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# Disclosure

**Robert Zeiser:**

Honoraria from Novartis, Mallinckrodt  
Pharmaceuticals, and Incyte

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Stem cell transplantation - Clinical: Graft Versus Host Disease

# Ruxolitinib Versus Best Available Therapy in Patients with Steroid-Refractory Acute Graft-Versus-Host Disease: Overall Response Rate by Baseline Characteristics in the Phase 3 Randomized REACH2 Trial

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# REACH2 Primary Publication

The NEW ENGLAND JOURNAL of MEDICINE

## ORIGINAL ARTICLE

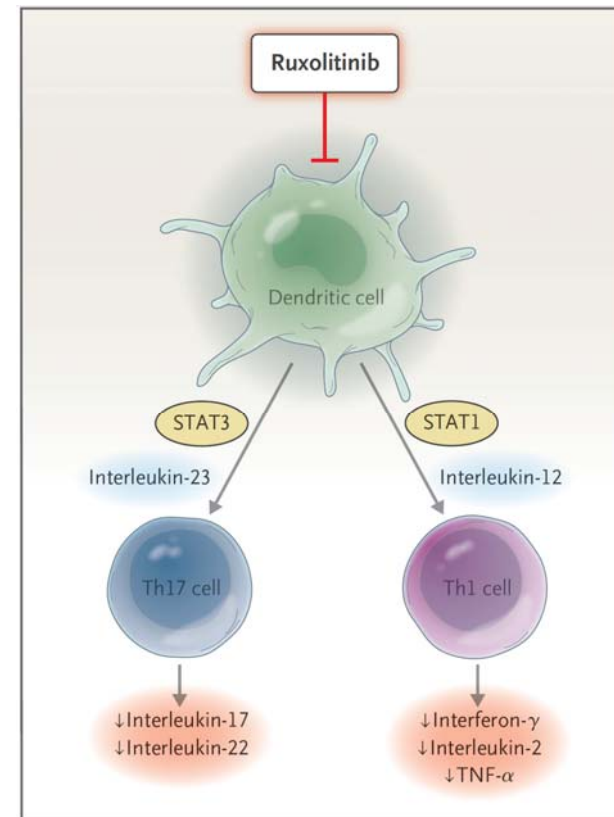
### Ruxolitinib for Glucocorticoid-Refractory Acute Graft-versus-Host Disease

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Zeiser R, et al *N Engl J Med*. 2020;382:1800–1810



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Chao N. *N Engl J Med*. 2020;382:1853–1854.

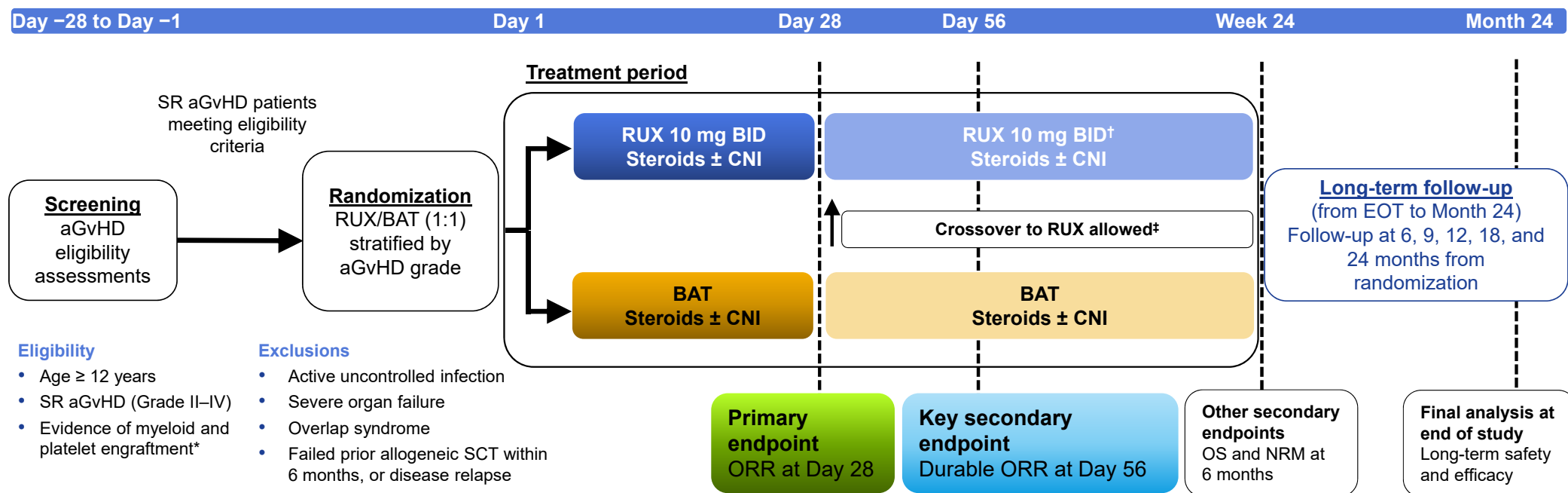
# Graft Versus Host Disease

- The use of allogeneic SCT continues to rapidly increase worldwide<sup>1</sup>
- GvHD remains a major limitation of a successful allogeneic SCT<sup>2,3</sup>
  - Up to 50% of patients develop GvHD, despite immunosuppressive prophylaxis<sup>3–5</sup>
  - GvHD is a significant cause of mortality in allogeneic SCT patients<sup>6–9</sup>
- Only half of patients with aGvHD respond to first-line treatment with corticosteroids<sup>9,10</sup>
- There is no optimal second-line treatment for patients with SR aGvHD, though RUX was recently approved in the USA<sup>2,3,11,12</sup>
  - Previous randomized trials evaluating novel therapies have failed to demonstrate superiority to BAT<sup>13,14</sup>

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aGvHD, acute GvHD; BAT, best available therapy; RUX, ruxolitinib; SCT, stem cell transplantation; SR, steroid refractory.

# REACH2 Study Design



The focus of this presentation is data until Day 56

\*Absolute neutrophil count > 1,000/mm<sup>3</sup> and platelet count ≥ 20,000/mm<sup>3</sup>. †RUX tapering was permitted after Day 56 for responding patients and to continue beyond 6 months and up to 2 years from randomization, as required. ‡Crossover from BAT to RUX was permitted from Day 28 if patients did not respond at Day 28, or if they lost their response thereafter and required additional systemic therapy and did not have signs of cGvHD.

BID, twice daily; cGvHD, chronic graft versus host disease; EOT, end of treatment period; ICF, informed consent form; NRM, non-relapse mortality; ORR, overall response rate; OS, overall survival.

# REACH2 Study Design (cont'd)

## Randomized, phase 3, open-label, multicenter study comparing the efficacy and safety of RUX with BAT (NCT02913261)<sup>1</sup>

- Age  $\geq$  12 years, grade II–IV aGvHD that requires systemic immunosuppressive therapy and that became SR
- SR aGvHD is defined based on organ assessment as:
  - Progression after  $\geq$  3 days of high-dose systemic steroid therapy, with or without CNI; or
  - Lack of response (PR or better) after 7 days; or
  - Failure during steroid taper, defined as
    - Requiring dose increase to  $\geq$  2 mg/kg/day methylprednisolone\*; or
    - Failure to taper dose to  $<$  0.5 mg/kg/day methylprednisolone<sup>†</sup>

### RUX

- 10 mg orally BID
- Tapering permitted no earlier than Day 56 for responding patients, dose modifications permitted for AEs
- Ruxolitinib (optional) tapering steps: 10 mg BID  $\longrightarrow$  5 mg BID  $\longrightarrow$  5 mg QD  $\longrightarrow$  Discontinue ruxolitinib

### BAT

- By investigators choice at randomization: Antithymocyte globulin, Extracorporeal photopheresis, Mesenchymal stromal cells, Low-dose methotrexate, Mycophenolate mofetil, Everolimus, Sirolimus, Etanercept, Infliximab
- Crossover to RUX permitted from Day 28 if lack of response at Day 28 or loss of response thereafter

\*Prednisone equivalent dose  $\geq$  2.5 mg/kg/day. <sup>†</sup>Prednisone equivalent dose  $<$  0.6 mg/kg/day. CNI, calcineurin inhibitor; PR, partial response.

1. <https://clinicaltrials.gov/ct2/show/NCT02913261>.

# Patient Disposition\*

	RUX (n = 154)	BAT (n = 155)
Patients randomized, n (%)	154 (100) <sup>†</sup>	155 (100) <sup>†</sup>
Completed treatment	31 (20.1)	17 (11.0)
Ongoing treatment	12 (7.8)	6 (3.9)
Discontinued treatment	111 (72.1)	132 (85.2)
Reason for discontinuation, n (%)		
Lack of efficacy	32 (20.8)	68 (43.9)
AE	26 (16.9)	5 (3.2)
Death	25 (16.2)	22 (14.2)
Failure to meet protocol continuation criteria	10 (6.5)	9 (5.8)
Malignancy relapse	7 (4.5)	12 (7.7)
Physician decision	6 (3.9)	8 (5.2)
Patient/guardian decision	4 (2.6)	7 (4.5)
Graft loss	1 (0.6)	0
Technical issues	0	1 (0.6)
Crossover to RUX, n (%)	-	49 (31.6)

\*At study cut-off date (25 July 2019). <sup>†</sup>2 patients (1.3%) in the RUX group and 5 patients (3.2%) in the BAT group did not receive treatment.

# Baseline Characteristics

Characteristic	RUX (n = 154)	BAT (n = 155)	Total (N = 309)
Age, median (range), years	52.5 (12–73)	54.0 (13–71)	54.0 (12–73)
Aged 12 to < 18 years, n (%)	5 (3.2)	4 (2.6)	9 (2.9)
Aged ≥ 65 years, n (%)	21 (13.6)	25 (16.1)	46 (14.9)
Male, n (%)	92 (59.7)	91 (58.7)	183 (59.2)
Female, n (%)	62 (40.3)	64 (41.3)	126 (40.8)
Ethnicity, n (%)			
White	111 (72.1)	102 (65.8)	213 (68.9)
Black/African American	0	1 (0.6)	1 (0.3)
Asian	19 (12.3)	29 (18.7)	48 (15.5)
Other	8 (5.2)	4 (2.6)	12 (3.9)
Unknown	16 (10.4)	19 (12.3)	35 (11.3)
aGvHD grade at randomization, n (%)			
II	50 (32.5)	54 (34.8)	104 (33.7)
III	68 (44.2)	68 (43.9)	136 (44.0)
IV	30 (19.5)	32 (20.6)	62 (20.1)



## Baseline Characteristics (cont'd)

Characteristic	RUX (n = 154)	BAT (n = 155)	Total (N = 309)
aGvHD organ involvement, n (%)			
Skin	93 (60.4)	74 (47.7)	167 (54.0)
Liver	36 (23.4)	26 (16.8)	62 (20.1)
Upper GI	28 (18.2)	37 (23.9)	65 (21.0)
Lower GI	96 (62.3)	115 (74.2)	211 (68.3)
Missing	4 (2.6)	1 (0.6)	5 (1.6)
SR criteria, n (%)			
Progression after at least 3 days	35 (22.7)	43 (27.7)	78 (25.2)
Failure to respond after 7 days	72 (46.8)	63 (40.6)	135 (43.7)
Failure during steroid taper	47 (30.5)	49 (31.6)	96 (31.1)
Donor type, n (%)			
Related	49 (31.8)	55 (35.5)	104 (33.7)
Not related	105 (68.2)	100 (64.5)	205 (66.3)
Prior aGvHD therapy, n (%)			
Steroid + CNI	77 (50.0)	76 (49.0)	153 (49.5)
Steroid + CNI + other systemic aGvHD treatment	56 (36.4)	49 (31.6)	105 (34.0)
Steroid + other systemic aGvHD treatment	9 (5.8)	12 (7.7)	21 (6.8)
Steroid only	12 (7.8)	18 (11.6)	30 (9.7)

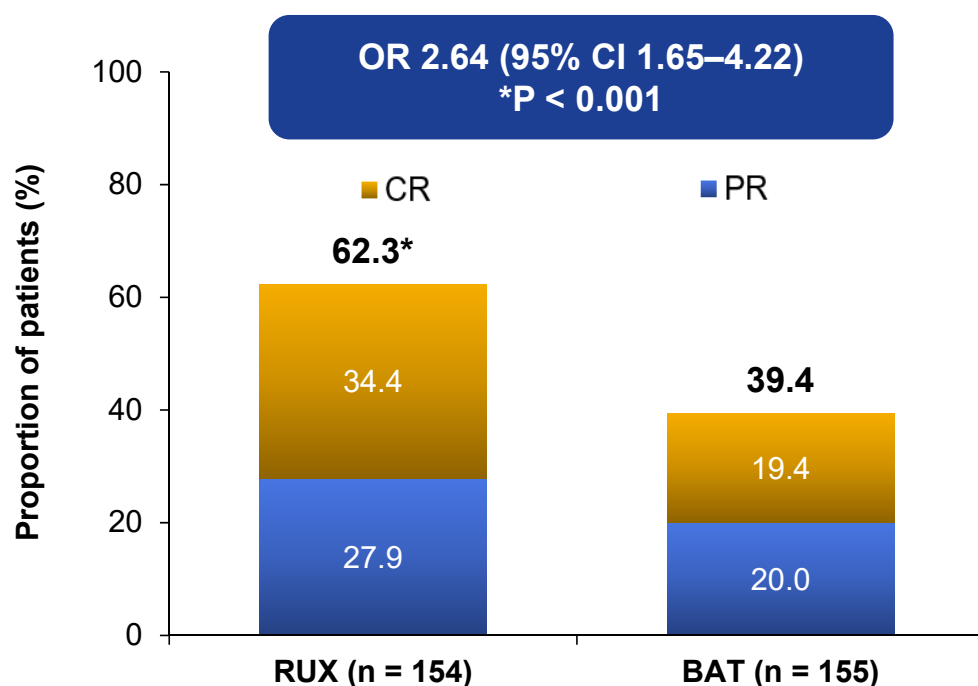
CNI, calcineurin inhibitors; GI, gastrointestinal.

## Baseline Characteristics (cont'd)

Characteristic	RUX (n = 154)	BAT (n = 155)	Total (N = 309)
Conditioning regimen, n (%)			
Myeloablative	85 (55.2)	65 (41.9)	150 (48.5)
Non-myeloablative	31 (20.1)	41 (26.5)	72 (23.3)
Reduced intensity	38 (24.7)	49 (31.6)	87 (28.2)
Donor type HLA match status, n (%)			
Not related and match	65 (42.2)	62 (40.0)	127 (41.1)
Not related and mismatch	38 (24.7)	36 (23.2)	74 (23.9)
Not related and missing	2 (1.3)	2 (1.3)	4 (1.3)
Related and match	27 (17.5)	29 (18.7)	56 (18.1)
Related and mismatch	21 (13.6)	21 (13.5)	42 (13.6)
Related and missing	1 (0.6)	3 (1.9)	4 (1.3)
Related and unknown	0	2 (1.3)	2 (0.6)

HLA, Human Leukocyte Antigen.

# Overall Response Rate at Day 28 Significantly Higher for Ruxolitinib vs BAT

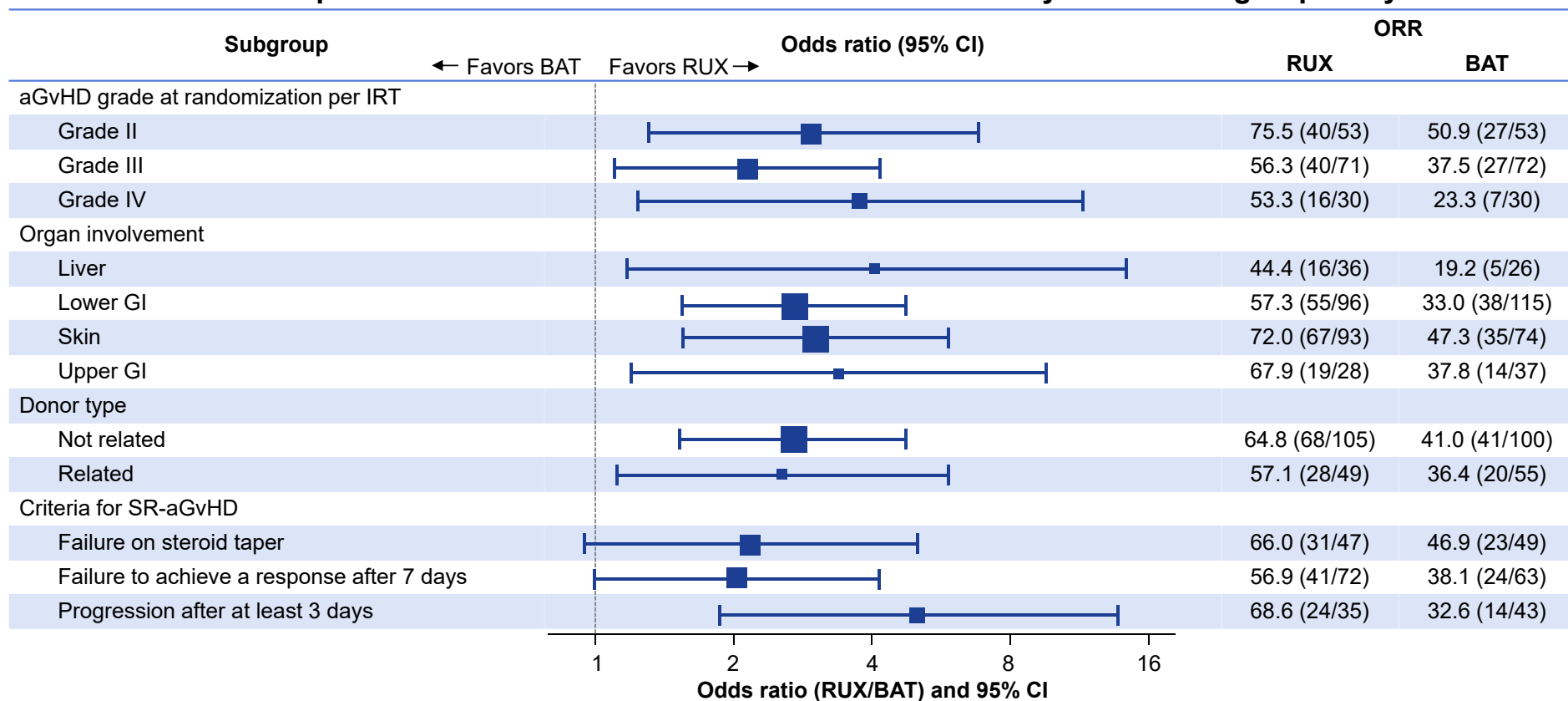


	RUX (n = 154)	BAT (n = 155)
<b>Responders, n (%)</b>		
Complete Response	53 (34.4)	30 (19.4)
Partial Response	43 (27.9)	31 (20.0)
<b>Non-responders, n (%)</b>		
No response	7 (4.5)	10 (6.5)
Mixed response	10 (6.5)	17 (11.0)
Progression	4 (2.6)	13 (8.4)
Other†	1 (0.6)	7 (4.5)
Unknown	36 (23.4)	47 (30.3)

†Other: patient with additional systemic therapies along with CR/PR per investigator assessment.  
CI, confidence interval; CR, complete response; OR, odds ratio.

# Overall Response Rate at Day 28 Higher for Ruxolitinib vs BAT in all Subgroups

Forest plot of odds ratio with 95% CI interval for ORR at Day 28 from subgroup analysis

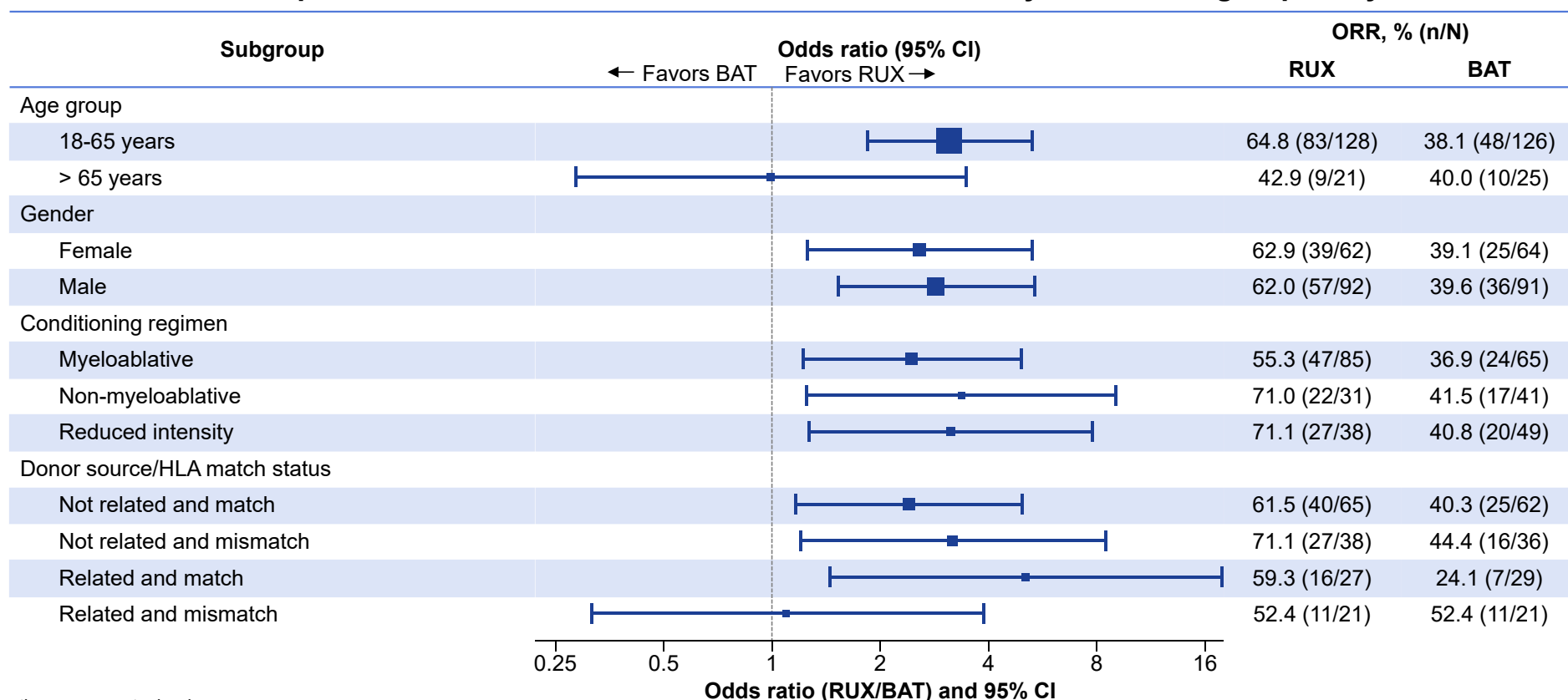


IRT, interactive response technology

X-axis values are represented in natural log scale. Dotted line shows no effect point. The area of the box indicates the weight of the sub group, measured by the size of subpopulation.

# Overall Response Rate at Day 28 Higher for Ruxolitinib vs BAT in Majority of Subgroups

Forest plot of odds ratio with 95% CI interval for ORR at Day 28 from subgroup analysis

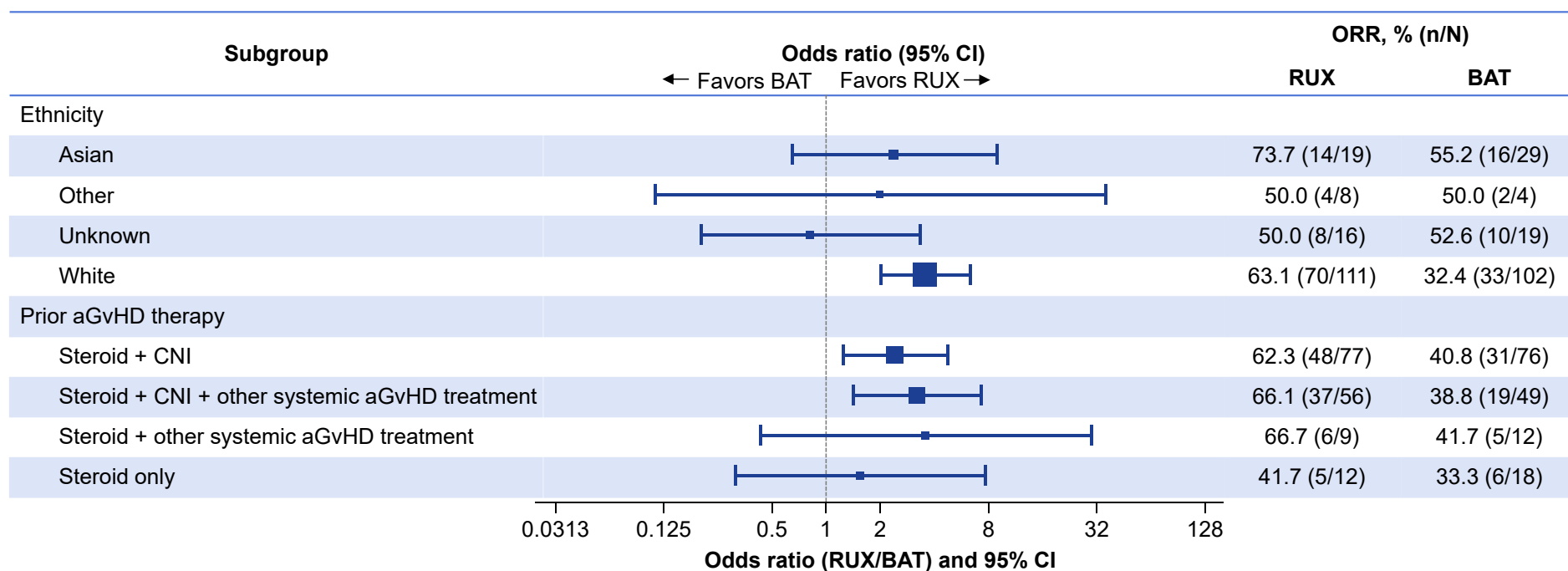


IRT, interactive response technology.

X-axis values are represented in natural log scale. Dotted line shows no effect point. The area of the box indicates the weight of the sub group, measured by the size of subpopulation.

# Overall Response Rate at Day 28 Higher for Ruxolitinib vs BAT in Majority of Subgroups(cont'd)

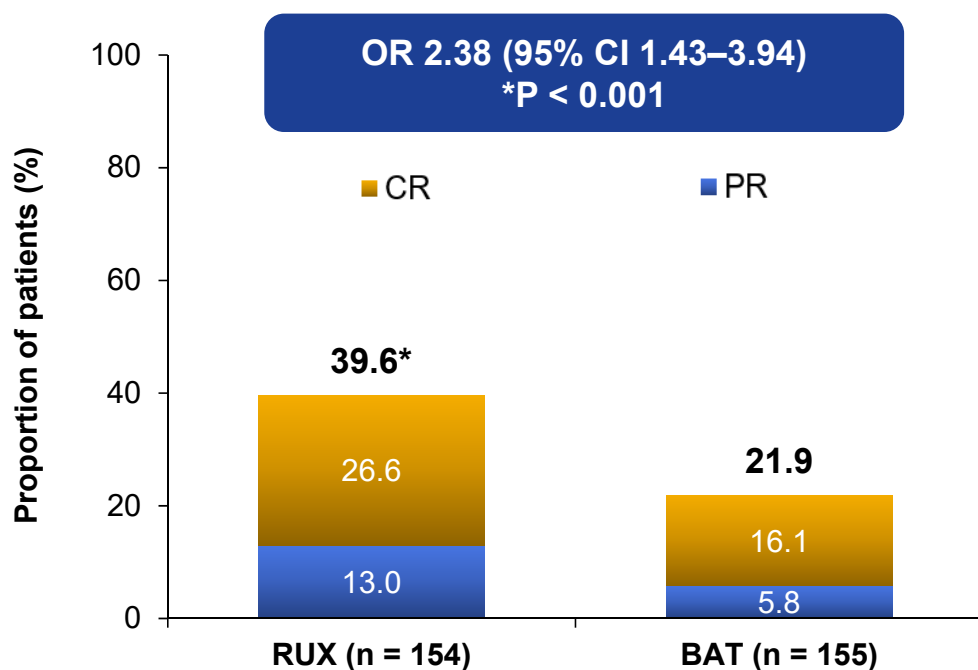
Forest plot of odds ratio with 95% CI interval for ORR at Day 28 from subgroup analysis



IRT, interactive response technology.

X-axis values are represented in natural log scale. Dotted line shows no effect point. The area of the box indicates the weight of the sub group, measured by the size of subpopulation.

# Durable Overall Response Rate at Day 56 Significantly Higher for Ruxolitinib vs BAT



	RUX (n = 154)	BAT (n = 155)
<b>Responders, n (%)</b>		
Complete Response	41 (26.6)	25 (16.1)
Partial Response	20 (13.0)	9 (5.8)
<b>Non-responders, n (%)</b>		
No response	1 (0.6)	1 (0.6)
Mixed response	5 (3.2)	4 (2.6)
Progression	0	0
Other†	0	1 (0.6)
Unknown	29 (18.8)	21 (13.5)

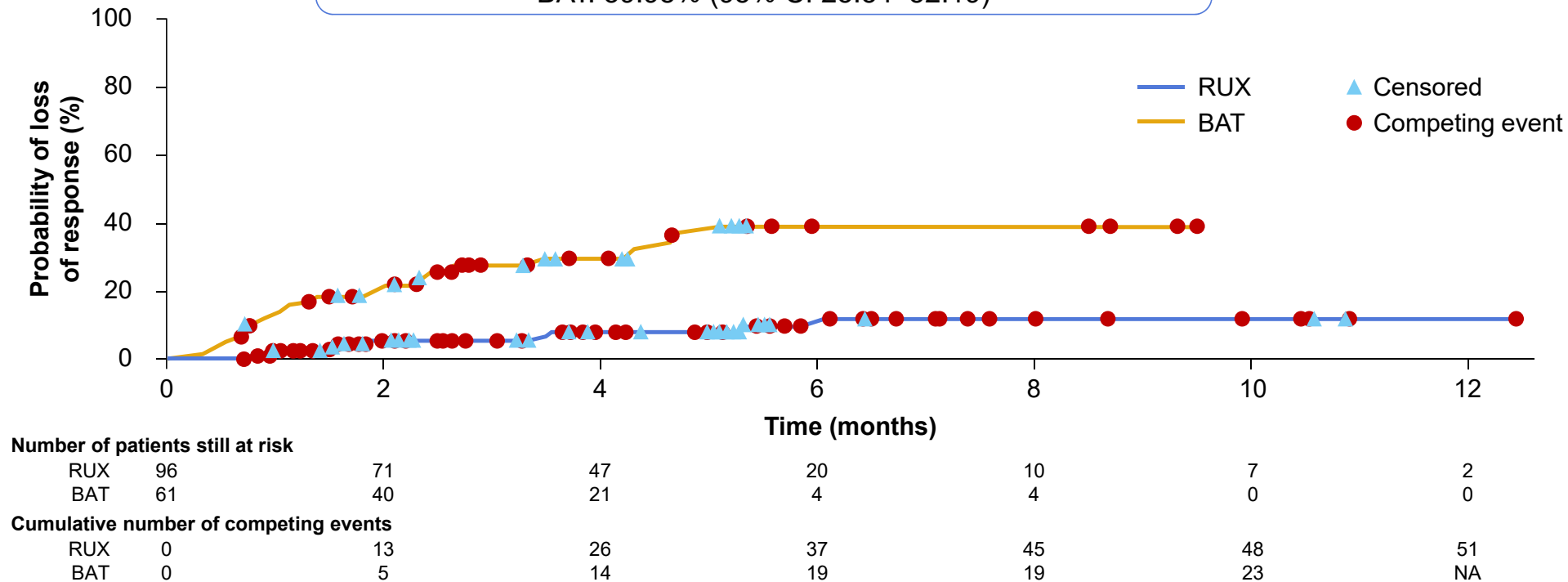
†Other: patient with additional systemic therapies along with CR/PR per investigator assessment.

# Duration of Response\*

**Cumulative incidence of loss of response at 6 months:**

RUX: 9.65% (95% CI 4.39–17.40)

BAT: 39.98% (95% CI 25.54–52.19)



\*Only patients achieving a response at Day 28 were included.



# Common ( $\geq 10\%$ ) Adverse Events Up to Day 28 by Preferred Term

Event, n (%)	RUX (n = 152)*		BAT (n = 150)*	
	Any grade	Grade $\geq 3$	Any grade	Grade $\geq 3$
Thrombocytopenia	50 (32.9)	41 (27.0)	27 (18.0)	23 (15.3)
Anemia	46 (30.3)	33 (21.7)	42 (28.0)	28 (18.7)
Cytomegalovirus infection†	39 (25.7)	11 (7.2)	31 (20.7)	12 (8.0)
Peripheral edema	28 (18.4)	2 (1.3)	26 (17.3)	1 (0.7)
Platelet count decreased	26 (17.1)	22 (14.5)	21 (14.0)	20 (13.3)
Neutropenia	24 (15.8)	20 (13.2)	19 (12.7)	14 (9.3)
Hypokalemia	20 (13.2)	9 (5.9)	25 (16.7)	9 (6.0)
Hypertension	16 (10.5)	9 (5.9)	14 (9.3)	6 (4.0)
Hypoalbuminemia	16 (10.5)	6 (3.9)	15 (10.0)	10 (6.7)
Pyrexia	16 (10.5)	2 (1.3)	17 (11.3)	2 (1.3)
Hypomagnesemia	15 (9.9)	0	20 (13.3)	1 (0.7)
Diarrhea	14 (9.2)	7 (4.6)	15 (10.0)	5 (3.3)
All deaths up to study cut-off date, n (%)‡	72 (47.4)		77 (51.3)	
Deaths during randomized treatment period up to study cut-off date, n (%)	43 (28.3)		36 (24.0)	

\*Safety population: all patients who received at least 1 dose of study treatment. †A distinction between cytomegalovirus infection and reactivation was not made due to MedDRA v.22.0 limitations (cytomegalovirus reactivation coded to cytomegalovirus infection). ‡Most common causes of death were aGvHD (34 RUX, 37 BAT), underlying disease progression, including neoplasms (8 RUX, 8 BAT), multiple organ dysfunction syndrome (3 RUX, 1 BAT), sepsis (4 RUX, 3 BAT), and septic shock (3 RUX, 3 BAT).

# Conclusions

- **ORR at Day 28 was significantly higher with RUX than with BAT in patients with SR aGvHD (62.3% vs 39.4%;  $P < 0.001$ )**
- RUX showed a consistent clinically meaningful treatment benefit for patients compared with BAT across different subgroups of baseline characteristics
  - These included aGvHD grade at randomization, organ involvement, criteria for SR and transplant characteristics
- **Durable ORR at Day 56 was also significantly higher with RUX than with BAT (ORR 39.6% vs 21.9%;  $P < 0.001$ )**
  - The 6-month cumulative incidence of loss of response was 9.7% with RUX vs 40.0% with BAT
- The safety profile of RUX was consistent with previous observations in patients with aGvHD
- RUX is the first novel agent to demonstrate superiority to BAT in a phase 3 trial of patients with SR aGvHD

# Acknowledgments

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