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Promising New Agents

**Drug Name: Atezolizumab**
*Manufacturer: Genentech*
*Indication: mUC*
*Formulation: Intravenous infusion*

Atezolizumab is a monoclonal antibody that inhibits the programmed death ligand-1 (PD-L1), resulting in the activation of thymus (T)-cells against tumor cells. Atezolizumab is currently being investigated for the treatment of patients with locally advanced or metastatic urothelial carcinoma (mUC) whose disease progressed during or after standard treatments.

In the open-label, single-arm Phase II IMvigor 210 trial (N=310), patients with locally advanced or mUC, with or without PD-L1 expression, and whose disease progressed during or after previous treatment with a platinum-based regimen, received atezolizumab 1,200 mg intravenous (IV) once every three weeks until loss of clinical benefit. After a median follow-up of 11.7 months, the median overall survival (OS) was 11.4 months in patients with higher PD-L1 expression (95 percent CI 9.0 to not estimable) and 7.9 months in the overall study population (95 percent CI 6.6 to 9.3). Additionally, 15 percent of patients in the overall study group and 26 percent of patients with medium or high PD-L1 expression achieved a reduction in tumor burden (95 percent CI 11 to 19 and 95 percent CI 18 to 36, respectively). The median duration of response was not reached, with 84 percent of patients experiencing an ongoing response at follow-up.

If approved, atezolizumab may offer a novel approach to the treatment of locally advanced or mUC. This agent is also being evaluated for use in kidney, breast, and lung cancer. Atezolizumab was granted Priority Review status with a Prescription Drug User Fee Act (PDUFA) date of Sep. 12, 2016.

**Drug Name: Ocrelizumab**
*Manufacturer: Genentech*
*Indication: RRMS and PPMS*
*Formulation: Intravenous infusion*

Ocrelizumab is an investigational, humanized monoclonal antibody designed to selectively target CD20-positive B cells, which are key contributors to myelin and axonal damage in patients with multiple sclerosis. Ocrelizumab is being studied for the treatment of relapsing-remitting multiple sclerosis (RRMS) and primary progressive multiple sclerosis (PPMS).

Ocrelizumab was evaluated in three Phase III randomized, double-blind studies, including OPERA I and OPERA II in RRMS, and ORATORIO in PPMS. In OPERA I and OPERA II (N=1,656), treatment with ocrelizumab resulted in 46 and 47 percent reductions in annualized relapse rate, respectively, compared to treatment with Rebif® (interferon β-1a) over two years (P<0.0001 for both). In ORATORIO (N=732), treatment with ocrelizumab reduced the risk of clinical disability progression by 24 percent, sustained for at least 12 weeks, as measured by the Expanded Disability Status Scale, compared to placebo over two years (P=0.0321). Treatment with ocrelizumab also resulted in a statistically significant reduction in the risk of clinical disability progression by 25 percent for at least 24 weeks, time to walk 25 feet by 29 percent, volume of hyperintense T2 lesions by 3.4 percent, and rate of whole brain volume loss by 17.5 percent compared to placebo over 120 weeks.

If approved, ocrelizumab may offer the first treatment option for PPMS and an additional treatment option for RRMS. A Biologics License Application (BLA) submission is planned for 2016.
Promising New Agents

**Drug Name:** Pimavanserin  
**Manufacturer:** Acadia  
**Indication:** PDP  
**Formulation:** Oral tablet

Nuplazid™ (pimavanserin), a selective 5-HT₂₄ inverse agonist, is being investigated for the treatment of Parkinson’s disease psychosis (PDP). The Phase III -020 Study (N=185) investigated treatment with pimavanserin 40 mg daily compared to placebo. Pimavanserin recipients experienced a greater decrease in Parkinson’s disease-adapted Scale for Assessment of Positive Symptoms Scores compared to placebo (-5.79 and -2.73, respectively, 95 percent CI -4.91 to -1.20, P=0.001). A greater improvement in psychosis from baseline was reported with pimavanserin compared to placebo (37 versus 14 percent, respectively, P=0.0006). Treatment with pimavanserin resulted in greater improvements in the Clinical Global Impression-Severity and Improvement scores compared to placebo (-0.58 and -0.67, P=0.0007 and P=0.0011, respectively). In addition, caregivers of subjects in the pimavanserin group reported a significant improvement in sleep and daytime wakefulness compared to placebo.

If approved, pimavanserin may provide the first Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-approved treatment option for PDP. On March 29, 2016, an FDA Advisory Committee voted 12 to 2 that the benefits of treatment with pimavanserin outweighed the risks; however, they did not formally make a recommendation for or against approval. Pimavanserin was granted the Breakthrough Therapy designation and Priority Review status with a PDUFA date of May 1, 2016.

**Drug Name:** Plecanatide  
**Manufacturer:** Synergy  
**Indication:** CIC  
**Formulation:** Oral tablet

Plecanatide is a uroguanylin analog that stimulates guanylate cyclase-c, thereby increasing fluid movement. This agent is being studied for the treatment of chronic idiopathic constipation (CIC) and irritable bowel syndrome with constipation.

The safety and efficacy of plecanatide were evaluated in two Phase III clinical trials (N=2,683) which compared plecanatide 3 mg or 6 mg to placebo for the treatment of CIC. The primary and secondary endpoints for both studies were durable overall response and stool consistency.

In the first study, the primary endpoint of durable overall response was achieved by 21.0 and 19.5 percent of plecanatide 3 mg and 6 mg recipients, respectively, compared to 10.2 percent with placebo (P<0.001 for both). The average increases in Bristol Stool Form Scale (BSFS) scores were 1.53 and 1.52 for the plecanatide 3 mg and 6 mg recipients, respectively, compared to 0.77 with placebo (P<0.001 for both).

In the second study, durable overall response was achieved by 20.1 and 20.0 percent of plecanatide 3 mg and 6 mg recipients, respectively, compared to 12.8 percent with placebo (P=0.004 for both). The average increases in BSFS were 1.49 and 1.50 for the plecanatide 3 mg and 6 mg recipients, respectively, compared to 0.87 with placebo (P<0.001 for both).

If approved, this agent may provide an additional treatment option for CIC with an improved tolerability profile compared to other available agents. An NDA was submitted in January 2016.

**Drug Name:** Romosozumab  
**Manufacturer:** Amgen and UCB  
**Indication:** Osteoporosis  
**Formulation:** Subcutaneous injection

Romosozumab is a monoclonal antibody that is being studied for the treatment of osteoporosis. Romosozumab inhibits sclerostin, thereby increasing bone formation and decreasing bone breakdown.

The randomized, open-label Phase III STRUCTURE trial (N=436) compared the safety and efficacy of romosozumab to Forteo® (teriparatide) in postmenopausal women who were previously treated with bisphosphonates. Monthly treatment with romosozumab 210 mg resulted in a greater average change in hip bone mineral density over 12 months compared to daily Forteo® (teriparatide) 20 mcg injections. The incidence of adverse events was similar between groups, with the most common adverse events in the romosozumab group being nasopharyngitis, arthralgia, back pain, headache, and falls.

The randomized, double-blind, parallel-group Phase III FRAME study (N=7,180) evaluated treatment with romosozumab for reducing the risk of new vertebral fractures in postmenopausal women with osteoporosis over 12 and 24 months compared to placebo, followed by open-label treatment with Prolia® (denosumab) in both groups. Monthly treatment with romosozumab resulted in a statistically significant 73 percent reduction in relative risk for vertebral fracture through 12 months compared to placebo, and the effect was sustained through 24 months during the open-label Prolia® (denosumab) phase (75 percent reduction).

If approved, romosozumab could provide a novel monthly treatment option for women at high risk of fractures. A BLA submission is planned for 2016.
Promising New Agents

**Drug Name: Sarilumab**
Manufacturer: Regeneron and Sanofi
Indication: Moderate-to-severe RA
Formulation: Subcutaneous injection

Sarilumab is a fully human monoclonal antibody that works by inhibiting the interleukin-6 receptor. It is currently being studied for the treatment of moderate-to-severe rheumatoid arthritis (RA).

The Phase III SARIL-RA-TARGET trial (N=546) compared treatment with sarilumab 200 mg or 150 mg every two weeks to placebo, in combination with conventional disease-modifying anti-rheumatic drug therapy, in patients who had an inadequate response or intolerance to tumor necrosis factor (TNF)-α inhibitors. Both sarilumab groups experienced improvement in physical function, as measured by mean change from baseline in Health Assessment Questionnaire-Disability Index at week 12 (P=0.0004 and P=0.0007, respectively) and signs and symptoms of RA, as measured by the proportion of patients achieving a 20 percent improvement in the American College of Rheumatology score at week 24 compared to placebo (P<0.0001 for both).

**Drug Name: Sofosbuvir/velpatasvir**
Manufacturer: Gilead Sciences
Indication: HCV infection
Formulation: Oral tablet

Sofosbuvir/velpatasvir is a fixed-dose combination of Sovaldi® (sofosbuvir), a nucleotide analog nonstructural protein 5B (NS5B) polymerase inhibitor, and velpatasvir, an investigational pan-genotypic nonstructural protein 5A (NS5A) inhibitor. This agent is currently being studied for the treatment of genotype 1 through 6 chronic hepatitis C virus (HCV) infection.

The randomized, double-blind Phase III ASTRAL-1 study (N=624) compared sofosbuvir 400 mg/velpatasvir 100 mg once daily for 12 weeks to placebo in patients with HCV genotypes 1a, 1b, 2, 4, 5, or 6. The prevalence of these genotypes among patients receiving active treatment was 34, 19, 17, 19, 6, and 7 percent, respectively.

Of the active treatment recipients (N=624), 68 percent were treatment-naïve and 19 percent had compensated cirrhosis. Sustained virologic response at 12 weeks post-treatment (SVR12) was achieved in 99 percent of patients overall and ranged from 97 to 100 percent, depending on genotype (95 percent CI 98 to >99). In two additional Phase III studies, ASTRAL-2 and ASTRAL-3, treatment with this regimen in HCV genotype 2 and 3 infection resulted in SVR12 rates of 99 and 95 percent, respectively.

The once-daily interferon- and ribavirin-free regimen of sofosbuvir/velpatasvir offers high cure rates in all six HCV genotypes which is an advantage over currently available regimens. The FDA granted the Breakthrough Therapy designation to this agent for the treatment of HCV and an FDA decision is expected by June 28, 2016.

**Drug Name: Venetoclax**
Manufacturer: Genentech and AbbVie
Indication: Relapsed/refractory CLL
Formulation: Oral tablet

Venetoclax, an oral B-cell lymphoma-2 inhibitor, is currently being investigated for the treatment of various cancer types, including chronic lymphocytic leukemia (CLL) and acute myeloid leukemia.

The pivotal Phase II, open-label, single arm M13-982 study (N=107) met its primary endpoint of overall response rate (ORR) by demonstrating a clinically meaningful reduction in the number of cancer cells in 79.4 percent of patients with relapsed or refractory CLL with the 17p (petit arm of chromosome 17) deletion who received treatment with venetoclax.

The one-year progression-free survival (PFS), OS, and complete response rates were 72.0, 86.7, and 7.5 percent, respectively. The most common serious adverse events were fever, low red blood cell count, pneumonia, and low white blood cell count with fever. The study also included a safety expansion cohort (N=50), the results of which demonstrated that the safety of venetoclax was similar to what was observed in previous studies.

The FDA granted venetoclax the Breakthrough Therapy designation for the treatment of relapsed or refractory CLL in patients with the 17p deletion and Priority Review status for the treatment of CLL in patients who have received at least one prior therapy, including those with the 17p deletion.

If approved, venetoclax may provide a novel treatment option for relapsed or refractory cases of CLL with the 17p deletion. This agent is also being studied in combination with anti-CD20 monoclonal antibodies. An FDA decision is expected in the first half of 2016.
Gilotrif® (afatinib)
The Phase III, open-label LUX-Lung 8 trial (N=795) compared treatment with afatinib 40 mg daily to erlotinib 150 mg daily in adults with stage IIIB or IV squamous cell carcinoma of the lung who progressed following at least four cycles of platinum-based chemotherapy. Patients treated with afatinib achieved an OS of 7.9 months compared to 6.8 months with erlotinib (HR 0.81, 95 percent CI 0.69 to 0.95, P=0.0077) and a PFS of 2.6 months compared to 1.9 months, respectively (HR 0.81, 95 percent CI 0.69 to 0.96, P=0.0103). An FDA decision is expected in the first half of 2016.

Stelara® (ustekinumab)
The Phase III UNITI-2 trial (N=628) compared treatment with ustekinumab 130 mg or 6 mg/kg IV to placebo in adults with moderately-to-severely active Crohn’s disease who had previously failed or were intolerant to corticosteroids or immunomodulators. At week six, clinical response was achieved by 51.7, 55.5, and 28.7 percent of patients in the ustekinumab 130 mg, 6 mg/kg, and placebo groups, respectively (P<0.001). At week eight, clinical remission was achieved by 30.6, 40.2, and 19.6 percent of patients in the ustekinumab 130 mg, 6 mg/kg, and placebo groups, respectively (P<0.009). An FDA decision is expected in the second half of 2016.
Additional Promising New Agents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drug Name</th>
<th>Manufacturer</th>
<th>Indication</th>
<th>Product Timeline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deutetrabenzine</td>
<td>Teva Pharmaceutical Industries</td>
<td>Chorea associated with Huntington disease</td>
<td>PDUFA date 5/2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obeticholic acid</td>
<td>Intercept Pharmaceuticals</td>
<td>Primary biliary cholangitis</td>
<td>PDUFA date 5/29/2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBRIA™ (calcitonin-salmon [rDNA origin])</td>
<td>Tarsa Therapeutics, Inc.</td>
<td>Postmenopausal osteoporosis</td>
<td>PDUFA date 5/30/2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lixisenatide (SC)</td>
<td>Sanofi</td>
<td>Type 2 diabetes mellitus</td>
<td>PDUFA date 7/2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bezloctomuzum (IV)*</td>
<td>Merck</td>
<td>Prevention of C. diff recurrence</td>
<td>PDUFA date 7/23/2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andexanet alfa (IV)</td>
<td>Portola Pharmaceuticals</td>
<td>Factor Xa inhibitor antidote</td>
<td>PDUFA date 8/17/2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>ABP 501 (adalimumab biosimilar) (SC)*</td>
<td>Amgen</td>
<td>Plaque psoriasis, rheumatoid arthritis</td>
<td>BsUFA date 9/25/2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brodalumab (SC)*</td>
<td>AstraZeneca</td>
<td>Plaque psoriasis</td>
<td>PDUFA date 11/16/2016</td>
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<td>Baricitinib*</td>
<td>Eli Lilly, Incyte Corporation</td>
<td>Rheumatoid arthritis</td>
<td>NDA submitted 1/2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valbenazine</td>
<td>Neurocrine</td>
<td>Tardive dyskinesia</td>
<td>NDA submission expected in 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Binimetinib*</td>
<td>Array BioPharma</td>
<td>NRAS-mutant melanoma</td>
<td>NDA submission expected in 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADS-5102</td>
<td>Adamas Pharmaceuticals, Inc.</td>
<td>Levodopa-induced dyskinesia in Parkinson’s disease</td>
<td>NDA submission expected in 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elagolix</td>
<td>Neurocrine, AbbVie</td>
<td>Endometriosis</td>
<td>NDA submission expected in 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITI-007</td>
<td>Intra-Cellular Therapies, Inc.</td>
<td>Schizophrenia</td>
<td>NDA submission expected in 2017</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table Abbreviations: BLA = Biologics License Application, BsUFA = Biosimilar User Fee Act, C. diff = Clostridium difficile, IV = Intravenous, NDA = New Drug Application, PDUFA = Prescription Drug User Fee Act, rDNA = Ribosomal deoxyribonucleic acid, SC = Subcutaneous

Note: All agents are administered orally unless otherwise indicated. *Designates specialty drug.
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