Viracta Therapeutics Presents Preclinical Vecabrutinib Data in Oral and Poster Presentations at ASH 2021

Vecabrutinib enhanced the efficacy of CAR T-cells in a murine mantle cell lymphoma model
Vecabrutinib inhibited the secretion of pro-inflammatory cytokines known to play a role in the cytokine release syndrome associated with CAR T-cell therapy
Vecabrutinib significantly reduced chronic graft-versus-host disease (cGVHD) symptoms in a murine disease model

SAN DIEGO, Dec. 13, 2021 /PRNewswire/ -- Viracta Therapeutics, Inc. (Nasdaq: VIRX), a precision oncology company targeting virus-associated malignancies, today announced the presentation of new preclinical data on vecabrutinib, a reversible inhibitor of Bruton's tyrosine kinase (BTK) and interleukin-2-inducible kinase (ITK), in oral and poster presentations at the 2021 American Society of Hematology (ASH) Annual Meeting.

The oral presentation featured preclinical data indicating that vecabrutinib may enhance the efficacy and safety of CD19-targeted chimeric antigen receptor T (CART19) cell therapy. Though CART19 cell therapy has been shown to effectively treat certain hematological malignancies, rates of long-term durable response after therapy are low and the majority of patients develop resistance. Additionally, CAR T-cell therapies are associated with significant safety concerns such as cytokine release syndrome and neurotoxicity.

Key findings from the oral presentation include:

- Vecabrutinib increased the cytotoxic activity of CART19 cells and maintained their proliferation capacity
- Vecabrutinib enhanced CART19 cell anti-tumor activity in a murine mantle cell lymphoma model
- Vecabrutinib reduced the level of pro-inflammatory cytokines known to cause toxicities associated with CAR T-cell therapy; these observations were consistent with data from a prior Phase 1 clinical trial evaluating vecabrutinib as a treatment for patients with B-cell malignancies
- In a direct comparison with ibrutinib, only vecabrutinib continued to induce CAR-T cell proliferation at high doses

"These compelling preclinical findings demonstrate the potential of vecabrutinib to improve the efficacy of CAR T-cells while ameliorating many of the concerns that currently prevent their use outside of inpatient settings," said Ayman Elguindy, Ph.D., Chief Scientific Officer of Viracta. "If translated to the clinic, the positive effects of vecabrutinib could potentially expand the use and tolerability of CAR T-cell therapies and improve the outlook for patients with a variety of cancers."

In addition to the oral presentation, a poster presentation detailed preclinical findings of vecabrutinib in a murine model of sclerodermatous cGVHD, a complication occurring in patients following allogeneic stem cell transplantation. Data showed that vecabrutinib significantly reduced cGVHD symptoms including skin irritation, redness, alopecia, and diarrhea via modulation of pathogenetic B- and T-cell subsets.

Ivor Royston, M.D., President and Chief Executive Officer of Viracta, commented, "We believe vecabrutinib's differentiated reversible kinase inhibitory profile and ability to modulate immune-related signaling pathways give it the potential to overcome the shortcomings of ibrutinib when combined with CAR T-cell therapy. Looking ahead, we are strategically evaluating clinical development options to assess the combination of vecabrutinib and CART19 cell therapy."

A copy of the ASH presentations will be available by visiting the Events and Webcasts page of the Viracta website following the conference's conclusion.

About Vecabrutinib

Vecabrutinib is a well-tolerated, selective, reversible, non-covalent inhibitor of Bruton's tyrosine kinase (BTK) and interleukin-2-inducible kinase (ITK). Vecabrutinib is being studied as a potential enhancer of efficacy and safety of CAR T-cell therapy.

About Viracta Therapeutics, Inc.

Viracta is a precision oncology company targeting virus-associated malignancies. Viracta's proprietary investigational drug, nanatinostat, is currently being evaluated in combination with the antiviral agent valganciclovir as an oral combination therapy, Nana-Val, in a registration-enabling Phase 2 clinical trial for EBV-positive (EBV^+) lymphoma and a Phase 1b/2 trial in patients with EBV^+ nasopharyngeal carcinoma and other EBV^+ solid tumors. Viracta is also pursuing the application of its inducible synthetic lethality approach in other virus-related cancers.

For additional information please visit www.viracta.com.

Forward-Looking Statements

This communication contains "forward-looking" statements within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995, including, without limitation, statements regarding: the significance of the vecabrutinib data, the potential of vecabrutinib to improve the efficacy, use and tolerability of CAR T-cells therapies and improve the outlook for cancer patients , the potential for vecabrutinib to overcome shortcomings of other therapies, Viracta's plans to evaluate development options for vecabrutinib; and other statements that are not historical facts. Risks and uncertainties related to Viracta that may cause actual results to differ materially from those expressed or implied in any forward-looking statement include, but are not limited to: Viracta's ability to successfully enroll patients in and complete its ongoing and planned clinical trials; Viracta's plans to develop and commercialize its product candidates, including all oral combinations of nanatinostat and valganciclovir; the timing of initiation of Viracta's planned clinical trials; the timing of the availability of data from Viracta's clinical trials; previous preclinical and clinical results may not be predictive of future clinical results; the timing of any planned investigational new drug application or new drug application; Viracta's plans to research, develop and commercialize its current and future product candidates; the clinical utility, potential benefits and market acceptance of Viracta's product candidates; Viracta's ability to manufacture or supplying nanatinostat, valganciclovir and pembrolizumab for clinical testing; Viracta's ability to identify additional products or product candidates with significant commercial potential; developments and projections relating to Viracta's competitors and its industry; the impact of government laws and regulations; Viracta's ability to protect its intellectual property position; and Viracta's estimates regarding future expenses, capital requirements and need for additional financing in the future.

These risks and uncertainties may be amplified by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has caused significant economic uncertainty. If any of these risks materialize or underlying assumptions prove incorrect, actual results could differ materially from the results implied by these forward-looking statements. Additional risks and uncertainties that could cause actual outcomes and results to differ materially from those contemplated by the forward-looking statements are included under the caption "Risk Factors" and elsewhere in Viracta's reports and other documents that Viracta has filed, or will file, with the SEC from time to time and available at www.sec.gov.

The forward-looking statements included in this communication are made only as of the date hereof. Viracta assumes no obligation and does not intend to update these forward-looking statements, except as required by law or applicable regulation.

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