

## **Antisoma starts new trial of R1550 (formerly Therex) in breast cancer**

[London, UK: 30 June 2003] Antisoma, the UK-based biopharmaceutical company, today announces that it is starting patient recruitment into a phase I trial of its drug R1550 (formerly Therex), a novel cancer therapy that it is co-developing with pharmaceutical company Roche. The trial is enrolling patients with locally advanced or metastatic (spreading) breast cancer, with recruitment taking place initially at the UCLA's Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Center USA. An earlier phase I study, conducted in the UK by the Imperial Cancer Research Fund, showed that R1550 was well tolerated in breast cancer patients.

Antisoma licensed the worldwide marketing rights for the product to Roche as part of the alliance agreement signed by the two companies in November 2002. Since that agreement Roche has been funding the development of R1550 in full. Antisoma will conduct the current phase I study in breast cancer, but Roche plans to conduct future studies, which are expected to evaluate the potential of the drug in a variety of cancer indications.

R1550 is an antibody (humanised HMFG1) that targets and binds to a protein called MUC1. This protein is exposed only on the surface of cancer cells, so the antibody binds specifically to tumours. Evidence suggests that the antibody then recruits components of the immune system called 'natural killer cells' to attack the cancer cells. R1550 has broad potential because the MUC1 protein that it targets is made by many different types of cancer.

Dr Miroslav Ravic, Chief Clinical Officer of Antisoma, said: 'Breast cancer accounts for 30% of all cancers that affect women, and there is a profound need for improved treatment. Our new trial of R1550 will define the doses to be used in phase II trials in breast and other cancers'.

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## **Notes to Editors**

### **HMFG1 and R1550**

HMFG1 is a mouse monoclonal antibody that forms the basis for a number of Antisoma's drugs in development. R1550 (huHMFG1) is a humanised form of the antibody suitable for repeat administration into the systemic circulation. The drug is a naked antibody thought to attack cancer cells by recruiting the patient's immune system, particularly natural killer cells. This is the process of antibody-dependent cell-mediated cytotoxicity (ADCC), which has been demonstrated during in-vitro experiments with the R1550 antibody.

A growing body of evidence links the MUC1 protein targeted by HMFG1 antibodies with cancer progression and metastasis. In particular, MUC1 has been implicated in changes in intracellular signalling and altered interactions with extracellular matrix components such as ICAM-1. These findings reinforce the relevance of MUC1 as a target for anti-cancer treatments and open up the possibility that, in addition to mediating ADCC, naked anti-MUC1 antibodies such as R1550 could exert effects on cancer cells by altering the interactions of MUC1 with other proteins.

### **About Antisoma**

Based in London, UK, Antisoma is a biopharmaceutical company that develops novel products for the treatment of cancer. The Company fills its development pipeline by acquiring promising new product candidates from internationally recognised academic or cancer research institutions. Its core activity is the pre-clinical and clinical development of these drug candidates. Antisoma forms partnerships with pharmaceutical companies to bring its products to market. In November 2002, Antisoma signed a ground-breaking collaboration agreement with Roche to develop and commercialise products from Antisoma's pipeline. Visit [www.antisoma.com](http://www.antisoma.com) for further information about Antisoma.