Belani et al conducted another study with an inhibitor of VEGFR in combination with Cis-Pem as first line treatment in advanced NSCLC (non squamous). This study failed to reach its primary endpoint i.e. PFS assessed by investigators, despite significant improvement of the response rate in the two groups receiving axitinib.

Discretionary revision

Despite the negative results, one of the interesting data is the better PFS and OS observed in the three groups of patients than in the landmark study of Scagliotti et al. (almost +3 and +5 months respectively). These differences were quoted by the authors and were judged important enough as to be developed in the first chapter of their discussion. They suggested different reasons of which the presence of better prognostic factors in the population studied and also the possible influence of subsequent treatments. Data on postdiscontinuation therapies were nevertheless not shown but could perhaps be given as they were in the study of Scagliotti et al.

If we look at the survival curves, we can see that the group of patients who received Axitinib continuously had a better survival between the 6th and the 10 or 12 months suggesting three explanations: an imbalance in postdiscontinuation therapies between the groups (cfr previous point), a real activity of adding this VEGFR inhibitor continuously to chemotherapy, or an imbalance in the perprotocol treatment. Indeed, as written in the section “Study design and treatment”, the dose of axitinib could be reduced according to the side effects but also increased if the tolerance was good (except if development of hypertension). Data or comments according to the number of patients who received more axitinib were unfortunately not shared. Authors could give comments on these points.

Another concern is the design of the study. When almost in all the other studies with anti-VEGF agents, these agents were maintained after chemotherapy, this was not the case in the present study. What is the rationale behind this decision?
**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I hereby certify that I have no competing interests in relation to this study.