

Clinical trials for agent to treat methamphetamine addiction initiated.

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Full Text

2004 DEC 28 - (NewsRx.com & NewsRx.net) -- **Yaupon Therapeutics**, a specialty pharmaceutical company developing products for central nervous system disorders and cancer, has initiated a phase 1 trial for lobeline for the treatment of methamphetamine addiction.

The company also announced that it intends to begin phase 2/3 clinical trials of a new topical agent, Clearazide, for the treatment of cutaneous T-cell lymphoma.

Lobeline is derived from a natural product with a long history of safety in human use. In animal studies, it has been shown to be effective in treating methamphetamine addiction. In recent years, the wide availability and highly addictive nature of methamphetamine have led to a tripling in the number of abusers, with over a million Americans now addicted, and have resulted in tremendous social, economic and personal costs. Until now, there has been no effective treatment for methamphetamine addiction. Yaupon is conducting phase I studies of lobeline with the University of California at San Francisco, with funding from the National Institute of Drug Abuse.

Yaupon's progress in advancing lobeline into human studies was supported by an investment earlier this year from BioAdvance, the Biotechnology Greenhouse of Southeastern Pennsylvania. The Greenhouse Fund investment was specifically targeted at enabling Yaupon to hire critical clinical and regulatory personnel needed for the clinical program.

Clearazide, Yaupon's lead product candidate for cancer, is slated to enter pivotal clinical trials next year. Clearazide is a topical cytotoxic agent that has shown promise in early clinical trials in the treatment of cutaneous T-cell lymphoma, a difficult-to-treat skin cancer that afflicts 20,000 Americans. Clearazide has been designated an orphan drug by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for this condition.

Yaupon Therapeutics is a privately held specialty pharmaceutical company that develops small molecule pharmaceuticals licensed from academic laboratories. The company has 4 product candidates in development, with 1 in phase 2/3 studies, one in phase 1 studies and 2 compounds scheduled to enter human trials over the next 2 years.

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