

New Drugs

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Alzhemed, Neurochem

Developed by Canadian pharma major Neurochem, Alzhemed is investigational product candidate that can be used as a potential therapy for Alzheimer's. ALZHEMED acts by reducing the deposition of amyloids in the brain by binding to soluble A β peptide. In the phase I trials, Alzhemed had a dose-dependent inhibitory effect on both the deposition of cerebrovascular amyloids and on plasma concentration. Alzhemed is currently undergoing phase III trials in Europe.

Gardasil, Sanofi Aventis

Gardasil is being touted as the world's first vaccine against cervical cancer and other diseases caused by certain types (16, 18, 6 and 11) of the human papilloma virus (HPV). Marketed by Merck & Co., the vaccine is designed to prevent infection with HPV. Australia's government announced in late November last year that beginning 2007 they will provide this vaccination to all 12-13 year-old girls in the country.

PI-88, Progen, Australia

PI-88, anti-angiogenic therapeutic works against multiple cancers at an early stage. This drug attacks the growth of the original tumor and inhibits the establishment and spread of secondary tumours. Typically, anti-angiogenic therapy fights

against cancerous tumors by stopping them from forming blood vessels that spread the cancer.

In its phase II trials, Progen tested PI 88 for lung cancer, liver cancer, multiple myeloma and melanoma (for which PI-88 has received Orphan Drug status from the US FDA) and prostate cancer.

SPP100/ Raslilez, Novartis

SP 100 or Raslilez is touted as the first of a new class of renin inhibitor drugs. Renin is a circulating enzyme released in the kidney that brings about a series of biochemical events causing blood vessels to constrict. It is considered to be one of the crucial molecular triggers that lead to hypertension. Novartis has submitted Rasilez for its regulatory approval in the US in early 2006 and much recently in the European Union.

MN-001, MediciNova

MN-001 is a drug compound that has been shown to block a number of the inflammatory mechanisms activated by mast cell degranulation. It is also under development by MediciNova for the treatment of interstitial cystitis. The company hopes to get the final phase results by the beginning of 2007.

Chantix, Pfizer

Chantix is a smoking cessation product and is an alternative to bupropion (Zyban) and nicotine replacement therapy (NRT), such as nicotine patches. By acting similarly to nicotine on the brain it reduces user cravings for cigarettes and other tobacco products and may assist some patients in smoking cessation.

Exubera, Pfizer & Nektar Therapeutics

Exubera is the brand name of the first formulation of inhalable insulin to receive the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval. It is manufactured by Pfizer in collaboration with Nektar Therapeutics and is licensed for use by both type 1 and type 2 diabetics. Exubera is considered short or rapid acting insulin.