

Lung Cancer Molecular Markers

Indications for Ordering

Mutation testing to aid in selection of tyrosine kinase inhibitor (TKI) and/or immune checkpoint inhibitor therapy

Tests to Consider

Typical testing strategy

Minimum initial recommendation – lung cancer panel that includes simultaneous ordering for mutations in *ALK*, *EGFR*, and *ROS1* genes

Primary tests

Determine eligibility for TKI therapy (panel tests)

[Lung Cancer Panel 2008894](#)

- Screening panel detects
 - *EGFR* mutations
 - *ALK* and *ROS1* fusion proteins

[Lung Cancer Panel with *KRAS* 2008895](#)

- Screening panel detects
 - *EGFR* and *KRAS* mutations
 - *ALK* and *ROS1* fusion proteins

Determine eligibility for TKI therapy (single tests)

[ALK \(D5F3\) with Interpretation by Immunohistochemistry 2007324](#)

- Detects *ALK* fusion proteins

[ALK \(D5F3\) by Immunohistochemistry with Reflex to ALK Gene Rearrangements by FISH 2011431](#)

- Detects *ALK* fusion proteins and *ALK* gene rearrangements in solid tumors

[ALK Gene Rearrangements by FISH, Lung 2006102](#)

- Screening test for all *ALK* fusions
- Use this test if the companion diagnostic test for crizotinib is required
- Does not identify the translocation partner or variant

[EGFR Mutation Detection by Pyrosequencing 2002440](#)

[KRAS Mutation Detection 0040248](#)

- Predicts response to anti-EGFR and MAPK pathway therapies in a variety of malignancies (eg, colorectal and lung cancer)

[c-MET by Immunohistochemistry 2008652](#)

- Detects overexpression of c-MET protein

[MET Gene Amplification by FISH 2013082](#)

- Aids in prognostication and therapeutic decisions for neoplasms where amplification has been demonstrated
- Screening test for *MET* gene amplification

[RET Gene Rearrangements by FISH 2012654](#)

- Detects *RET* gene rearrangements in solid tumors
- Does not identify the translocation partner or variant

[ROS1 by FISH 2008418](#)

- Detects *ROS1* gene rearrangements in solid tumors
- Does not identify the translocation partner or variant

[ROS 1 with Interpretation by Immunohistochemistry with Reflex to FISH if Equivocal or Positive 2008414](#)

- Detects *ROS1* fusion proteins and *ROS1* gene rearrangements

Screening for immune checkpoint inhibitor therapy FDA-approved PD-L1 companion tests

[PD-L1 22C3 IHC for NSCLC with Interpretation, pembrolizumab \(KEYTRUDA\) 2013284](#)

- Aid in prediction of response to pembrolizumab (KEYTRUDA) as first- or second-line therapy for patients with nonsmall cell lung cancer (NSCLC)
- Use for NSCLC specimens only
- Can be performed in conjunction with or instead of PD-L1 28-8
- For gastroesophageal junction (GEJ) specimens, see PD-L1 22C3 IHC with Combined Positive Score (CPS) Interpretation, pembrolizumab (KEYTRUDA) 3000197

[PD-L1 28-8 pharmDx by Immunohistochemistry with Interpretation, nivolumab \(OPDIVO\) 2013684](#)

- Aid in prediction of response to nivolumab for patients with nonsquamous NSCLC or melanoma
- Can be performed in conjunction with or instead of PD-L1 22C3

Monitor for EGFR T790M resistance

[EGFR T790M Mutation Detection in Circulating Tumor DNA by Digital Droplet PCR 2012868](#)

- Monitor blood plasma or cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) for
 - Development of *EGFR* T790M drug-resistant mutation in patients administered TKI therapy for *EGFR*-mutant NSCLC
 - Response to therapy and disease progression in patients receiving *EGFR* T790M-specific TKIs

Related test

[Solid Tumor Mutation Panel by Next Generation Sequencing 2007991](#)

- Aids in therapeutic decisions for solid tumor cancers
- Simultaneously evaluates mutations in multiple genes, including *AKT1*, *ALK*, *BRAF*, *EGFR*, *ERBB2*, *ERBB4*, *KRAS*, *NRAS*, and *PIKC3CA*
- Does not detect translocations

Test Methodology

ALK

- Immunohistochemistry (IHC) using *ALK* clone D5F3
- Fluorescence in situ hybridization (FISH)

EGFR – polymerase chain reaction (PCR) and pyrosequencing

- Detects mutations at codons 719 (exon 18), 768 and 790 (exon 20), 858 and 861 (exon 21)
- Detects deletions in exon 19

EGFR T790M (serum) – digital droplet PCR

KRAS – PCR and pyrosequencing

- Detects mutations at codons 12, 13 (exon 2), and 61 (exon 3)

c-MET – IHC

MET – FISH

PD-L1 – IHC

RET – FISH

- Detects all *RET* gene fusions

ROS1 – IHC (using *ROS1* clone D4D6) with FISH reflex if equivocal

Test Interpretation

Results

Single gene testing (includes genes in panels) – see table

Single Gene			
Gene	Testing method	Test result	
<i>ALK</i>	IHC	Positive – uniform membranous staining in tumor cells Equivocal – very weak cytoplasmic staining visible only on higher power by microscopy Negative – no cytoplasmic staining in tumor cells	May predict response to TKI therapy
	FISH	Positive – <i>ALK</i> gene rearrangements detected in ≥15% of nuclei • Does not identify translocation partner	May predict response to TKI therapy
<i>EGFR</i>	PCR/pyrosequencing	Positive – mutation detected	May predict response to TKI therapy
	<i>EGFR</i> T790M (serum) Digital droplet PCR	Positive – mutation detected • Expressed as percentage	Predicts resistance to TKI therapy
<i>KRAS</i>	PCR/pyrosequencing	Positive – mutation detected	May predict response to TKI therapy
<i>MET</i>	FISH	Positive – detects gene amplification	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• May predict response to crizotinib TKI therapy• Associated with acquired resistance to <i>EGFR</i> inhibitors in 5-20% of patients with <i>EGFR</i>-mutated tumors

Limitations

- Results must be interpreted in the context of clinical findings and morphological and other relevant data
- Results may be compromised if the recommended tissue-fixation procedures have not been followed

Disease Overview

Incidence

Lung cancer is the second most common cancer in U.S.

Treatment issues

- Lung cancer has poor response to traditional chemotherapy agents
 - Dismal 5-year outcome when using these agents
 - Newer targeted agents have better response rates in specific individuals and tumor types
- Tumor response rates to targeted therapy are closely associated with mutation status of the tumor, especially for adenocarcinoma or mixed adenocarcinoma subtypes
- Mutation status
 - Determines TKI therapy eligibility
 - Confers resistance to TKIs (eg, *EGFR* T790M mutation)
 - Monitoring in serum for *EGFR* T790M mutation may detect TKI resistance sooner and alter treatment plans
- PD-L1 expression
 - May predict response to immune checkpoint inhibitor therapy

References

- Francis G, Stein S. Circulating cell-free tumour DNA in the management of cancer. *Int J Mol Sci*. 2015;16;14122-14142
- NCCN Clinical Practice Guidelines in Oncology, Lung Cancer Screening. National Comprehensive Cancer Network. Fort Washington: Pennsylvania [Accessed: February 2018]

Gene	Testing method	Test result	
<i>RET</i>	FISH	Positive – gene rearrangements detected • Does not identify translocation partner	May predict response to TKI therapy
<i>ROS1</i>	IHC FISH reflex	Positive – cytoplasmic staining in tumor cells Equivocal – any degree of cytoplasmic staining or focal/weak membranous staining in tumor cells • Reflexes to FISH for confirmation	May predict response to TKI therapy