

Gilteritinib activity in refractory or relapsed FLT3-mutated acute myeloid leukemia patients previously treated by intensive chemotherapy and midostaurin: a study from the French AML Intergroup ALFA/FILO

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85 Abstract

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The real-world efficacy and safety of gilteritinib was assessed in an ambispective study that included 87 167 R/R FLT3-mutated AML patients. Among them, 140 received gilteritinib as single agent (cohort B), 88 89 including 67 previously treated by intensive chemotherapy and midostaurin (cohort C). The main 90 differences in patient characteristics in this study compared to the ADMIRAL trial were ECOG \geq 2 91 (83.6% vs 16.6%), FLT3-TKD mutation (21.0% vs 8.5%), primary induction failure (15.0% vs 40.0%) and 92 line of treatment (beyond 2nd in 37.1% vs 0.0%). The rates of composite complete remission, excluding 93 those that occurred after hematopoietic stem cell transplantation (HSCT), were similar at respectively 25.4% and 27.5% in cohorts B and C. Median overall survival (OS) for these two groups was also similar 94 95 at respectively 6.4 and 7.8 months. Multivariate analyses for prognostic factors associated with OS 96 identified female gender (HR 1.61), adverse cytogenetic risk (HR 2.52) and allogenic HSCT after 97 gilteritinib (HR 0.13). Although these patients were more heavily pretreated, these real-world data 98 reproduce the results of ADMIRAL and provide new insights into the course of patients previously 99 treated by intensive chemotherapy and midostaurin and beyond the 2nd line of treatment who can 100 benefit from treatment in an outpatient setting.

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103 Internal tandem duplication (ITD) in the FLT3 gene is one of the most frequent mutations found in acute myeloid leukemia (AML)¹. FLT3-ITD is associated with poor prognosis² and has emerged as a 104 relevant therapeutic target ³. *FLT3*-ITD is usually conserved at relapse ⁴, even if prevalence decreases 105 in patients who received midostaurin in front-line treatment⁵, suggesting that *FLT3*-ITD AML-initiating 106 cells are key targets for long-lasting remission ^{2,6}. Before the era of second-generation FLT3 tyrosine 107 108 kinase inhibitors (TKI), there was no standard approach to treat relapsed/refractory (R/R) AML beyond 109 the need for enrollment into clinical trials. Commonly used therapeutic options included intermediateor high-dose aracytine (I/HDAC)-based salvage chemotherapies, sequential reduced-intensity 110 111 conditioning for allogenic hematopoietic stem cell transplantation (HSCT) and best supportive care ⁷. 112 In the subgroup of FLT3-mutated AML, the QUANTUM-R trial, which was designed specifically for R/R 113 FLT3-ITD AML patients, demonstrated the superiority of quizartinib as single agent over the control 114 arm with median overall survival (OS) at 6.2 months in the quizartinib arm and 4.7 months in the 115 control arm. These results allowed approval in Japan but not in the US and EU. The ADMIRAL phase 3 116 trial, designed for both R/R FLT3-ITD and tyrosine kinase domain (-TKD) mutated AML patients, 117 demonstrated the superiority of gilteritinib as single agent over the control treatment arm, which was 118 determined by investigators prior to 2:1 randomization between mitoxantrone, etoposide, cytarabine 119 (MEC) or fludarabine, cytarabine, granulocyte colony-stimulating factor, idarubicin (FLAG-Ida) or 120 azacitidine (AZA) or low-dose aracytine (LDAC). In this trial, OS was significantly improved in the 121 gilteritinib arm compared to the control arm with a hazard ratio (HR) of 0.64 (95%CI 0.49-0.83). Median 122 OS was 9.3 months in the gilteritinib arm and 5.6 months in the control arm. Best response was noted 123 at any post-baseline visit including the post-HSCT period, leading to composite complete remission 124 (CRc) [complete remission (CR) + CR without hematological recovery (CRi) + CR with incomplete platelet recovery (CRp)] of 54.3% in the gilteritinib arm vs 21.8% in the control arm. When remissions 125 126 that occurred after HSCT were excluded, the percentage of patients who had CR with full or partial

hematologic recovery was 26.3% in the gilteritinib group vs 15.3% in the chemotherapy group ⁸. These
results led to the approval of gilteritinib monotherapy in US and EU in patients with R/R *FLT3*-mutated
AML and it is now a standard treatment in such situations. Nevertheless, in the ADMIRAL trial, only
5.7% of patients had been exposed to midostaurin as front line prior to gilteritinib ⁹. Therefore, this
pivotal trial underrepresented current patients previously exposed to midostaurin, since virtually all *FLT3*-mutated AML patients now receive midostaurin added to standard intensive chemotherapy as
first-line therapy ⁹.

Therefore, the objective of the current study was to describe the characteristics, treatments, and outcomes of R/R *FLT3*-mutated AML patients treated in a real-world setting by gilteritinib and to report results in patients who had previously received an intensive chemotherapy associated with midostaurin.

138 Methods

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This non-interventional ambispective study included virtually all patients receiving gilteritinib 140 in the French early access program between March 1st, 2019, and March 1st, 2021, in 37 centers. All 141 patients \geq 18 years with AML according to the WHO classification ¹⁰ who received gilteritinib, as single 142 143 agent or in combination, for R/R AML with FLT3 mutation were included. Newly diagnosed AML 144 patients and patients who received gilteritinib out of the scope of its marketing approval such as post-145 HSCT maintenance in patients in CR1 after intensive chemotherapy were excluded. This study has been 146 registered in ClinicalTrial (NCT05193448) and has been approved by ethics authorities (Comité de Protection des Personnes Ouest III) with approval number 2021-A00993-38. Cytogenetic risk 147 148 classification was defined according to the United Kingdom Medical Research Council classification ¹¹. 149 Response to treatment, relapse-free survival (RFS), event-free survival (EFS), cumulative incidence of 150 relapse (CIR), and OS were defined according to the European LeukemiaNet (ELN) 2017 criteria ⁷. 151 Primary refractory AML and relapse were defined according to ELN 2017⁷: the former was defined as 152 a failure to achieve CR or CRi after one or two courses of induction chemotherapy; the latter was defined as bone marrow blasts ≥ 5% or reappearance of blasts in the blood, or development of 153 154 extramedullary disease. Serious adverse events (SAE) were defined according to FDA code. More 155 details about Methods are available in Supplementary material.

- 156 Results
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158 Study population at diagnosis and front-line treatment

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160 A total of 167 patients (Cohort A) with FLT3-ITD and/or TKD mutated AML fulfilled the inclusion 161 criteria. Among these 167 patients, 27 received gilteritinib associated with another drug and 140 162 received gilteritinib as single agent (Cohort B). Finally, among these 140 patients, 67 received 163 gilteritinib in an R/R setting following a front-line strategy including intensive chemotherapy and 164 midostaurin (Cohort C) (Supplementary Figure 1). Characteristics of patients in these three cohorts are 165 described in Table 1. In cohort A, 73 (43.7%) patients were 65 years of age or older. The median white 166 blood cell count (WBC) was 31.7 × 10⁹/L (IQR, 8.7-90.9) at diagnosis. There were 141 (84.4%) cases of 167 de novo AML. Cohort A displayed an FLT3-ITD mutation in 104 (62.3%) patients and an FLT3-TKD 168 mutation in 33 (19.8%), whereas 36 (21.6%) were FLT3 wild type at diagnosis and acquired mutation 169 later in the disease evolution. Finally, 6 (3.6%) patients had both the FLT3-ITD and TKD mutation at 170 diagnosis. Median FLT3-ITD/wt ratio was 0.50 (IQR, 0.12-0.70 and range 0.01-1.90), and median size of 171 ITD was 48 bp (IQR, 30-75 and range 3-408). Most patients (136, 81.4%) had an intermediate 172 cytogenetic risk, and 84 (50.3%) had an NPM1 co-mutation.

173 In cohort A, 153 (91.6%) patients received front-line treatment by intensive chemotherapy, 54 174 (35.3%) a daunorubicin-based "3+7" and 86 (56.2%) an idarubicin-based "3+7". This intensive 175 chemotherapy was associated with midostaurin in 87 (56.9%) patients, whereas 3 (2.0%) other 176 patients received quizartinib or ponatinib in clinical trials. Median duration of targeted therapy added 177 to intensive chemotherapy was 120.5 days (IQR, 65.0-287.0 and range 9.0-456.0) and 33 patients 178 received maintenance treatment after CR1/CRi1. Among the 153 patients who received an intensive 179 chemotherapy, 125 (81.7%) were in CR1/CRi1 after 1 or 2 courses of intensive chemotherapy. Furthermore, 14 (8.4%) patients received front-line treatment by hypomethylating agents (HMA), 180 181 including 3 (21.4%) associated with midostaurin. Among the 14 patients who received HMA, 3 (21.4%)

182 were in CR1/CRi1, and median number of cycles of HMA before best response was 5 (IQR, 2.0-6.0 and 183 range 1.0-8.0). Twenty-two (13.2%) patients received an allogenic HSCT in CR1/CRi1. Finally, 128 184 (76.6%) patients in CR1/CRi1 relapsed. The median time to relapse from CR/CRi was 6.6 months (IQR, 3.9-11.8; range 0.1-101.9), and 3.4 months (IQR, 1.8-5.9; range 1.6-59.9) in the 22 patients who 185 186 received HSCT in CR1/CRi1. Lastly, before gilteritinib, 75 (44.9%) patients received a second-line 187 treatment, 32 (19.2%) patients received a third-line treatment, and 9 (5.4%) patients received a fourth-188 line treatment. A total of 42 (25.1%) patients received an allogenic HSCT before gilteritinib. 189 Characteristics of patients and results of front-line treatment for cohort B (n=140) and C (n=67) are 190 described in Table 2, with similar results in the three cohorts.

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192 Characteristics of patients at gilteritinib initiation

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194 The characteristics of the three cohorts at gilteritinib initiation are described in Table 3. In 195 cohort A, 72 (51.4%) were 65 years of age or older. The median WBC was 3.8×10^9 /L (IQR, 1.9-14.5). 196 Sixty-eight (40.7%) did not have a new karyotypic analysis at relapse, 66 (39.5%) had a karyotype 197 similar to the diagnosis and 27 (16.2%) a different one. Thirty-six (21.5%) patients unmutated at 198 diagnosis acquired an FLT3 mutation: 27 (75.0%) patients acquired a FLT3-ITD mutation and 9 (25.0%) 199 patients a FLT3-TKD mutation. Overall, 36 patients among 167 (21.5%) had a single TKD mutation. 200 Finally, at gilteritinib initiation, 25 (15.0%) patients were refractory to front-line treatment, 41 (24.6%) 201 were in 1^{st} relapse ≤ 6 months from CR1/CRi1, 39 (23.4%) were in 1^{st} relapse > 6 months from CR/CRi, 202 17 (10.2%) were refractory to the treatment of the 1^{st} relapse and 45 (26.9%) were beyond the 1^{st} 203 relapse. Patients' characteristics were similar in the three cohorts but among 67 patients in cohort C 204 who received gilteritinib as single agent following a front-line strategy including intensive 205 chemotherapy and midostaurin, only 5 (7.5%) were in primary induction failure. Lastly, among 167 206 patients in cohort A, 140 received gilteritinib as single agent (Cohort B) and 27 in combination: 17 207 (10.2%) with an HMA, 6 (3.6%) with venetoclax, and 4 (2.4%) with intensive chemotherapy, low-dose

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cytarabine or other treatments. In cohorts B and C, 29 (21.2%) and 10 (15.2%) patients, respectively,
received hydroxyurea with gilteritinib for a median duration of 14.0 days (IQR 5.0-37.0, range 1.0-96.0)
and 10.0 days (IQR 5.0-37.0, range 5.0-96.0), respectively.

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212 **Response to treatment**

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214 Apart from remissions that occurred after HSCT, the response to gilteritinib in the three 215 cohorts is described in Table 4. Among 167 patients in cohort A, the best response to treatment was 216 CR/CRi for 38 (24.4%) patients and CRc (CR+CRi+CRp) for 41 (26.3%). Among 140 patients who received 217 gilteritinib as single agent in cohort B, the best response to treatment was CR/CRi for 30 (23.1%) 218 patients, CRc (CR+CRi+CRp) for 33 (25.4%), overall response rate (ORR) [CRc+ partial response (PR)] for 219 40 (30.8%) patients, and morphological leukemia-free state (MLFS) for 9 (6.9%) patients. Sixty-eight 220 (52.4%) patients were in failure and 6 (4.6%) died before evaluation. In multivariate analysis, no 221 prognostic factor was independently and significantly associated with response among age, ECOG at 222 gilteritinib initiation, secondary AML, sex, white blood cell count (WBC) at gilteritinib initiation, 223 cytogenetic risk, ELN 2017 classification, FLT3-ITD, FLT3-TKD, ITD/wt ratio, previous HSCT before 224 gilteritinib, prior treatment with midostaurin, and prior treatment with FLT3-TKI. Similar results were 225 observed in cohort C with a best response to treatment that was CR/CRi for 16 (25.9%) patients, CRc 226 for 17 (27.5%) patients, ORR for 21 (34.0%) patients and MLFS for 3 (4.8%) patients. Thirty-one (50.0%) 227 patients were in failure and 3 (4.8%) died before evaluation. Time to the best response was 1.9 months 228 (IQR, 1.0-2.9; range 0.1-15.1) in cohort B and 2.1 months (IQR, 1.1-3.2; range 0.1-8.4) in cohort C. 229 Response to gilteritinib in subgroups defined as per AML phase at gilteritinib initiation are described 230 in Supplementary Table 1. Briefly, among 140 patients who received gilteritinib as single agent, CRc 231 rates were 5.0%, 43.3%, 33.3% and 18.9% in following subgroups : refractory after front-line (N=22), 232 1^{st} relapse ≤ 6 months from CR/CRi (N=32), 1^{st} relapse > 6 months from CR1/CRi1 (N=30) and refractory 233 after 1st relapse and beyond (N=56), respectively. Finally, 32 (19.2%), 25 (17.9%) and 15 (22.4%)

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patients received an allogenic HSCT after gilteritinib, in CRc for 21 (65.6%), 17 (68.0%) and 11 (73.3%) patients in cohorts A, B and C, respectively (Supplementary Table 2). In cohort A, 12 (37.5%) patients resumed gilteritinib after HSCT as maintenance strategy after a median time from HSCT of 1.6 months (IQR 1.1-3.1, range 0.7-10.2) and for a period of 1.9 months (IQR 1.2-7.0, range 1.0-12.0). Among patients who received maintenance with gilteritinib, only 1 (8.3%) underwent an acute graft versus host disease (GVHD) after 61 days of treatment and 2 (16.7%) a chronic GVHD after 43 and 69 days of treatment.

241 In subgroup of patients having previously received induction chemotherapy in front-line and 242 then treated with gilteritinib as single agent, we compared the subgroup of patient who received "3+7" 243 and midostaurin in front-line, previously identified as Cohort C and those who received "3+7" in front-244 line without midostaurin nor other FLT3-TKI (N=56/126). Baseline characteristics, front-line treatment, 245 relapses, characteristics at gilteritinib initiation and response to gilteritinib have been described in 246 Supplementary Tables 3 to 6. Briefly, CRc/ORR were at 27.5%/34.0% and 28.3%/30.2% in patients 247 treated by single agent gilteritinib after prior exposure to "3+7" with midostaurine (N=67) and without 248 any TKI (N=56), respectively (p=NS) (Table 4 and Supplementary Table 6 and 7). In others subgroup, 249 among cohort B: CRc was at 0% in adverse cytogenetic risk vs 27.1% in favorable/intermediate 250 cytogenetic risk (p=0.04); CRc was at 30.5% in patients that received previous front- or subsequent-251 line of treatment with midostaurin vs 25.0% in patients that received previous front- or subsequent-252 line of treatment with FLT3-TKI other than midostaurin (p=NS); CRc was at 29.4% in FLT3-ITD subgroup 253 vs 15.4% in FLT3-TKD subgroup (p=NS) (Supplementary Table 7). Finally, among the whole cohort A, 254 CRc was at 25.4% in gilteritinib single agent vs 30.8% in cohort of patients who received gilteritinib 255 associated with another drug (p=NS) (Supplementary Table 7).

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257 Safety

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259 Among 98 patients in cohort B with a documented ECG before gilteritinib initiation and who 260 received gilteritinib as single agent, 87 (88.8%) and 11 (11.2%) patients had QTcF <450 ms or >450 but 261 <500 ms, respectively. Finally, 132 (94.3%) patients started gilteritinib at 120 mg per day, 103 (73.6%) 262 did not receive any dose modification, 12 (8.6%) had their posology increased to 200 mg per day, 15 263 (10.7%) had it reduced to 80 mg/day, and 10 (7.1%) had other dose modifications. These modifications 264 were made after a median time of 43 days (IQR 14-72, range 1-368), owing to QTcF modification in 2 265 patients (5.4%), hematological toxicity in 12 (32.4%), lack of efficacy in 13 (35.1%) and other reasons 266 in 10 (27.0%). Reasons for gilteritinib discontinuation were hematological toxicity in 4 (3.0%) patients 267 or other adverse event (AE) in 8 (6.0%) patients, but not for QTcF prolongation. Eighty-nine (66.9%) 268 patients discontinued treatment because of lack of efficacy or death, whereas 18 (13.5%) patients 269 discontinued for HSCT and 14 (10.6%) patients for other reasons. Grade ≥3 hematological and non-270 hematological adverse events are described in Table 5. A total of 6 (4.3%) patients experienced a 271 differentiation syndrome and 1 (0.7%) a tumor lysis syndrome. No posterior reversible encephalopathy 272 syndrome nor acute pancreatitis was noted during the study.

Thirty-nine patients (28.3%) experienced a serious AE (SAE) during gilteritinib treatment: infections in 22 (56.4%), hemorrhage in 1 (2.6%), cardiovascular in 4 (10.3%), hepatic in 4 (10.3%), differentiation syndrome in 2 (5.2%), and other SAE in 6 (15.4%). In terms of health care resource consumption, median duration of hospitalization during the first 6 months of treatment was 9.0 days (IQR 0-29, range 0-117) with transfusion of 7 RBC units (IQR 0-14, range 0-54) and 5 platelet units (IQR 0-13.5, range 0-56).

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280 Outcomes

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After a median FU of 13.8 months (IQR, 9.9-17.7), the median OS of the whole study cohort A was 6.4 months (IQR, 3.2-14.3) (Figure 1A). Among 140 patients in Cohort B who received gilteritinib as single agent and after a median FU at 14.5 months (IQR, 9.9-17.7), median RFS, EFS, and OS were

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285 9.8 months (IQR, 2.8-not reached [NR]), 3.9 months (IQR, 1.6-11.3), and 6.4 months (IQR, 3.2-14.7) 286 (Figure 1B), respectively. Moreover, 12-month RFS, EFS and OS were 37.3% (95%CI 18.2-56.5), 23.6% (95%CI 16.5-31.5) and 31.4% (95%CI 22.4-39.7), respectively. Multivariate analyses for factors 287 288 significantly and independently associated with OS found female gender (HR 1.61, 95%CI 1.07-2.42, 289 p=0.02), adverse cytogenetic risk (HR 2.52, 95%CI 1.24-5.13, p=0.01) (Figure 2A and B) and HSCT after 290 gilteritinib (HR 0.13, 95%CI 0.05-0.37, p<0.0001). Among 33 patients in CRc in cohort B, 15 (45.5%) 291 relapsed. Early death \leq day 30 occurred in 7 (5.0%) patients and \leq day 60 in 18 (12.9%). Among 67 292 patients in cohort C who received gilteritinib in an R/R setting following a front-line strategy including 293 intensive chemotherapy and midostaurin, and after a median FU at 14.5 months (IQR, 9.2-17.7), 294 median EFS and OS were 3.9 months (IQR, 2.4–15.7) and 7.8 months (IQR, 3.2-20.8) (Figure 1C), 295 respectively. Moreover, 12-month EFS and OS were 31.0% (95%CI 20.1-42.4) and 38.3% (95%CI 26.0-296 50.4), respectively. Among 17 CRc patients in cohort C, 7 (41.2%) patients relapsed. Early death \leq day 297 30 and \leq day 60 occurred in 1 (1.5%) and 10 (14.9%) patients, respectively. Median OS and EFS in 298 various subgroups are described in Supplementary Table 8.

299 We also compared outcomes in Cohort C and in patients who received "3+7" in front-line 300 without midostaurin nor other FLT3-TKI (N=56/126) for OS ans EFS that are quite similar and are shown 301 in Figure 2C and D. We also compared OS and EFS depending on treatment added to gilteritinib, 302 showing same median OS and EFS (Supplementary Figure 2A and B). Moreover, patients that were 303 previously exposed to FLT3-TKI other than midostaurin in front- or subsequent-line of treatment 304 showed a shorter OS with a 1-year OS at 18.3% (IC95% 6.0-35.9) vs 43.0% (IC95% 29.8-55.5) (p<0.05) 305 and a trend for shorter EFS with a 1-year EFS at 14.4% (IC95% 3.9-31.4) vs 31.2% (IC95% 19.6-43.4) 306 (p=0.11) (Supplementary Figure 2C and D). Finally, FLT3 mutation (ITD vs TKD) showed just a trend to 307 better OS and EFS for FLT3-ITD patients treated by gilteritinib, even if 1-year OS was at 36.6% (IC95% 308 26.4-46.8) in FLT3-ITD subgroup vs 17.1% (IC95% 5.9-33.3) in FLT3-TKD subgroup (p=0.09) (Figure 2E 309 and F).

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311 FLT3 mutation persistence at relapse after Gilteritinib treatment

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313 Among the 140 patients of cohort B, 33 (25.4%) were in CRc after gilteritinib treatment, and among 314 them, at the time of data analysis, 15 (46.3%) relapsed. Among these 15 patients, 14 have had a new 315 FLT3-ITD evaluation and solely 10 (71.4%) still displayed a FLT3-ITD mutation with a median FLT3-316 ITD/wt ratio at 0.50 (IQR, 0.27-0.56 and range 0.08-0.80), and median size of ITD was 40 bp (IQR, 33-317 45 and range 2-66). One had also a FLT3-TKD D835Y mutation. Finally, among the 67 patients of cohort 318 C, 17 (27.5%) were in CRc after gilteritinib treatment, and among them, at the time of data analysis, 7 319 (41.2%) relapsed. Among these 7 patients, 6 have had a new FLT3-ITD evaluation and solely 4 (66.6%) 320 still displayed a FLT3-ITD mutation with a median FLT3-ITD/wt ratio at 0.50 (IQR, 0.29-0.53 and range 321 0.08-0.56), and median size of ITD was 36 bp (IQR, 27-54 and range 24-66). None still have a FLT3-TKD 322 mutation.

323 Discussion

324

In the current study, we described the characteristics and outcomes of R/R FLT3-mutated AML 325 patients in order to evaluate the efficacy and safety of gilteritinib in a real-world setting, especially for 326 327 patients previously treated by intensive chemotherapy and midostaurin. The main differences in 328 patient characteristics in this study vs the ADMIRAL trial were ECOG \ge 2 (83.6% vs 16.6%), FLT3-TKD 329 mutation (21.5% vs 8.5%), primary induction failure (15.0% vs 40.0%) and line of treatment (beyond 330 2nd in 37.1% vs 0.0% since such patients were excluded from ADMIRAL). Broadly, R/R FLT3-mutated 331 AML patients included in this study were in poor general condition, less frequently in primary induction 332 failure but much more heavily pretreated.

333 Despite such discrepancies, among the 140 patients who received gilteritinib as single agent, 334 the CRc rate was 25.4% in our cohort compared to 26.3% in the gilteritinib arm of the ADMIRAL trial, when remissions that occurred after HSCT were excluded. Median OS was 6.4 months in the current 335 336 study vs 9.3 months in the gilteritinib arm of the ADMIRAL trial, and 1-year OS was 37.1% vs 31.4%, 337 respectively. The real-life safety profile showed 40.0% of grade ≥3 anemia, as in ADMIRAL trial, but 338 twice as many cases of grade \geq 3 thrombocytopenia. As previously observed, QTcF prolongation > 450 339 ms were rare and without clinical impact. Discontinuation of gilteritinib due to lack of efficacy or death 340 was also comparable: 64% in the ADMIRAL study and 67% in the current study.

341 The most important finding concerns previous exposure to intensive chemotherapy associated 342 with midostaurin. As a reminder, the RATIFY trial randomized 717 patients with newly diagnosed FLT3mutated AML to receive conventional "3+7" chemotherapy followed by HDAC consolidations with or 343 344 without midostaurin, followed by 1 year of maintenance. The combination significantly increased 4year OS by 51.4% vs 44.3%, and prolonged median OS to 74.7 vs 25.6 months ⁹. To date, an other study 345 addressed the question of gilteritinib efficacy in patients who previously received FLT3-TKI 346 347 (midostaurin, sorafenib and others) in 11 US centers. However, one third of patients received 348 gilteritinib associated with other treatments so some results were difficult to interpret. Median OS was

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349 7.0 months in the whole cohort and 7.8 months in the subgroup of patients who previously received intensive chemotherapy and midostaurin ¹², so the results of this subgroup are reassuring since they 350 351 are similar to those of other patients. Another recent study included 33 patients from the CHRYSALIS phase 1/2 trial ¹³ who previously received sorafenib and 33 patients from the ADMIRAL phase 2 trial 352 353 who previously received midostaurin or sorafenib in 42% and 58% cases, respectively. Median OS was 7.2 months and CRc rates were quite similar to those of patients who did not receive prior TKI¹⁴. To 354 355 date, our study provides the largest cohort of patients treated by gilteritinib as single agent in real life 356 and the largest cohort of patients receiving gilteritinib after a prior front-line treatment by "3+7" and 357 midostaurin, which is currently the gold standard.

358 Surprisingly, multivariate analyses for factors significantly and independently associated with 359 OS found female gender associated with much more expected factors such as adverse cytogenetic risk 360 and HSCT after gilteritinib. In the specific subgroup of adverse cytogenetic risk, we also showed that response rates were dramatically decreased. There are conflicting reports in the literature suggesting 361 362 that gender impacts survival of AML patients. Recently, a specific study has been done in an attempt 363 to resolve this issue, showing that females patients with AML have a greater OS compared with males, 364 irrespective of age at diagnosis. Interestingly, gender did not influence outcome in patients with a 365 *FLT3*-ITD mutation, also suggesting a link between *FLT3* mutation, gender and response to treatment¹⁵. 366 On the other hand, sex-biased expression levels of enzymes or transporters in liver or kidney leading 367 to different pharmacokinetics are described for most common anti-cancer drugs including TKI but no 368 data are currently available for gilteritinib. Noteworthy, in ADMIRAL study, female gender was 369 associated with a significant HR for death at 0.57 (0.40-0.82) so the opposite of our results. We have 370 no clear explanation for this intriguing point, which should be interpreted with caution and should 371 prompt additional investigations.

The main limitation of the present study is obviously its ambispective nature. We cannot exclude selection bias, although we included virtually all patients who received gilteritinib in France during the period of accrual in 37 centers that cover a large proportion of the French population.

Second, there may also be a measurement bias in remission rates based on real-world data vs an 375 376 experimental arm of a prospective trial, so we presented results as an intention-to-treat cohort 377 including patients not evaluated before death or treatment discontinuation. Finally, real-world data 378 reproduced results from the ADMIRAL study. Despite some discrepancies between patient 379 characteristics, these results provide a care pathway for adverse prognosis patients in an outpatient setting. Despite preclinical data suggesting its efficacy to overcome some resistance mechanisms ^{16,17}, 380 it has been shown that mutational landscape ^{18,19} and microenvironment ²⁰ allow AML blasts to resist 381 382 to gilteritinib, precluding long-lasting remission or cure of FLT3-mutated AML by FLT3-TKI as single 383 agent. Gilteritinib is therefore an interesting therapeutic pillar whose results can still be greatly improved, in association with intensive chemotherapy ²¹, hypomethylating agents ²², BH3 mimetics ^{23,24} 384 and others ²⁵. 385

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463 Figure Legends

464

465 Figure 1. Overall survival from gilteritinib initiation: A) in cohort A (n = 167), B) in cohort B (n = 140), C)
466 in cohort C (n = 67)

467

468	Figure 2. Overall survival (left panel) and event free survival (right panel) from gilteritinib initiation in
469	cohort B of patient treated with single agent gilteritinib: A/B) Adverse cytogenetic risk (n = 9) vs
470	Favorable/intermediate cytogenetic risk (n = 131), C/D) Prior exposure to "3+7" + midostaurin (n = 67)
471	vs prior exposure to 3+7 without midostaurin nor other FLT3 tyrosine kinase inhibitor (n = 56), E/F)
472	FLT3-ITD without FLT3-TKD mutated patients (n = 100) vs FLT3-TKD without FLT3-ITD mutated patients
473	(n=28).

474 Disclosure

475

- 476 Pierre-Yves Dumas: Daiichi-Sankyo, Jazz Pharmaceutical, Astellas, Abbvie, Celgene, Janssen
- 477 Emmanuel Raffoux: Daiichi-Sankyo, Astellas, Abbvie, Celgene, Pfizer
- 478 Emilie Berard: no competing interest
- 479 Sarah Bertoli: Jazz Pharmaceuticals, Daiichi-Sankyo, Sanofi, Astellas and BMS
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- 482 Yohann Desbrosses: Jazz Pharmaceuticals, Abbvie, Celgene, Novartis
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- 495 Eric Jourdan: Novartis, Abbvie, BMS
- 496 Chantal Himberlin: no competing interest
- 497 Emmanuelle Tavernier: Abbvie, BMS
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- 499 Stephanie Haiat: no competing interest

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529 Contributions

- 530 Conceptualization, PYD ; Methodology, PYD, EB ; Patients care, PYD, ER, SB, MAH, MH, YD, CB, CP, JL,
- 531 CO, AB, FP, PP, TM, MU, JF, PT, TC, EJ, CH, ET, AV, SH, MLC, MC, SC, IV, MW, SC, GG, RG, HD, EG, KL,
- 532 AM, AS, AP, HD, CR; Collected the data, AM, MCB; Analyzed data, PYD, EB; Writing—original draft,
- 533 PYD; Revised the manuscript, CR, JL, PP, MH, CO, RG; Review and editing, PYD, EB, CR; Funding
- 534 acquisition, PYD, AM.
- 535

536 Data availability

- 537 Some de-identified data will be shared with other researchers upon reasonable request to the
- 538 corresponding authors (pierre-yves.dumas@u-bordeaux.fr). The sharing will require a detailed
- 539 proposal to the study investigators, and a data transfer agreement must be signed.

Table 1. Baseline characteristics at AML diagnosis

	Overall study	Single agent	Single agent
	n = 167 (100%)	gilteritinib	gilteritinib and
	Single agent	n = 140 (100%)	prior exposure
	n=140	No prior mido	to "3+7+mido"
	Combination	n=70	n = 67 (100%)
	n=27	Prior mido	11 - 07 (10070)
	11-27	n=70	
Age (years) at diagnosis			
Median (IQR)	63.4 (52.4-70.1)	63.9 (52.6-70.4)	62.5 (52.1-70.1)
Range	18.2-84.8	20.8-84.8	23.5-77.8
Gender: n (%)			
Male	88 (52.7)	76 (54.3)	38 (56.7)
Female	79 (47.3)	64 (45.7)	29 (43.3)
ECOG at diagnosis: n (%)			
0-1	29 (19.7)	24 (18.9)	11 (17.7)
≥2	118 (80.3)	103 (81.1)	51 (82.3)
WBC at diagnosis (× 10 ⁹ /L)			
Median (IQR)	31.7 (8.7-90.9)	28.7 (8.2-80.6)	37.0 (12.8-101)
Range	0.9-348.6	0.9-348.6	0.95-348.6
Blood blast at diagnosis (%)			
Median (IQR)	55.0 (21.0-80.0)	53.0 (21.0-79.0)	60.0 (37.0-80.0)
Range	0.0-98.0	0.0-98.0	1.0-97.0
BM blast at diagnosis (%)			
Median (IQR)	72.5 (48.0-87.0)	72.0 (48.0-86.0)	75.0 (55.5-88.0)
Range	0.0-98.0	0.0-98.0	0.0-95.0
AML status: n (%)			
De novo	141 (84.4)	115 (82.1)	56 (83.6)
Secondary AML ^a	26 (15.6)	25 (17.9)	11 (16.4)
Cytogenetics risk: n (%) ^b			
Favorable	5 (3.0)	4 (2.9)	2 (3.0)
Intermediate	136 (81.4)	119 (85.0)	56 (83.6)
Adverse	12 (7.2)	9 (6.4)	4 (6.0)
Failure	14 (8.4)	8 (5.7)	5 (7.5)
ELN 2017 prognosis: n (%)			· · ·
Favorable	23 (13.8)	18 (12.9)	6 (9.0)
Intermediate	112 (67.1)	96 (68.6)	47 (70.1)
Adverse	25 (15.0)	20 (14.3)	12 (17.9)
Unknown	7 (4.2)	6 (4.3)	2 (3.0)
<i>FLT3</i> mutation: n (%) [°]			
<i>FLT3</i> -ITD	104 (62.3)	86 (61.4)	53 (79.1)
<i>FLT3-</i> TKD	33 (19.8)	26 (18.6)	13 (19.4)
Both	6 (3.6)	4 (2.9)	3 (4.5)
No mutation ^d	36 (21.6)	32 (22.9)	4 (6.0)
<i>FLT3</i> ratio ITD/wt: n (%)		. ,	. ,
< 3%	5 (5.3)	4 (5.1)	2 (4.1)
3–25%	28 (29.8)	24 (30.8)	19 (38.8)
26%–50%	16 (17.0)	14 (17.9)	8 (16.3)
> 50%	45 (47.9)	36 (46.2)	20 (40.8)
<i>NPM1</i> : n (%)	- /	. ,	- /
Mutation	84 (50.3)	67 (47.9)	33 (49.3)

Mido, midostaurin; ECOG, performance status; WBC, white blood cells; AML, acute myeloid leukemia; ELN, European LeukemiaNet; ITD, internal tandem duplication; wt, wild type; IQR, interquartile range. ^a non-*de novo* AML (12 post MDS, 2 post MPN, 3 post CMML and 9 therapy-related)

^b according to MRC 2010 classification

^c one patient can be included in several subgroups, patients *FLT3* wt at diagnosis acquired *FLT3* mutation later in disease history

^d 4 patients received midostaurin as front line treatment with intensive chemotherapy in clinical trial for *FLT3*wt AML

Table 2. Front-line treatment, relapses and subsequent lines of treatment before gilteritinib

	Overall study n = 167 (100%) Single agent n=140 Combination n=27	Single agent gilteritinib n = 140 (100%) No prior mido n=70 Prior mido n=70	Single agent gilteritinib and prior exposure to "3+7+mido" n = 67 (100%)
Front-line treatment: n (%)			
Intensive chemotherapy	153 (91.6)	126 (90.0)	67 (100.0)
Hypomethylating agent	14 (8.4)	14 (10.0)	-
Type of ICT: n (%)			
Daunorubicin-based 3+7	54 (35.3)	44 (34.9)	21 (31.3)
Idarubicin-based 3+7	86 (56.2)	69 (54.8)	42 (62.7)
GO-based 3+7	5 (3.3)	5 (4.0)	1 (1.5)
CPX-351	2 (1.3)	2 (1.6)	1 (1.5)
Other	6 (3.9)	6 (4.8)	2 (3.0)
FLT3-TKI added to ICT: n (%) ^a			
None	63 (41.1)	70 (50.0)	-
Midostaurin	87 (56.9)	67 (47.9)	67 (100.0)
Other	3 (2.0)	3 (2.1)	-
FLT3-TKI added to HMA: n (%) ^b			
None	10 (71.4)	10 (71.4)	-
Midostaurin	3 (21.4)	3 (21.4)	-
Other	1 (7.2)	1 (7.2)	-
Response to front-line ICT: n (%)			
CR/CRi in 1 course	111 (72.5)	93 (73.8)	48 (71.6)
CR/CRi in 2 courses	14 (9.2)	12 (9.5)	6 (9.0)
Failure	28 (18.3)	21 (16.7)	13 (19.4)
Response to front-line HMA: n (%)			
CR/CRi	3 (21.4)	3 (21.4)	-
Partial response	2 (14.3)	2 (14.3)	-
Stable disease	2 (14.3)	2 (14.3)	-
Failure	7 (50.0)	7 (50.0)	-
Relapses after front-line treatment: n			
(%)	128 (76.6)	108 (77.1)	54 (80.6)
Bone marrow	108 (84.4)	91 (84.3)	44 (81.5)
MRD	18 (14.1)	16 (14.8)	10 (18.5)
Extramedullary	2 (1.5)	1 (0.9)	0 (0.0)

Mido, midostaurin; ICT, intensive chemotherapy; GO, gemtuzumab ozogamycin, AML, acute myeloid leukemia; TKI, tyrosine kinase inhibitor; HMA, hypomethylating agent; CR, complete remission; CRi, complete remission with incomplete hematologic recovery; MRD, measurable residual disease; IQR, interquartile range.

^a the 3 patients classified as "other" received quizartinib (n=2) and ponatinib (n=1)

^b among 14 patients who received HMA, 3 patients received a regimen with Venetoclax, the patient classified as "other" received sorafenib (n=1)

Table 3. Characteristics of patients at gilteritinib initiation

		Cingle agent	Cingle agent
	Overall study	Single agent	Single agent
	n = 167 (100%)	gilteritinib	gilteritinib and
	Single agent	n = 140 (100%)	prior exposure
	n=140	No prior mido	to "3+7+mido"
	Combination	n=70	n = 67 (100%)
	n=27	Prior mido	
		n=70	
Age (years) at gilteritinib initiation:	/		
Median (IQR)	64.9 (53.4-71.5)	65.2 (53.8-72.1)	63.2 (53.3-71.7)
Range	19.1-86.1	23.1-86.1	25.4-78.5
ECOG at gilteritinib initiation: n (%)			
0-1	26 (16.4)	19 (14.1)	10 (15.6)
≥2	133 (83.6)	116 (85.9)	54 (84.4)
WBC at gilteritinib initiation (× 10 ⁹ /L)			
Median (IQR)	3.8 (1.9-14.5)	3.8 (1.9-13.9)	4.1 (1.9-16.8)
Range	0.2-210.0	0.2-210.0	0.3-210.0
ANC at gilteritinib initiation (× 10 ⁹ /L)			
Median (IQR)	1.2 (0.4-2.9)	1.1 (0.4-2.7)	1.2 (0.4-2.5)
Range	0.0-38.3	0.0-38.3	0.0-22.9
Hb at gilteritinib initiation (g/dL)			
Median (IQR)	9.9 (8.6-11.1)	9.8 (8.6-10.9)	10.2 (9.4-11.5)
Range	5.5-15.5	5.5-15.5	6.0-15.5
Pt at gilteritinib initiation (× 10 ⁹ /L)			
Median (IQR)	49 (21-104)	43 (20-93)	50 (24-113)
Range	1-551	1-551	2-319
Blood blast at gilteritinib initiation (%)			
Median (IQR)	17.6 (0.0-58.0)	16.2 (0.0-52.0)	15.7 (0.0-60.0)
Range	0.0-99.0	0.0-99.0	0.0-94.0
BM blast at gilteritinib initiation (%)			
Median (IQR)	41.0 (9.0-75.0)	41.0 (8.0-77.0)	35.0 (7.0-77.0)
Range	0.0-96.0	0.0-96.0	0.0-96.0
AML phase at gilteritinib initiation: n (%)			
Refractory after front-line treatment	25 (15.0)	22 (15.7)	5 (7.5)
1^{st} relapse ≤ 6 months from CR/CRi1	41 (24.6)	32 (22.9)	20 (29.9)
1 st relapse > 6 months from CR/CRi1	39 (23.4)	30 (21.4)	20 (29.9)
Refractory after 1 st relapse	17 (10.2)	15 (10.7)	6 (9.0)
Beyond the 1 st relapse	45 (26.9)	41 (29.3)	16 (23.9)
Treatment associated with gilteritinib			
None	140 (83.8)	140 (100)	67 (100)
Intensive chemotherapy	2 (1.2)	-	-
НМА	17 (10.2)	-	-
LDAC	1 (0.6)	-	-
Venetoclax	6 (3.6)	-	-
Other	1 (0.6)	-	-
Mide midestauring ECOC performance s	tatus: M/RC white	blood colley ANC	<u> </u>

Mido, midostaurin; ECOG, performance status; WBC, white blood cells; ANC, absolute neutrophil count; Hb, hemoglobin; Pt, platelets; AML, acute myeloid leukemia; BM, bone marrow; IQR, interquartile range; CR, complete remission; CRi, complete remission with incomplete hematologic recovery; HMA, hypomethylating agent; LDAC, low-dose cytarabine

Table 4. Response to gilteritinib

	Overall study	Single agent	Single agent
	n = 167 (100%)	gilteritinib	gilteritinib and
	Single agent	n = 140 (100%)	prior exposure
	n=140	No prior mido	to "3+7+mido"
	Combination	n=70	n = 67 (100%)
	n=27	Prior mido	
		n=70	
Best response: n (%)			
CR	24 (15.4)	22 (16.9)	12 (19.4)
CRi	14 (9.0)	8 (6.2)	4 (6.5)
CRp	3 (1.9)	3 (2.3)	1 (1.6)
PR	10 (6.4)	7 (5.4)	4 (6.5)
Combined criteria for best response: n (%)			
CR/CRi	38 (24.4)	30 (23.1)	16 (25.9)
CRc ^a	41 (26.3)	33 (25.4)	17 (27.5)
ORR ^b	51 (32.7)	40 (30.8)	21 (34.0)
MLFS	13 (8.3)	9 (6.9)	3 (4.8)
Failure ^c	75 (48.1)	68 (52.4)	31 (50.0)
No evaluation ^d	9 (5.8)	7 (5.4)	4 (6.5)
Deceased before evaluation	8 (5.1)	6 (4.6)	3 (4.8)
WBC at best response (× 10 ⁹ /L)			
Median (IQR)	2.6 (1.2-5.1)	3.0 (1.4-5.6)	3.4 (1.5-6.1)
Range	0.1-54.1	0.1-54.1	0.1-30.8
ANC at best response (× 10 ⁹ /L)			
Median (IQR)	1.1 (0.3-2.6)	1.2 (0.3-2.7)	1.5 (0.4-2.8)
Range	0.0-23.5	0.0-23.6	0.0-9.0
Hb at best response (g/dL)			
Median (IQR)	9.7 (8.6-10.8)	9.7 (8.6-10.8)	9.5 (8.6-11.1)
Range	6.8-78.0	6.9-78.0	7.3-78.0
Pt at best response (× 10 ⁹ /L)			
Median (IQR)	35 (17-92)	33 (17-92)	37 (18-127)
Range	5-503	5-503	5-250
Blood blast at best response (%)			
Median (IQR)	0.8 (0.0-18.0)	0.9 (0.0-21.0)	0.0 (0.0-7.0)
Range	0.0-95.0	0.0-95.0	0.0-85.0
BM blast at best response (%)			
Median (IQR)	3.0 (1.0-21.5)	3.7 (1.0-33.0)	3.9 (1.0-32.5)
Range	0.0-96.0	0.0-96.0	0.0-71.0

Mido, midostaurin; CR, complete remission; CRi, complete remission with incomplete hematologic recovery; CRp, complete remission with incomplete platelet recovery; PR, partial remission; MLFS, morphological leukemia-free state; ORR, overall response rate; NA, not available; WBC, white blood cells; ANC, absolute neutrophil count; Hb, hemoglobin; Pt, platelet; BM, bone marrow; IQR, interquartile range.

^a Composite complete remission (CRc) = CR + CRi + CRp

^b Overall response rate (ORR) = CRc + PR

^c Failure = progression + stable disease

^d Missing data for 11/167, 10/140 and 5/67 patients respectively

Table 5. Gilteritinib-related adverse events during treatment

	Overall study n = 167 (100%) Single agent n=140 Combination n=27	Single agent gilteritinib n = 140 (100%) No prior mido n=70 Prior mido n=70	Single agent gilteritinib and prior exposure to "3+7+mido" n = 67 (100%)
QTcF prolongation			
None	143 (91.7)	120 (92.3)	54 (88.5)
< 450 ms	9 (5.8)	6 (6.2)	6 (9.8)
450-500 ms	4 (2.6)	2 (1.5)	1 (1.6)
> 500 ms	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Grade ≥ 3 hematological AE: n (%)			
Anemia	68 (41.0)	56 (40.3)	24 (35.8)
Thrombocytopenia	88 (53.3)	71 (51.4)	37 (56.1)
Neutropenia	87 (52.4)	68 (48.9)	34 (51.5)
Grade ≥ 3 non-hematological AE: n (%)			
Hemorrhage	10 (6.0)	7 (5.0)	5 (7.5)
Hepatic toxicity	7 (4.2)	5 (3.6)	3 (4.5)
Tumor lysis syndrome	1 (0.6)	1 (0.7)	1 (1.5)
Differenciation syndrome: n (%)	10 (6.0)	6 (4.3)	4 (6.0)

Mido, midostaurin; QTcF, Q wave interval (QT)/Fridericia-corrected Q wave; AE, adverse event; HMA, hypomethylating agent; CR, complete remission; RCi, complete remission with incomplete hematologic recovery; IQR, interquartile range.