



Conatus Pharmaceuticals' IDN-7314 Pan-caspase Inhibitor Reduces Hepatic Tissue Factor-Driven Coagulation In Vitro and In Vivo

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SAN DIEGO, April 18, 2018 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Conatus Pharmaceuticals Inc. (Nasdaq:CNAT), a biotechnology company focused on the development and commercialization of novel medicines to treat liver disease, today announced the publication¹ of results from both *in vitro* and *in vivo* studies of its pan-caspase inhibitor, IDN-7314, demonstrating reductions of hepatic tissue factor-driven coagulation.

Patients with liver cirrhosis can suffer caspase-driven complications of both excessive bleeding and excessive clotting. The current studies suggest that a pan-caspase inhibitor may have the potential to reduce excessive clotting in patients with severe liver disease.

The studies were conducted under the sponsorship of Conatus in collaboration with the Department of Pathobiology & Diagnostic Investigation and the Institute for Integrative Toxicology at Michigan State University. "We were intrigued to learn that caspase inhibition, by preventing apoptosis-associated release of hepatocyte tissue factor, may reduce the risk of thrombosis in patients with cirrhosis," said Al Spada, Ph.D., Executive Vice President of Research and Development, Chief Scientific Officer and co-founder of Conatus, and a co-author on the publication. "These data encourage further study to evaluate the potentially normalizing hematological effects of caspase inhibition in the context of severe liver disease."

Both the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the European Medicines Agency (EMA) have granted Orphan Drug Designation to IDN-7314 for the treatment of primary sclerosing cholangitis (PSC), a disease affecting bile ducts in the liver which can lead to cirrhosis and liver failure. IDN-7314 is an orally active pan-caspase protease inhibitor designed to reduce the activity of enzymes that mediate inflammation and cell death (apoptosis), which has demonstrated reduction of relevant biomarkers in two preclinical models of PSC. Conatus is evaluating the potential of IDN-7314 as a treatment for PSC.

About Conatus Pharmaceuticals

Conatus is a biotechnology company focused on the development of novel medicines to treat liver disease. In collaboration with Novartis, Conatus is developing its lead compound, emricasan, for the treatment of patients with chronic liver disease. Emricasan is a first-in-class, orally active pan-caspase inhibitor designed to reduce the activity of enzymes that mediate inflammation and apoptosis. Conatus believes that by reducing the activity of these enzymes, caspase inhibitors have the potential to interrupt the progression of a variety of diseases. For additional information, please visit www.conatuspharma.com.

Forward-Looking Statements

This press release contains forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended. All statements other than statements of historical facts contained in this press release are forward-looking statements, including statements regarding: the preclinical data encouraging further evaluation of caspase inhibition in liver disease; the potential for IDN-7314 as a treatment for PSC; and caspase inhibitors' potential to interrupt the progression of a variety of diseases. In some cases, you can identify forward-looking statements by terms such as "may," "will," "should," "expect," "plan," "anticipate," "could," "intend," "target," "project," "contemplates," "believes," "estimates," "predicts," "potential" or "continue" or the negative of these terms or other similar expressions. These forward-looking statements speak only as of the date of this press release and are subject to a number of risks, uncertainties and assumptions, including those risks described in the company's prior press releases and in the periodic reports it files with the Securities and Exchange Commission. The events and circumstances reflected in the company's forward-looking statements may not be achieved or occur and actual results could differ materially from those projected in the forward-looking statements. Except as required by applicable law, the company does not plan to publicly update or revise any forward-looking statements contained herein, whether as a result of any new information, future events, changed circumstances or otherwise.

¹Kopec A, et al. Caspase Inhibition Reduces Hepatic Tissue Factor-Driven Coagulation In Vitro and In Vivo. *Toxicol Sci.* 162:2, 396-405. 1 April 2018.
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