



## Encouraging results for Desmoteplase in stroke in a second phase II trial

**New Orleans – 4. February, 2005** – PAION, Aachen, Germany, and its U.S. partner Forest Laboratories, New York, today presented at the 30<sup>th</sup> International Stroke Conference in New Orleans, Louisiana, the data of a second Phase II acute stroke trial, DEDAS, involving Desmoteplase, a drug that dissolves blood clots, sponsored by PAION. The analysis of this multi-centre trial confirms the positive results for the most effective dosage (125 µg/kg) of PAION's previous Phase II stroke trial, DIAS. Desmoteplase was tested to restore blood flow and improve patient outcome for patients suffering from acute ischaemic stroke, in which a brain artery is blocked by a blood clot, in the time window up to nine hours after the onset of symptoms. Furthermore, the favourable safety profile demonstrated in the DIAS trial was confirmed.

In the DEDAS trial, two dosages of Desmoteplase were investigated based on positive results in the DIAS trial: 90 µg/kg and 125 µg/kg.

Detailed results from the DEDAS trial that were presented for the first time at the stroke conference indicate:

- **Dose-dependent improved blood flow and patient outcome**

The 125 µg/kg dosage demonstrated that Desmoteplase improved the blood flow in the damaged area of stroke patients' brains and prevented the expansion of the affected brain area. Similarly, it improved clinical outcome for patients at 90 days after treatment with a combined endpoint consisting of the NIH Stroke Scale (NIHSS), modified Rankin Scale (mRS) and Barthel Index (BI). The pre-defined clinical endpoint which required a marked functional improvement for the patient at 90 days after treatment, was achieved in 60% of patients treated with 125 µg/kg Desmoteplase, compared with 25% of patients who received placebo. These results of the 125 µg/kg dose were consistent with the previously achieved results in the DIAS Phase II trial.

The second dosage of 90 µg/kg showed a lower percentage of patients who achieved the clinical endpoint. Specifically, 28.6% of patients receiving this dosage reached the clinical endpoint, which was lower than in the previous trial. PAION believes that this is because the study inclusion criteria were not adhered to with respect to a number of patients.

- **Safety in the late time window**

A known serious side effect of "clot busting" drugs is intra-cranial haemorrhage (ICH) resulting in clinical deterioration of the patient (symptomatic ICH). None of the patients in the DEDAS trial experienced such a symptomatic haemorrhage.

Anthony Furlan, MD, Medical Director, Cleveland Clinic Foundation and principal investigator of the DEDAS trial states: *"Preserving brain function and restoring quality of life in patients after acute ischemic stroke is the goal of effective stroke treatment. The consistent results from two completed studies of Desmoteplase in patients with acute stroke strongly support moving forward to further assess this potential breakthrough treatment in a large scale worldwide trial."*

### **The DEDAS Trial**

The "DEDAS" (Dose Escalation trial of Desmoteplase in Acute ischaemic Stroke) was a multicentre, randomised, placebo-controlled, dose escalation Phase II clinical trial. 38 patients were recruited at 13 hospitals in the United States and 3 hospitals in Europe. Patients were included in the time window between three and nine hours after the onset of stroke symptoms. Another trial with a similar design, DIAS (Desmoteplase In Acute ischaemic Stroke), was completed in 2003, and its results were published in the scientific journal "Stroke" in January 2005. In both trials magnetic resonance imaging, or MRI, was used to identify patients with penumbra (viable but insufficiently perfused tissue) who have the potential to benefit most from reperfusion therapy (restoration of blood flow) with Desmoteplase.

A randomised late phase clinical trial to investigate Desmoteplase in a larger number of patients is in preparation and is expected to start in Q1/2005. In this trial, perfusion computer tomography, or CT, will also be allowed as a diagnostic tool for the identification of patients who may benefit from reperfusion therapy with Desmoteplase.

### **About Stroke**

Stroke is the third leading cause of death in the industrialised world after heart disease and cancer. The treatment of acute stroke and related serious long-term disabilities currently represent a substantial unmet medical need. The only drug currently approved for the treatment of acute ischaemic stroke must be administered within three hours after the onset of stroke symptoms, which limits the potential patient population that can safely benefit from the rapid dissolution of the blood clot and the restoration of blood supply to the affected area of the brain.

### **About PAION**

PAION, a development stage biopharmaceutical company based in Aachen, Germany, aims to become a leader in developing and commercialising innovative drugs for the treatment of stroke and other thrombotic diseases for which there is a substantial unmet medical need. PAION intends to build an integrated portfolio of drugs by exploiting its core expertise in identifying compounds with potential in the treatment of stroke and other thrombotic diseases, licensing or otherwise acquiring these compounds and advancing them through the clinical development and regulatory approval process. PAION's most advanced drug candidate, Desmoteplase, has received fast-track designation from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for the indication acute ischemic stroke. PAION currently employs approximately 55 people and has raised approximately € 51 million in four financing rounds since its foundation in 2000. More information is available at [www.paion.de](http://www.paion.de).

### **About Forest**

Forest Laboratories develops, manufactures and markets pharmaceutical products principally in the United States and Europe. Forest's primary therapeutic markets include treatment of central nervous system disorders, hypertension and pulmonary disorders. Forest Laboratories' growing line of products includes among others: Lexapro®, an SSRI antidepressant; Celexa®, an antidepressant; Namenda®, an N-methyl-D-aspartate (NMDA)-receptor antagonist indicated for the treatment of moderate to severe Alzheimer's disease and Tiazac®, a once-daily diltiazem, indicated for the treatment of angina and hypertension. More information is available at [www.frx.com](http://www.frx.com).

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