



For Immediate Release

OncoMed Pharmaceuticals, Inc. Granted Fundamental Patent For Isolation And Use Of Solid Tumor Stem Cells

MOUNTAIN VIEW, Calif., Jan. 10 /PRNewswire/ -- OncoMed Pharmaceuticals, pioneering the development of novel therapeutics that target "cancer stem cells," today announced that the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office has issued U.S. Patent # 6,984,522 titled "Isolation and Use of Solid Tumor Stem Cells." The patent covers the isolation of solid tumor stem cells from solid tumors, such as breast, pancreas, lung and colon cancers. Solid tumor stem cells, or "cancer stem cells," are a small subset of cells in solid tumors that have the capacity to self renew and which are believed to drive tumor growth, disease recurrence after treatment, and to mediate the ability of cancer to spread to other tissues. The ability to isolate cancer stem cells will enable researchers to better understand the role of these cells in tumor growth and metastases and to discover a new generation of therapeutics that target cancer stem cells.

"This patent reflects the broad applicability of and value in our method to isolate cancer stem cells for study," commented Michael F. Clarke, MD, inventor on this patent, an OncoMed founder and Karel and Avice Beekhuis Professor in Cancer Biology at Stanford University. "Researchers have made tremendous strides in understanding cancer, developing new chemotherapeutic agents and extending the lives of cancer patients during the past four decades, however, mortality rates due to cancer recurrence continue to hold steady. We believe that cancer stem cells for solid tumors are at the core of this disease."

The patent, exclusively licensed to OncoMed, is based on the research of Drs. Michael Clarke, Muhammad Al-Hajj, Sean Morrison and Max Wicha at the University of Michigan School of Medicine. In 1998, pioneering research by Dr. Clarke and his collaborators resulted in the discovery that solid tumor stem cells are uniquely able to self-renew and drive tumorigenesis as well as to differentiate into diverse populations of non-tumorigenic cancer cells. Cancer stem cells are now recognized to possess the indefinite proliferative potential fundamental to the formation and growth of tumors.

"We are pleased to have received our first issued patent which covers the methods for isolating solid tumor stem cells and using those cells to identify new cancer therapeutics. We believe that elucidating the role of cancer stem cells in the initiation and metastasis of solid tumors represents an important frontier in cancer research and

drug development," said Paul Hastings, OncoMed's President and Chief Executive Officer. "Using that novel technology, OncoMed is focused on identifying and developing innovative anti- cancer therapeutics. We are also committed to collaborating with academic and institutional researchers working in this area, as well as with those in industry, developing products utilizing this compelling new approach in cancer research."

About OncoMed Pharmaceuticals

OncoMed Pharmaceuticals is discovering and developing monoclonal antibodies and small molecules targeting "cancer stem cells", a recently discovered type of cell believed to seed the growth of cancers and underlie cancer's ability to metastasize. The company has established a library of antibodies capable of binding to the cell surface proteins expressed on cancer stem cells and has identified small molecules capable of inhibiting cancer stem cell growth. In its brief history, the company has become a leader in the research of cancer stem cells and the identification of novel targets on the cancer stem cell.

OncoMed is funded by leading venture capital firms, including Laterell Venture Partners, US Venture Partners, Morgenthaler Ventures and the Vertical Group. Information can also be found at the company's website www.oncomed.com.

OncoMed Pharmaceuticals

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