



**News
Release**



Curie-Cancer and GamaMabs Pharma renew their research partnership to develop an antibody for gynecological cancers

Clinical trials are scheduled for 2015 to explore the value of the candidate drug 3C23K in relapsing ovarian cancer

Paris and Toulouse, France, December 16, 2014 - Curie-Cancer, the body responsible for developing Institut Curie's industry partnership activities, and GamaMabs Pharma, a company specialized in the development of monoclonal antibodies for cancer, today announce the extension of their partnership to develop the 3C23K antibody for the treatment of gynecological cancers.

An initial partnership agreement was concluded in 2013. The results of work on the 3C23K antibody were presented to the Ovarian Cancer Research Symposium in Seattle in September 2014. The partnership agreement has been renewed and extended in order to further examine the efficacy of this candidate drug for ovarian cancer.

Models of mice were grafted with human tumor samples from the operating theaters at the Institut Curie. In particular, the partners are exploring the value of 3C23K in relapses; a major challenge in the treatment of this disease.

Ovarian cancer is responsible for over 50,000 deaths a year in Europe and the US.

A new therapy for treating ovarian cancer

3C23K is a 'low-fucose' antibody that mobilizes tumor immune cells and targets the anti-Müllerian hormone receptor (AMHR2). The expression of this hormone is limited to adult ovaries (where it is expressed by the granulosa cells) and testicles (by the Leydig cells). AMHR2 is also expressed in the majority of gynecological cancers, such as ovarian and endometrial cancers, being detected in around 65% of cases.

The 3C23K antibody is in preclinical development. Initial clinical trials are expected to start in 2015, following a round of fundraising scheduled for the first half of the year.

“To confirm initial observations in cellular models in vitro, we needed to have access to animal models that were highly representative of cancer in humans and to the expertise of researchers with first-rate knowledge of metastatic processes,” said Jean-François Prost, co-founder and scientific director of GamaMabs Pharma. “Damien Salauze, director of Curie-Cancer, whom I have known for a long time, persuaded me of the value of a collaboration, given the Institut Curie’s large collection of mice with patient-derived tumor xenografts taken as samples in the operating theater (PDX models). These are highly representative of the tumors seen in humans. The Institut Curie also allows us to combine these models with the development of tools for detecting AMHR2 in patient biopsies. This allows us to work closely with the biology of ovarian cancers.”

Didier Decaudin, principal investigator for this collaboration and manager of the Institut Curie’s preclinical investigation laboratory, said: “The promising results on different ovarian cancer subtypes in these PDX models confirm the potential of 3C23K.”

Curie-Cancer alongside GamaMabs Pharma

“In Curie-Cancer, we found all the expertise and support that we needed to roll out our strategy,” said Stéphane Degove, CEO and co-founder of GamaMabs Pharma. “As an innovative company, it is most important for us to be able to call on a major, internationally recognized center like the Institut Curie. We connect with researchers and doctors and tap into expertise that complements ours, to access their knowledge of biology and cancer treatment. This collaborative work helps us to consolidate our strategic vision and develop our products.”

Leading academic research institutes like the Institut Curie have developed numerous technology platforms to support their own work. These platforms are the result of investments (part-financed by the French government) that make it possible to conduct research programs in conjunction with industry, for the benefit of patients.

“Beyond the prospect of being able to move quickly to provide our patients with an additional therapeutic solution, we are delighted that we can support a French SME in its plans for growth,” said Damien Salauze, director of Curie-Cancer. “Once again the expertise developed at the Institut Curie also meets the stated requirements of our industry partners. This is illustrated by our Carnot label, which we were awarded in 2011 in recognition of our commitment to providing them with practical solutions.”

About Curie-Cancer

Curie-Cancer is the body responsible for developing Institut Curie’s industry partnership activities. It oversees the institute’s existing industry partnerships as well as areas of great potential interest to industry partners. Institut Curie’s 1,200 researchers provide the high level of expertise in oncology required to collaborate with industry partners in creating and subsequently developing cancer therapies.

Curie-Cancer management has extensive industry experience and can call upon a vast pool of scientists involved in basic and clinical research. In 2011, Curie-Cancer was awarded the ‘Institut Carnot’ label by the French government, which recognizes excellence and involvement in research partnerships.

About Institut Curie

Institut Curie is a private foundation founded in 1909 by Marie Curie, the first woman Nobel prize-winner and the first double Nobel prize-winner. It is the leading comprehensive cancer center (combining research and patient care) in Europe. Institut Curie's research center and hospital employ some 3,200 scientists, physicians, nurses, technicians and administrative staff. The institute's current objectives include increasing the proportion of research programs carried out in partnership with industry so that research results can lead to faster availability of products and services for the benefit of patients.

<http://www.curie.fr/en>

About GamaMabs Pharma

GamaMabs Pharma is a French biotechnology company developing innovative monoclonal antibodies in cancer. GamaMabs' lead project is the monoclonal antibody (mAb) 3C23K, currently in advanced pre-clinical stage, which targets Anti-Mullerian Human Receptor 2 (AMHRII/MISIR) in ovarian cancer. Ovarian cancer is responsible for over 50,000 deaths every year in Europe and the United States. The company develops low-fucose antibodies with increased activity through the activation of immune system cells.

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