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Title: Pemetrexed in advanced non-small cell lung cancer patients with idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis

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Body: [Background] Advanced non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC) patients with idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis (IPF), need to be carefully treated with cytotoxic chemotherapy because of high incidence of pulmonary toxicity. Pemetrexed (PEM) is one of the key cytotoxic drugs for advanced NSCLC. However, the safety, particularly the incidence of interstitial lung disease (ILD), and efficacy of PEM in NSCLC patients with IPF are unknown. [Aim] To investigate the safety and efficacy of PEM in NSCLC patients with IPF. [Patients and Method] The medical records of NSCLC patients with or without IPF and treated with PEM monotherapy (500mg/m³, every 3 weeks) were retrospectively reviewed. [Result] 106 NSCLC patients were treated with PEM monotherapy at Juntendo University Hospital between April 2009 and January 2013. Among them, 11 patients were diagnosed as having IPF before treatment (designated as IPF group), and 95 patients were not diagnosed as having IPF before treatment (non-IPF group). 2 patients in IPF group and 1 patient in non-IPF group developed ILD during the treatment (18.1% vs 2.0%, p=0.007). The 2 patients in IPF group died due to ILD and judged as treatment related death. Median progression free survival was 7.4 weeks, and 15.5 weeks (p=0.02) for IPF group and non-IPF group, respectively. The response, compliance, and toxicities excluded ILD were not significantly different between two groups. [Conclusion] Our results indicated that the incidence of PEM-related ILD was significantly higher in NSCLC patients with IPF than those with non-IPF. PEM must be carefully administered when treating NSCLC patients with IPF.