

New findings for Antisoma's anti-cancer drugs presented at AACR

29 March 2004, London, UK-Antisoma plc, the biopharmaceutical company specialising in the development of novel anti-cancer drugs, announces the presentation of promising new data from five of its oncology programmes at the American Association of Cancer Research meeting in Orlando, USA.

ATTACK approach combats variety of tumours

Tomorrow the first presentation of data from the ATTACK (Anti-tumour Therapy with Targeting Antibodies and CytoKines) programme will reveal potent anti-tumour activity in a variety of cancer models. The ATTACK agent BC1-IL12 significantly reduced the growth of human skin, prostate and colon cancer xenografts in mice. In a model of metastatic (spreading) lung cancer, coverage of lung surfaces by tumour growth was reduced by 99% with the drug relative to a control. BC1-IL12 combines the tumour-targeting antibody BC1 with the cytokine IL12. Clinical trials have shown that, when given alone, IL12 has powerful anti-tumour effects, but these are overshadowed by side-effects. Linking the cytokine to the BC1 antibody is intended to avoid these unwanted effects by delivering IL12 specifically to tumours. The drug is being co-developed by Antisoma and EMD Lexigen Research Center, whose scientists will present the work.

Positive animal data for second targeted apoptosis drug

Tomorrow scientists from Antisoma's laboratories will report that the targeted apoptosis drug huHMFG1-huDNaseI slows the growth of tumours in mice. In a xenograft model of human bladder cancer, tumour growth was reduced almost threefold by the drug. HuHMFG1-huDNaseI is a fusion protein with two components: a tumour targeting antibody, which causes the drug to be internalised specifically by cancer cells; and an enzyme, which breaks down their DNA. Such damage leads the targeted cells to undergo apoptosis (programmed cell death). Positive findings have previously been reported for Antisoma's similar drug, AS1406 (huHMFG1-RNase), which uses the enzyme RNase to kill cancer cells. The new results with DNase underline the potential of the targeted apoptosis approach to produce multiple drugs for clinical development based on different permutations of antibodies and enzymes.

Telomerase inhibitors show distinctive anti-cancer effects

Yesterday Professor Stephen Neidle of the London School of Pharmacy presented the latest findings from the programme of telomerase inhibitors developed in his laboratory and licensed by Antisoma from Cancer Research UK during 2003. He reported studies showing that the current lead candidate inhibits the growth of human prostate cancer cells while leaving healthy cells unharmed. He also showed evidence that the agents developed in his laboratory have a mechanism of action distinct from other anti-cancer approaches based on inhibiting the telomerase function.

Other presentations

The two other Antisoma programmes covered by presentations at AACR are AS1404 (DMXAA) and ⁹⁰Y-huHMFG1.

Glyn Edwards, CEO of Antisoma, said, ‘Our five presentations at AACR showcase the progress we are making in preparing further new drugs for clinical development, and highlight the wealth of promising anti-cancer approaches in our preclinical portfolio.’

Enquiries:

Antisoma plc

Glyn Edwards
Chief Executive Officer

Tel: +44 (0)20 8799 8200

Financial Dynamics

Ben Atwell

T: +44 (0)20 7831 3113

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 preclinical and clinical development of these drug candidates. Antisoma forms partnerships with pharmaceutical companies to bring its products to market. In November 2002, Antisoma formed a broad strategic alliance with Roche to develop and commercialise products from Antisoma’s pipeline. Please visit www.antisoma.com for further information about Antisoma.