



Results presented at ACR 2009 confirm the promise of the IFN α Kinoid as a therapeutic approach for lupus

Paris, October 22, 2009 -- Neovacs, a biotechnology company developing proprietary immunotherapeutics for autoimmune and chronic diseases, today released a summary of preclinical results achieved with its Interferon alpha (IFN α) Kinoid immunotherapy for lupus, as presented in a poster at the ACR/ARHP 2009 Annual Scientific Meeting (October 17th-21st in Philadelphia).

The experimental results, summarized in a poster entitled "Active immunization with IFN α Kinoid induces polyclonal antibodies that neutralize IFN α from systemic lupus erythematosus patients" are strongly supportive of both the efficacy and safety of the approach. Specifically:

- In terms of efficacy, active immunotherapy with Neovacs' IFN α Kinoid generates a polyclonal antibody response that neutralizes all subtypes of IFN α . Polyclonal antibodies to the IFN α Kinoid also neutralize IFN α in the sera of lupus patients. Given that there are 13 subtypes of IFN α , alternative passive immunotherapy approaches based on monoclonal antibodies may not prove as broadly neutralizing.
- In terms of safety, antibodies to the IFN α Kinoid do not neutralize other cytokines in the interferon system, thus leaving intact their desirable function in the immune system. Further, immunization with the IFN α Kinoid does not produce a cellular immune response against the cytokine, reducing the likelihood of any undesirable autoimmune response to the therapy.

Neovacs expects to initiate clinical testing of its IFN α Kinoid in lupus patients later this year or early in 2010.

About lupus

Lupus is a chronic, life-threatening autoimmune disease, in which the body generates auto antibodies, especially against the cell nucleus. Approximately five million people worldwide, including approximately 1.5 million in the United States, suffer from various forms of lupus. Lupus can occur at any age, but appears mostly in young people ages 15 to 45. About 90 percent of those diagnosed with lupus are women. Symptoms may include extreme fatigue, painful and swollen joints, fever, rash and kidney problems. Lupus can lead to arthritis, kidney failure, heart and lung inflammation, central nervous system abnormalities, inflammation of the blood vessels and blood disorders. No new therapies have been approved for lupus for several decades. The over-production of interferon alpha, a cytokine that plays a key role in immune system regulation, has been identified by lupus researchers as strongly implicated in the disease.

About Neovacs

The biotechnology company Neovacs is focusing 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 leading product candidate (an immunotherapy targeting certain inflammatory diseases) is currently in a Phase I/II clinical trial in Crohn's disease patients. This therapeutic is also at the heart of a collaboration (with the diagnostics company BMD) aimed at developing novel theranostic tools for personalized care.

Neovacs' near-term milestones include the expansion of the lead clinical program (TNF α Kinoid) into new indications (Q4 2009) and first-in-man trials of a second product - an immunotherapy targeting lupus (Q4 2009/Q1 2010). The company's R&D efforts have generated a broad patent estate.

Disclaimer: drug development is an inherently uncertain and unpredictable process. Neovacs' forward-looking statements 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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