

XANTHUS

News Release

XANTHUS PRESENTS SYMADEX GENE EXPRESSION STUDY AT AACR

- Preclinical Study Hints at Potential for Multiple Sclerosis -

ANAHEIM, Calif. and CAMBRIDGE, Mass. – April 18, 2005 - Xanthus Life Sciences today announced the presentation of results from a preclinical study of the gene expression profile for its novel Phase 1 anti-cancer drug candidate, Symadex (formerly C-1311), at the 2005 American Association for Cancer Research (AACR) Annual Meeting. In the study, Symadex exerted a strong effect on the major classes of genes commonly targeted by oncology therapeutics that are cell cycle inhibitors. In addition, the expression profile uncovered gene activity suggesting that Symadex may be active in treating autoimmune disorders such as multiple sclerosis.

Details about the gene expression profile study for Symadex are included in AACR abstract number 55, titled, "Modification of Gene Expression in HT-29 and H-116 Colon Cell Lines Induced by Symadex – A Novel Anticancer Agent." Xanthus presented the abstract in a Poster Session on Sunday, April 17, at AACR which is being held through April 20, in Anaheim, California.

"In this gene expression study, Symadex exerted a profound effect on genes that regulate DNA repair, cell cycle and cell death," said Dr. Alfred Ajami, Xanthus' Chief Scientific Officer. "In addition, the results from this study demonstrated that Symadex down regulated certain groups of genes that affect immune cell signaling, trafficking and adhesion. This is an unexpected finding and we plan to further investigate Symadex' potential as a novel treatment for multiple sclerosis in addition to continuing our Phase 1 oncology studies."

About Symadex

Symadex (formerly C-1311) is a next-generation investigational anticancer drug that is part of the imidazoacridinone family that has shown a potentially novel, targeted mechanism of action in preclinical studies. Symadex is the result of deliberate chemical synthesis, based on the pre-existing anti-cancer product Novantrone® (mitoxantrone), with the intent to maintain efficacy while reducing specific toxicities such as cardiotoxicity and hematotoxicity. In previous preclinical studies Symadex was shown to be orally active in animals and to maintain its efficacy in various models of acquired resistance. Xanthus licensed intellectual property related to Symadex from BTG International, Ltd. Xanthus is currently examining daily and weekly dosing regimens for Symadex in two Phase 1 trials. The Company intends to develop Symadex in several tumor indications.

About Xanthus

Xanthus is an oncology drug development company. Xanthus' small molecule candidates are Xanafide, Symadex and Clomet which are advancing in clinical and preclinical development for multiple cancer indications. Each of these product candidates was in-licensed based on significant clinical and, or preclinical data supporting safety and activity. Xanthus also has proprietary technology to individualize patient dosing, which it believes may help improve the performance of certain drugs in development, and facilitate the life cycle management of certain marketed products, without limiting patient populations or markets.

Xanthus is headquartered in Cambridge, Massachusetts with an additional facility in Montreal, Quebec. More information is available at www.xanthus.com.

This press release contains forward-looking statements concerning Xanthus that involve a number of risks and uncertainties. For this purpose, any statements contained herein that are not statements of historical fact may be deemed to be forward-looking statements. Without

limiting the foregoing, the words, "believes," "anticipates," "plans," "expects," "estimates," "intends," "should," "could," "will," "may," and similar expressions are intended to identify forward-looking statements. There are a number of important factors that could cause Xanthus' actual results to differ materially from those indicated by such forward-looking statements, including risks as to whether results obtained early clinical studies or in preclinical studies such as the studies referred to above will be indicative of results obtained in future clinical trial or warrant additional trials; whether products based on Xanthus' technology will advance through the clinical trial process and receive approval from the United States Food and Drug Administration or equivalent foreign regulatory agencies; whether the company will have the cash resources to develop and commercialize its products; and whether the patent and patent applications owned or licensed by Xanthus will protect the Company's technology and prevent others from infringing it. Xanthus disclaims any intention or obligation to update any forward-looking statements

Note: Novantrone® is a registered trademark of Serono, Inc. and OSI Pharmaceuticals, Inc.

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