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BMS, Novartis to evaluate combo cancer drug

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Bristol-Myers Squibb (BMS) has announced the establishment of a clinical trial collaboration with Novartis. The collaboration aims to evaluate the safety, tolerability and preliminary efficacy of its investigational PD-1 immune checkpoint inhibitor Opdivo (nivolumab) with three molecularly targeted oncology therapies (Zykadia (ceritinib), INC280 and EGF816) from Novartis. Novartis will conduct two Phase 1/2 studies focused on non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC).

"Bristol-Myers Squibb is committed to advancing the science, research and development of immunotherapy as an innovative approach to treating cancer in multiple tumor types," said Mr Michael Giordano, senior vice president, Oncology Development, BMS.

"Combining Opdivo with select targeted agents from Novartis complements our broad global development strategy of immuno-oncology combinations across the spectrum of lung cancer settings, and supports our goal of improving outcomes for patients", he added.

Opdivo is part of a new class of cancer treatments known as immunotherapies designed to harness the body's own immune system in fighting cancer, and targets distinct regulatory components of the immune system.

Zykadia, INC280 and EGF816 have each demonstrated evidence of targeting specific molecules responsible for tumor growth in NSCLC patient populations. The studies will explore the potential of enhanced anti-tumor response using a combined immunotherapy and targeted molecular approach.

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