
First patient treated in Turnstone's lung cancer trial combining novel viral cancer therapy with approved checkpoint inhibitor



NEWS PROVIDED BY
Turnstone Biologics Inc. →
26 Apr, 2017, 03:00 ET

Combination of Turnstone's oncolytic viral immunotherapy with checkpoint inhibitors showed promising results in preclinical testing

OTTAWA, April 26, 2017 /PRNewswire/ - Turnstone Biologics Inc. announced today that treatment has been initiated on the first patient in the company's Phase I/II clinical trial combining its novel oncolytic viral immunotherapy agent, MG1-MAGEA3, with pembrolizumab, an approved anti-PD-1 antibody. Named the Sandpiper Trial, this study represents the second clinical trial for Turnstone's lead product.

The Sandpiper Trial is evaluating the proposed combination therapy in patients with non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC) no longer responsive to chemotherapy. NSCLC is the leading cause of cancer-related deaths in North America. Turnstone's first clinical trial with MG1-MAGEA3, which is still ongoing, is testing the agent as a monotherapy in NSCLC, as well as in breast and esophageal cancers.

Turnstone's platform generates a two-pronged effect on tumors by functioning both as a tumor-destroying oncolytic agent and as an immune-stimulating vaccine directed at specific cancer antigens. The result should be a potent immune response and strong anti-tumor activity.

"Initiation of the Sandpiper Trial represents an important milestone for Turnstone. We are excited to evaluate our technology in combination with pembrolizumab as a potential treatment for lung cancer, and about the promise it may hold for patients," said Turnstone CEO Sammy Farah, PhD. "Preclinical evidence strongly suggests that our product can sensitize cancers to the activity of checkpoint inhibitors and provide enhanced benefits to a larger segment of lung cancer patients compared to either therapy alone."

The trial will enroll 55 participants with metastatic NSCLC expressing the target antigen MAGE-A3. The Sandpiper Trial is currently recruiting patients at two sites in Canada: The Ottawa Hospital and Juravinski Cancer Centre in Hamilton, with additional study sites to be opened within the next year.

"I am treating people today with pembrolizumab alone and seeing some impressive outcomes," said Dr. Rosalyn Juergens, oncologist and site lead investigator at Hamilton Health Sciences' Juravinski Cancer Centre, and associate professor of oncology at McMaster University. "Combining it with Turnstone's oncolytic viral immunotherapy could be a way for more people to benefit from this emerging class of immunotherapies. Many experts in the field think that these combination approaches could truly harness the power of the body's immune system to selectively target and destroy cancer, and keep it at bay."

Turnstone Biologics is the sponsor and primary funder of the Sandpiper Trial. The company's investors include Versant Ventures, OrbiMed, F-Prime Capital and FACIT, the commercialization partner of the Ontario Institute of Cancer Research (OICR). Grants from BioCanRx and OICR are also providing financial support for the study.

Turnstone is currently expanding its pipeline to include products for prostate and HPV-related cancers, and anticipates opening two additional clinical trials in 2017–2018.

For more information about Turnstone's clinical trials, please call 613-421-8930, ext. 400.

More information

Partner release from The Ottawa Hospital

Trial information registered at ClinicalTrials.gov: NCT02879760

About Turnstone Biologics

Turnstone Biologics Inc. is a biotechnology company focused on developing novel oncolytic viral immunotherapies for cancer. Turnstone's therapeutic platform is a first-in-class, tumor-targeted oncolytic vaccine that combines potent tumor-killing effects of oncolytic viruses with the benefits of a cancer vaccine that harnesses the patient's own immune system to fight disease in a sustainable manner. The company's platform leverages the innovations and expertise of its renowned founding scientists, Drs. John Bell, Brian Lichty and David Stojdl. Turnstone also is developing additional oncolytic virus strategies and immunotherapy combination treatments. For more information, please visit www.turnstonebio.com.

SOURCE Turnstone Biologics Inc.

Related Links

www.turnstonebio.com