

Media Release

Embargoed to Wednesday, 10 November, 2010

Ovarian cancer drug shows promise with move to phase 3 trial

MELBOURNE: A new drug designed to arrest cancer cell growth by inhibiting blood vessel formation in ovarian cancer patients is being readied for a phase 3 trial in Australia, Canada and Europe.

The Clinical Oncological Society of Australia Annual Scientific Meeting will be told today (10/11) that AMG 386 offers benefits over existing treatments, extending survival in advanced ovarian cancer patients with fewer side-effects.

Associate Professor of Medicine at Monash University, Gary Richardson, will present updated data from phase 2 trials (first reported in June at the American Society of Clinical Oncology) showing that AMG 386 in combination with paclitaxel not only extends survival, but is well tolerated and reduces the risk of serious complications such as bowel perforation.

“Currently the prognosis for ovarian cancer patients is poor,” Professor Richardson said. “Over 75% of patients diagnosed with ovarian cancer present with advanced disease. Current treatments will cure only about a quarter of these patients.”

“The phase 2 trials show that AMG 386 combined with paclitaxel extends survival of heavily pre-treated patients by almost two thirds (4.6 to 7.2 months). In practical terms, this does not add significantly to survival time for terminal patients, but importantly indicates real potential as a first line treatment immediately following surgery.”

Professor Richardson said the treatment worked by inhibiting angiogenesis, the process by which new blood vessels grow from existing blood vessels. “By starving the cancer cells of blood supply, they will die in greater numbers. This form of therapy is complementary to current chemotherapy treatment as it uses a different mechanism to target the cancer.”

Professor Richardson said the phase 3 trial would commence by the end of this year and involve more than 1000 patients in Australia, Canada and western Europe.

Clinical Oncological Society of Australia President, Professor Bruce Mann, said clinicians had been frustrated by the lack of progress in treatment for ovarian cancer. “We don’t want to get ahead of ourselves, but novel approaches like this have the potential to make a real difference in patient survival from this devastating disease.”

[Professor Richardson will present at 11.40am today \(Nov 10\) at the Clinical Oncological Society of Australia Annual Scientific Meeting. Room 109, Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre.](#)

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