



**Encouraging VEGF Kinoid results in AMD model presented at
the European Association for Vision and Eye Research (EVER) Conference**

Paris, October 6, 2009 -- Neovacs, a biotechnology company developing proprietary immunotherapeutics for autoimmune and chronic diseases, today released a summary of the results achieved with its VEGF Kinoid in a mouse model of age-related macular degeneration (AMD) as presented recently at the [EVER](#) (*European Association for Vision and Eye Research*) annual conference.

In an established mouse model of choroidal neovascularization, animals receiving the VEGF Kinoid by intramuscular injection mounted a neutralizing antibody response to VEGF. Animals treated with the Kinoid showed a significant reduction in neovascularization as compared to a control group. Animals receiving the Kinoid immunotherapy showed no adverse effects and no alteration in normal retinal functions, as assessed by electroretinography.

Pathologic neovascularization is the proximate cause of vision loss, and ultimately blindness, in age-related macular degeneration, especially the “wet” clinical form. The current standard of care includes passive immunotherapy to VEGF administered intra-vitreally, up to once per month. *“The ability to deliver anti-VEGF therapy intra-muscularly would be of major benefit for many patients afflicted with AMD, avoiding the risks associated with intravitreal injections. Further, as observed with other kinoids developed by Neovacs, the therapeutic effect may be more potent and of longer duration than the intravitreal injections of antibodies or aptamers to VEGF currently used for the treatment of choroidal neovascularization arising from ARM. Critically, kinoids might be useful for the treatment of some forms of AMD and of some forms of retinal polypoidal vasculopathies refractory to VEGF antibodies”* commented Marc Abitbol M.D. PhD., Director of the Center for Therapeutic Research in Ophthalmology, Faculty of Medicine, Paris-Descartes University, and the leader of the study *“This study is an initial demonstration of feasibility and encourages us to pursue further research efforts in this area.”*

The study was funded in part by Retina France.

About age-related macular degeneration

AMD is the most common cause of vision loss in the developed world, with approximately 500,000 diagnoses of the more severe, exudative or “wet”, form of the disease every year. The inhibition of VEGF, a protein that mediates the sprouting of abnormal retinal neovessels in Wet AMD, is a standard treatment for this disease. Current VEGF inhibitor options require multiple intraocular injections over a two year period.

About VEGF and the VEGF Kinoid

The protein VEGF (Vascular Endothelial Growth Factor) plays a key role in the development of new blood vessels, and has therefore been identified as a therapeutic target for diseases associated with aberrant neovasculature, such as cancer and AMD. Passive immunotherapies targeting VEGF have been approved in recent years in both indications. Neovacs' VEGF Kinoid represents a new approach to this established target. A conjugate of VEGF to an immunogenic carrier protein, the VEGF Kinoid is an active immunotherapy that stimulates the body's own immune system to generate a therapeutic immune response to VEGF. Neovacs' has previously published results achieved with the VEGF Kinoid in two established experimental models of cancer (Rad et al, PNAS 2007; 104;8 pp2837-2842)

About Neovacs

The biotechnology company Neovacs is focused on an active immunotherapy technology platform with applications in autoimmune disease and other chronic conditions. It was founded as a spin-off from Pierre & Marie Curie University in Paris by Professor Daniel Zagury, MD, one of the world's leading immunologists. The key investors are Truffle Capital, Novartis Venture Fund and OTC Asset Management.

The company's lead program (an immunotherapy targeting certain inflammatory diseases) is currently in a Phase I/II study in subjects with Crohn's disease. This product candidate is also the focus of a collaboration with the diagnostics company BMD, with the objective of developing theranostic tools for personalized care.

Neovacs' near-term milestones include the expansion of the lead clinical program (TNF α Kinoid) into new indications (H2 2009) and the initiation of clinical trials of a second product - an immunotherapy targeting Lupus disease (H2 2009). The company's R&D has also generated a broad patent estate.

Disclaimer: Drug development is an inherently uncertain and unpredictable process. Neovacs' statements regarding the future depend on research that has yet to be performed and on a number of other factors. As a consequence, the company's future performance and financial results may differ significantly from those currently forecast.

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