CLAIMS

1. Use of an antibody that binds a human NKG2A polypeptide and neutralizes the inhibitory activity of NKG2A in the preparation of a medicament for the treatment or prevention of a head and neck squamous cell carcinoma (HNSCC) in an individual.

2. Use according to Claim 1, in which the HNSCC is an oral cavity squamous cell carcinoma (OCSCC).

3. Use according to Claim 1, in which the HNSCC is an oropharyngeal tumor.

4. Use according to Claim 1, in which the HNSCC is a larynx tumor.

5. Use according to Claim 1, in which the HNSCC is a tumor of the hypopharynx.

6. Use according to Claim 1, in which the individual is HPV positive.

7. Use according to Claim 1, in which:

(a) a determination is made as to whether HLA-E polypeptide is expressed by malignant cells from the individual having a HNSCC, and

(b) upon a determination that malignant cells express HLA-E polypeptide at or above a reference level, the antibody is to be administered to the individual.

8. Use according to Claim 7, in which determining whether HLA-E polypeptide is expressed by malignant cells comprises bringing HNSCC cells obtained from an individual into contact with an antibody that binds a HLA-E polypeptide, and detecting cells that express HLA-E.

9. Use according to Claim 1, in which the antibody comprises an Fc-engineered constant region comprising an amino acid modification that reduces binding to a human Fcγ receptor.

10. Use according to Claim 1, in which the anti-NKG2A antibody comprises the CDR1, CDR2 and CDR3 domains of a heavy chain having the sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO: 2, and the CDR1, CDR2 and CDR3 domains of a light chain having the sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO: 7.

11. Use according to Claim 1, in which the anti-NKG2A antibody is administered several times at a dosing frequency from once about every week to once about per month.

12. Use of an antibody that binds a human NKG2A polypeptide and neutralizes the inhibitory activity of NKG2A in the preparation of a medicament for treating a cancer in a human patient, in which an effective amount of each of: (a) an antibody that neutralizes the inhibitory activity of human NKG2A, and (b) an agent that binds the epidermal growth factor receptor (EGFR) is to be administered to the patient.

13. Use according to Claim 12, in which the agent that binds EGFR inhibits the biological activity of EGFR.

14. Use according to Claim 12, in which the agent that binds EGFR is an antibody that induces ADCC toward EGFR-expressing tumor cells.

15. Use according to Claim 12, in which the agent that binds EGFR is cetuximab.

16. Use according to Claim 12, which comprises at least one administration cycle, in which the cycle is a period of two weeks, in which for each of the at least one cycles, one dose of the antibody that neutralizes the inhibitory activity of human NKG2A is to be administered and two doses of an antibody that binds EGFR are to be administered.

17. Use according to Claim 12, which comprises at least one administration cycle, in which the cycle is a period of two weeks, in which for each of the at least one cycles, one dose of the antibody that neutralizes the inhibitory activity of human NKG2A is to be administered at a dose of 1-10 mg/kg and two doses of an antibody that binds EGFR are to be administered at a dose of 1-10 mg/kg.

18. Use according to Claim 12, in which the agent that binds EGFR is cetuximab and the NKG2A antibody comprises the CDR1, CDR2, and CDR3 domains of a heavy chain having the sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO: 2 and the CDR1, CDR2 and CDR3 domains of a light chain having the sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO: 7.