infiltration and weak immunogenicity, making it **less responsive to immune checkpoint inhibitors**.
- Several immune checkpoint inhibitors have reached late-phase development in combination with chemotherapy or targeted therapies, both in first-line and in recurrent ovarian cancer, yielding **mixed results and, to date, no significant improvements in OS**.
- Despite major successes in other solid tumors, **no immune checkpoint inhibitors are currently approved** for the treatment of ovarian cancer.

## Event

- The Phase 3 **KEYNOTE-B96 trial** showed that Keytruda plus chemotherapy, with or without bevacizumab, **met its primary endpoint of PFS** in recurrent platinum-resistant ovarian cancer (PROC), both regardless of PDL-1 status and in PD-L1 CPS  $\geq 1$  cases.
- **Keytruda combined with chemotherapy** also significantly **extended OS** (secondary endpoint) in **PD-L1 positive** patients, although data had not yet been disclosed at the time of writing.
- Merck has announced plans to share the KEYNOTE-B96 trial results with regulatory authorities worldwide.

## Clarivate's takeaways



### Breakthrough results for Keytruda in ovarian cancer

The combination of **Keytruda with chemotherapy is the first** to demonstrate a **significant improvement in OS**, marking a breakthrough after numerous setbacks for immune checkpoint inhibitors in ovarian cancer. The results from the KEYNOTE-B96 trial may lead to Keytruda becoming the **first immune checkpoint inhibitor approved for the treatment of ovarian cancer**.



### Target population may be limited by PD-L1 expression

We anticipate that Keytruda plus chemotherapy will be **approved for patients with positive PD-L1 expression** (CPS  $\geq 1$ ), potentially limiting its use in PROC. However, **over 40% of ovarian cancer patients have positive PD-L1 expression**, which represents a significant proportion of patients who could benefit from this regimen.



### Competitive pipeline in PROC

Traditionally treated with non-platinum chemotherapy, PROC patients who express high levels of FR $\alpha$  now benefit from the ADC Elahere (mirvetuximab soravtansine). Clarivate expects the approval of several other agents that will further diversify treatment options in this setting. **This evolving and competitive landscape may pose challenges to the uptake of Keytruda plus chemotherapy for ovarian cancer.**

# Late-phase clinical trials of immune checkpoint inhibitors in ovarian cancer

Immune Checkpoint Inhibitor	Combination Strategy	Phase 3 trial	Ovarian cancer setting	Primary Completion Date	Primary Endpoint
Opdivo (nivolumab)	Rubraca (rucaparib)	<u>ATHENA-COMBO</u>	Maintenance after first-line platinum-based chemotherapy	May 2025	PFS <sup>1</sup>
Bavencio (avelumab)	Platinum-based chemotherapy	<u>JAVELIN Ovarian 100</u>	First line advanced (maintenance with or without induction)	September 2018	PFS <sup>1</sup>
	Chemotherapy	<u>JAVELIN Ovarian 200</u>	Recurrent platinum-resistant	September 2018	PFS; OS <sup>1</sup>
Tecentriq (atezolizumab)	Carboplatin-based chemotherapy + bevacizumab	<u>IMagyn050</u>	First line advanced	February 2022	PFS; OS <sup>1</sup>
	Carboplatin-based chemotherapy + bevacizumab	<u>ATALANTE</u>	Recurrent platinum-sensitive	October 2021	PFS <sup>1</sup>
	Platinum-based chemotherapy + Zejula (niraparib)	<u>ANITA</u>	Recurrent platinum-sensitive	August 2024	PFS <sup>1</sup>
	Chemotherapy + bevacizumab	<u>AGO-OVAR</u>	Recurrent platinum-resistant	March 2025	PFS; OS <sup>1</sup>
Keytruda (pembrolizumab)	Chemotherapy + Lynparza (olaparib) ± bevacizumab	<u>KEYLYNK-001</u>	First line advanced	August 2024	PFS <sup>2</sup>
	Chemotherapy ± bevacizumab	<u>KEYNOTE-B96</u>	Recurrent platinum-resistant	June 2025	PFS <sup>2</sup>
Imfinzi (durvalumab)	Chemotherapy + Lynparza (olaparib) ± bevacizumab	<u>DUO-O</u>	First line advanced	March 2025	PFS <sup>2</sup>
Jemperli (dostarlimab)	Chemotherapy + Zejula (niraparib) ± bevacizumab	<u>FIRST</u>	First line advanced	October 2024	PFS <sup>2</sup>

# About the author



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Prior to joining Clarivate, Dr. Duran was a postdoctoral fellow at IRB Barcelona, where she worked on the development of a new type of p38 $\alpha$  inhibitors with therapeutic potential. She holds a Ph.D. in biochemistry from the University of Barcelona and an M.Res. in chemical biology from Imperial College London.

### Clarivate coverage of ovarian cancer

- Ovarian Cancer | [Disease Landscape & Forecast | G7](#)
- Ovarian Cancer | [Current Treatment: Physician Insights | US](#)
- Ovarian Cancer | [Current Treatment: Treatment Sequencing | US](#)



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