

Novartis AG

One-Year Phase III Study Confirms Ilaris(R) Offers Long-Term Remission in Patients With CAPS, a Severe Lifelong Auto-Inflammatory Disease

03.06.2009 - 23:05 Uhr, Novartis AG

Basel, Switzerland (ots/PRNewswire) -

- Not for US Media
- New Ilaris Data in The New England Journal of Medicine Show Rapid Sustained Efficacy in Patients With Cryopyrin-Associated Periodic Syndrome (CAPS)(1)
- CAPS is a Debilitating Genetic Disorder With Potentially Fatal Complications and Limited Treatments Available(1),(2),(3)
- Ilaris Selectively Blocks Interleukin-1beta (IL-1beta), a Key Driver in Inflammation and Tissue Destruction - Therapy Being Investigated for Other Inflammatory Diseases(1),(3),(4)
- Regulatory Submissions Completed in Major Countries With Priority Review Granted in US, Switzerland and Australia

New results from a one-year Phase III study have confirmed that the investigational biological therapy Ilaris(R) (canakinumab, formerly ACZ885)[*] produced rapid and sustained remission of symptoms in the majority of children and adults with a rare and potentially life-threatening auto-inflammatory disease called cryopyrin-associated periodic syndrome (CAPS)(1),(2),(3).

The study showed that more than 90% of CAPS patients treated with Ilaris (28 out of 31) remained in remission at the end of the final four-month phase of the study(1). This finding supported interim data from earlier phases showing efficacy in 97-100% of patients(1),(5). The full results have now been published in The New England Journal of Medicine(1).

"This study represents an important step forward for the rare disease community, as canakinumab treats the underlying causes of CAPS rather than just the symptoms," said Helen J. Lachmann, MD of the UK National Amyloidosis Centre at the Royal Free and University College Medical School in London, UK. "In the study, patients experienced a benefit within hours after receiving a single dose of canakinumab and only needed further treatment every two months to control their symptoms. This may give canakinumab a significant advantage over current therapies in an area of unmet medical need."

CAPS includes a number of lifelong diseases associated with a gene mutation and characterized by the overproduction of interleukin 1-beta (IL-1beta), a protein (or cytokine) that has a pivotal role in driving inflammation and tissue destruction(1),(2),(6),(7). The clinical benefits of Ilaris, a fully human monoclonal antibody, are due to its selective and long-lasting blockade of IL-1beta(1),(6). By neutralizing IL-1beta for a sustained period, Ilaris switches off all symptoms of inflammation in CAPS, as demonstrated in new research published in The Journal of Experimental Medicine(1),(4),(6).

The success in treating CAPS led Ilaris to be investigated also in other rare diseases such as systemic juvenile idiopathic arthritis (SJIA), or more common ones such as some forms of gout, chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder (COPD), rheumatoid arthritis and type 2 diabetes(4),(6), (8),(9).

The Novartis research and development strategy for Ilaris involves using proof-of-concept studies which are small-scale Phase I clinical trials in genetically well-defined diseases to determine how genes interact in molecular or 'signaling' pathways(10). The resulting clinical and biomarker data are then subjected to state-of-the-art modeling and simulation to yield new insights into

the regulation of IL-1beta in patients(10).

"Ilaris is the outcome of our highly innovative approach to research and development that is designed to bring more and better targeted medicines to patients in the shortest possible time," said Trevor Mundel, MD, Head of Global Development at Novartis Pharma AG. "We are extremely excited about the efficacy shown by Ilaris in patients with CAPS, and we hope to be able to extend these benefits to many more patients with other inflammatory diseases which are more widespread, and often equally debilitating."

CAPS comprises three syndromes of increasing severity: familial cold auto-inflammatory syndrome (FCAS), Muckle-Wells syndrome (MWS) and neonatal-onset multisystem inflammatory disease (NOMID)(1),(2). Patients with CAPS experience debilitating fatigue, fever and chronic anemia from infancy(1),(2),(11). Inflammation can affect the skin, eyes and bones causing rashes, conjunctivitis and destructive arthritis(1),(2),(11). Other severe complications of CAPS include progressive hearing loss, visual and intellectual impairment, and amyloidosis, a condition in which the build-up of proteins can cause vital organs to fail(1),(2),(3),(11). About 25% of CAPS patients develop systemic amyloidosis resulting in renal failure, and usually in death within five to 10 years(3).

The Phase III clinical trial in CAPS was a multinational, randomized, double-blind and placebo-controlled study designed to assess the efficacy, safety and tolerability of Ilaris(1). The 48-week study involved 35 patients aged nine to 74 years old and was divided into three parts(1). First interim results were presented at the American Rheumatology College meeting in October 2008(5), while full one-year results are now published for the first time in The New England Journal of Medicine(1).

In the first part of the study lasting eight weeks, 35 patients received a single dose of Ilaris (150 mg by subcutaneous injection). All but one patient (97%) showed a rapid and complete response(1). After this, 31 patients who maintained their response proceeded to part two, a randomized 24-week, double-blind placebo-controlled phase. Patients were treated every eight weeks with either Ilaris or placebo and if a relapse occurred, they entered part three.

Part two of the study included the primary endpoint, a comparison between the number of patients treated every eight weeks with Ilaris who experienced disease relapse or 'flares' vs. those on placebo. Results showed that no patients in the Ilaris group experienced a disease flare compared to 13 out of 16 patients in the placebo group (0% vs. 81%, p

Originaltext:

Novartis AG

Medienmappe:

<http://www.presseportal.ch/de/pm/100006314/novartis-ag>

Medienmappe als RSS:

http://presseportal.de/rss/pm_100006314.rss2