

Press Release



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AVONTEC's lead product AVT-01 advances into multiple-dosing Phase 2a studies in asthma

Novel decoy technology makes transcription factor target drugable

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AVONTEC's asthma drug candidate AVT-01 has entered a multiple dosing phase 2a clinical study in the United Kingdom and Romania. Last week, the English regulatory body, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency, and the Romanian regulatory body, the Romanian National Medicines Agency, approved the start of the study on AVT-01 in patients with asthma.

This approval is based on AVONTEC's clinical trial application, which contains a broad and comprehensive data base on information provided by the company on the CMC, toxicology, safety pharmacology and genotoxicity of the drug candidate. AVT-01 is a short, double-stranded oligodeoxynucleotide (ODN) "decoy" that effectively inhibits the transcription factor STAT-1. This transcription factor represents a novel drug target which acts at the level of innate immunity and has been shown to be strongly involved in chronic inflammation. AVT-01 is believed to be the first ODN-based drug candidate to enter clinical trials that attenuates the activity of a transcription factor in a specific and selective way. AVONTEC has already demonstrated that AVT-01 reduces inflammation in numerous pharmacological animal models. Single doses of AVT-01 also attenuated bronchial hyperresponsiveness in humans, as demonstrated in a single dose phase 2a study, which was presented at the American Thoracic Society convention in May, 2006.

AVONTEC's CEO, Dr. Thomas Schulze, stated that "AVT-01 originates from the research labs of AVONTEC's scientific founder, Prof. Marcus Hecker of the University of Heidelberg in Germany. AVT-01 thereby represents one of the very few examples in which a development product has been successfully translated from research all the way into clinical phase 2 development by a company's own development expertise. This successful process establishes AVONTEC as a strong product development company and, together with its strategic partner AnGes MG in Tokyo, Japan, as a leader in the area of decoy-based drugs".

Concurrent with this Phase 2a trial, AVONTEC is embarking upon a series of multiple dosing phase 2a studies in order to further demonstrate the safety and efficacy of AVT-01 in asthma. Results from these studies are expected for Q4/2007.

About AVONTEC GmbH

AVONTEC is a Phase 2 biopharmaceutical company in Martinsried, Germany, addressing large-market indication areas with product candidates derived from its unique and powerful decoy oligonucleotide platform technology. The company's lead drug candidates AVT-01 and AVT-02 are in Phase 2a clinical studies in asthma and psoriasis. In pilot studies in asthma and psoriasis, these development candidates showed excellent safety and had demonstrable effects on relevant endpoints.

The strength of AVONTEC's approach derives from its unique ability to make transcription factors drugable. AVONTEC and its corporate partner AnGes MG are two of the only companies worldwide that are pursuing this valuable approach, which employs a direct, intracellular method of inhibiting transcription factor targets. The strong attenuation of transcription factor levels without completely inhibiting them powerfully influences the activity of these factors and hence the inflammatory cascades they mediate without triggering unwanted effects inside or outside the cell.