

SAVE YOUR SKIN FOUNDATION APPLAUDS HEALTH CANADA APPROVAL OF FIRST ADJUVANT TREATMENT FOR MELANOMA TO PREVENT RELAPSE FOLLOWING SURGERY

Health Canada approves Tafinlar® (dabrafenib) plus Mekinist® (trametinib) for the Adjuvant Treatment of Melanoma Patients (with BRAF V600 mutation).

November 2, 2018 – VANCOUVER, BC – Health Canada has approved the use of a combination therapy of Tafinlar® (dabrafenib) plus Mekinist® (trametinib) to prevent recurrence of melanoma following surgery in patients with a stage II or stage III diagnosis, also referred to as ‘adjuvant’ treatment. Prior to this approval, Stage III melanoma patients who received surgery to remove tumours were not given targeted treatment to prevent recurrence despite a known high-risk of relapse and mortality.

Prior to this approval, after surgical removal of the tumour(s), Stage III melanoma patients were left to ‘watch and wait’ for the disease to come back, a terrifying prospect for any cancer patient. Adjuvant therapies like this new combo are a significant option to reduce relapse for melanoma patients following surgery.

"There is a high risk of recurrence in patients with stage III melanoma who have lymph node involvement following surgery. The use of adjuvant dabrafenib and trametinib in patients with the BRAF V600 mutation halves the risk of relapse in three years, compared to watching and waiting," said Dr. David Hogg of the Cancer Clinical Research Unit at Princess Margaret Cancer Centre, Toronto, and Professor of Medicine, University of Toronto. "This is another step forward in the management of this very serious cancer."

"Canadians with Stage III melanoma are in urgent need of access to new adjuvant therapeutic options to prevent recurrence – it’s unfair to expect them to just watch and wait for it to happen," says Kathy Barnard, Founder of Save Your Skin Foundation. "We applaud Health Canada's approval of this combination treatment for patients in this situation."

Combination use of Tafinlar® plus Mekinist® is already approved by Health Canada to treat patients with unresectable or metastatic stage IV melanoma who have a BRAF V600 mutation.

About Save Your Skin Foundation

Save Your Skin Foundation (SYSF) is a national patient-led not-for-profit group dedicated to leading the fight against non-melanoma skin cancers, melanoma and ocular melanoma through nationwide education, advocacy, and awareness initiatives. Save Your Skin Foundation is committed to playing an active role in reducing the incidence of skin cancer in Canada, and to providing compassionate support for all Canadians living with skin cancers."