

# Phase III trial shows crizotinib superior to single-agent chemotherapy for ALK-positive lung cancer

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The results of a new phase III trial show that crizotinib, a targeted therapy, is a more effective treatment than standard chemotherapy for patients with advanced, ALK-positive lung cancer, researchers said at the ESMO 2012 Congress of the European Society for Medical Oncology in Vienna.

Rearrangements of the [anaplastic lymphoma](#) kinase (ALK) gene are found in about 5% of all lung cancers. In previous uncontrolled studies, crizotinib has been shown to induce significant clinical responses in patients with advanced ALK-positive lung cancer.

"This study is the first head-to-head comparison of crizotinib with standard chemotherapy in this patient group," said lead study author Dr Alice Shaw from Massachusetts General Hospital Cancer Center in Boston, USA. "In ALK-positive patients who have been previously treated with first-line, platinum-based chemotherapy, crizotinib is superior to standard single-agent chemotherapy in terms of response, progression-free survival and quality of life. These results establish crizotinib as the standard of care for patients with advanced, previously treated, ALK-positive lung cancer."

The current global randomized [phase III](#) study compared the efficacy and safety of crizotinib with standard chemotherapy with [pemetrexed](#) or [docetaxel](#), in 347 patients with ALK-positive lung cancer who had already been treated with chemotherapy.

The study showed that crizotinib prolonged progression-free survival to a median of 7.7 months compared to 3.0 months among those patients who received the chemotherapy (HR 0.49; 95% CI 0.37-0.64 ; P

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