

Hepatitis C Caring Ambassadors Program Newsletter

March 2007

IN THE NEWS

US Court of Appeals Reinstates Permanent Injunction Against Abbott Laboratories for Infringing Innogenetics' Patent

<http://sev.prnewswire.com/health-care-hospitals/20070309/CLF04409032007-1.html>

“Innogenetics announced that yesterday the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit made its first substantive ruling in Abbott's appeal of a trial court's judgment and injunction in favor of Innogenetics. The court denied Abbott Laboratories' motion for a stay of injunction pending appeal.”

Hospital Seeks Patients of Surgeon with Hepatitis C

<http://calsun.canoe.ca/News/National/2007/03/09/3719879-sun.html>

[Canada] “Island health officials are contacting hundreds of former patients of a general surgeon now that tests have confirmed the doctor has hepatitis C. Dr. David Ashby is well with no symptoms, Dr. Lamont Sweet, chief health officer for the Department of Health, said yesterday.”

Key Protein - Claudin-1- for Hepatitis C Virus Entry Identified

<http://www.news-medical.net/?id=22248>

“For as many as 200 million people worldwide infected with hepatitis C, a leading cause of chronic liver disease, treatment options are only partially effective. But new research by Rockefeller University scientists points to a potential new target for better drugs: a key protein that resides in human liver cells that hepatitis C requires for entry.”

Idenix Announces Thirteen Data Presentations at the 2007 European Association For the Study of the Liver

<http://www.prnewswire.com/cgi-bin/stories.pl?ACCT=104&STORY=/www/story/03-01-2007/0004537539&EDATE=>

“Idenix Pharmaceuticals, Inc., a biopharmaceutical company engaged in the discovery, development and commercialization of drugs for the treatment of human viral and other infectious diseases, announced today that 13 abstracts have been accepted for presentation at the 42nd annual meeting of the European Association for the Study of the Liver (EASL), to be held in Barcelona, Spain, April 11-15, 2007.”

Pharmasset Initiates Multiple Ascending Dose Study of R7128 in Patients Chronically Infected with HCV Genotype 1

Pharmasset initiated the multiple ascending dose portion of an on-going Phase 1 clinical trial evaluating R7128 in up to 40 patients chronically infected with hepatitis C virus (HCV) genotype 1.

<http://www.pipelinereview.com/joomla/content/view/10137/109/>

“Pharmasset initiated the multiple ascending dose portion of an on-going Phase 1 clinical trial evaluating R7128 in up to 40 patients chronically infected with hepatitis C virus (HCV) genotype 1. The primary objective of this part of the study, being conducted in collaboration with Roche, is to assess the safety, tolerability and pharmacokinetics of multiple doses of R7128 after once-daily or twice-daily dosing for 14 days.”

New Culture System Leads to Anti-Viral Treatments for Hepatitis C

http://www.innovations-report.de/html/berichte/biowissenschaften_chemie/bericht-79830.html

“A new way of growing viruses in the laboratory developed by Japanese researchers could spell hope for the 170 million people infected with hepatitis C, only half of whom currently respond to drug treatments, scientists announced today (Tuesday 27 March 2007) at the Society for General Microbiology's 160th Meeting at the University of Manchester, UK, which will run from 26 – 29 March 2007.”

Human Genome Sciences Initiates Phase 3 Clinical Trial of Albuferon With Ribavirin in Treatment-Naive Patients With Chronic Hepatitis C Genotypes 2 and 3 - Enrollment of Both Phase 3 Trials of Albuferon to be Completed in 2007

<http://www.pharmalive.com/News/index.cfm?articleid=419101&categoryid=21>

“Human Genome Sciences, Inc. today announced that it has initiated dosing in ACHIEVE 2/3, a Phase 3 clinical trial of Albuferon(R) (albinterferon alfa-2b) in combination with ribavirin in treatment-naive patients with chronic hepatitis C genotypes 2 and 3. ACHIEVE 2/3 is the second of two pivotal Phase 3 trials of Albuferon that HGS is conducting, with the goal of filing global marketing applications in 2009.”

IND Filing for Belerofon, Its Oral, Long-Lasting, Interferon-alpha Drug

<http://www.pharmalive.com/News/index.cfm?articleid=418715&categoryid=21>

“Nautilus Biotech has announced that it has submitted an Investigational New Drug (IND) filing to the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for oral Belerofon(r), its long-lasting human Interferon (IFN) alpha. Belerofon has therapeutic potential for the treatment of a number of conditions, including chronic Hepatitis C. The new drug will be administered orally - all currently marketed interferon alpha drugs are administered by injection - resulting in improved safety and patient compliance.”

Did State Fully Treat Inmate's Hepatitis?

http://www.kansas.com/mld/kansas/news/columnists/mark_mccormick/16777072.htm

“Alexis McCullough, an inmate at the Wichita Work Release Center, died in excruciating pain, screaming for an ambulance, last March. Afterward, I started raising questions: Why did no one call an ambulance? Why was he allowed to suffer so? Now, there may be a bigger question: Did the Kansas Department of Corrections contribute to his condition by failing to sufficiently treat McCullough's chronic hepatitis C?”

Better Infection Control Programs Needed to Help Combat Hepatitis C in Egypt

<http://bbsnews.net/article.php/20070207201228382>

“At least five million people in Egypt are infected with the hepatitis C virus (HCV), a new committee formed by the country's government to tackle the disease has said. It added that action must be taken now to combat rising mortality.”

Medivir: Clinical Phase I Trial with Hepatitis C Virus Protease Inhibitor Initiated

<http://digital50.com/news/items/BW/2001/07/14/20070207006467/medivir-clinical-phase-i-trial-with-hepatitis-c-virus-protease-inhibitor-initiated.html>

“Medivir, on behalf of the Tibotec and Medivir collaborative project, announced that this week Tibotec initiated a phase I clinical trial with a potent and selective hepatitis C virus (HCV) NS3/4A protease inhibitor, for the treatment of chronic hepatitis C virus infection. The phase Ia clinical trial is designed to assess the safety, tolerability, and pharmacokinetics in healthy volunteers. The study will be conducted in Europe.”

Michael Houghton, Co-Discoverer of Hepatitis C and Lasker Award Winner, to Become Epiphany Biosciences' Chief Scientific Officer

<http://www.pharmalive.com/News/index.cfm?articleid=417554&categoryid=33%2C34>

“Epiphany Biosciences Inc. announced today the appointment of virologist Michael Houghton, PhD, as Chief Scientific Officer (CSO). Dr. Houghton joins Epiphany following a distinguished 24-year career at Chiron where he was most recently Vice President of HCV and Virology Research. In 1989, Dr. Houghton and his Chiron colleagues were the first to identify the hepatitis C virus (HCV) in collaboration with the CDC.”

Transgene Initiates A Phase I Trial of its Therapeutic Vaccine Candidate TG4040 for Patients Chronically Infected With the Hepatitis C Virus

<http://www.prnewswire.com/cgi-bin/stories.pl?ACCT=104&STORY=/www/story/02-13-2007/0004526780&EDATE=>

“Transgene S.A. announces today that the first patients have been enrolled in a Phase I trial of its therapeutic vaccine candidate TG4040 (MVA-HCV) for patients chronically infected with the Hepatitis C Virus (HCV). The trial is part of a development programme supported by Lyonbiopole, one of France's six world-class competitiveness clusters.”

Privately-Backed Inquiry into Contaminated Blood [UK]

<http://www.mlwmagazine.com/story.asp?sectioncode=201&storyCode=2042287>

“After two decades of calls for a public investigation into the exposure of thousands of haemophilia patients to HIV and hepatitis C infected blood, an independent inquiry has been set up with funding from charities and private

donors. Announcing the inquiry, Lord Morris of Manchester, president of the Haemophilia Society, said successive governments have resolutely resisted a public inquiry since 1988, preferring in-house inquiries at the Department of Health (DH) into narrowly defined aspects of the disaster.”

Anita Roddick Reveals She has Hepatitis C

<http://society.guardian.co.uk/health/story/0,,2013502,00.html>

“Dame Anita Roddick, the founder of the Body Shop, revealed yesterday that she is carrying hepatitis C and has cirrhosis of the liver, one of the condition's long-term effects. The 64-year-old entrepreneur said she had contracted hepatitis C through a blood transfusion while giving birth to her youngest daughter, Sam, in 1971.”

McGuinty Government Invests In Nursing Support Program For Hepatitis C Patients [Canada]

<http://www.newswire.ca/en/releases/archive/February2007/16/c9596.html>

“The McGuinty government is helping people with hepatitis C get the nursing care and support they need to complete their treatment regimen and lead healthier and more active lives, Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman announced today. “People with hepatitis C often find it difficult to stick to their treatments because of the side effects they suffer,” said Smitherman. “We want to provide patients with the nursing care and support they need to complete their treatment program and improve their chances of beating this disease.” The government is providing \$2.3-million to hire up to 20 nurses who will provide support to approximately 1,500 patients a year in Ontario and ensure they follow their hepatitis C treatment plans.”

Mayo Clinic Tests New Drug to Prevent Hepatitis C Recurrence after Liver Transplant

<http://www.allamericanpatriots.com/m-news+article+storyid-21020.html>

“The Mayo Clinic Transplant Center is studying whether Hepatitis C Immune Globulin (Human), an investigational drug candidate known as Civacir, prevents the recurrence of hepatitis C-related liver disease in liver transplant patients. Mayo Clinic sites in Arizona, Florida and Minnesota are looking for adults to participate in this study. Eligible participants must have hepatitis C and need a liver transplant. Individuals who have liver cancer may participate.”

CLINICAL TRIALS, COHORT STUDIES, AND PILOT STUDIES

Fibrosis progression in hepatitis C positive liver recipients after sustained virologic response to antiviral combination therapy (interferon-ribavirin therapy). Bahra M, et al. *Transplantation*. 2007 Feb 15;83(3):351-3.

http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?cmd=Retrieve&db=PubMed&list_uids=17297412&dopt=Abstract

Final results of a double-blind, placebo-controlled trial of the antifibrotic efficacy of interferon-gamma1b in chronic hepatitis C patients with advanced fibrosis or cirrhosis. Pockros PJ, et al. *Hepatology*. 2007 Mar; 45(3):569-78.

http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?db=pubmed&cmd=Retrieve&dopt=AbstractPlus&list_uids=17326152&query hl=3&itool=pubmed DocSum

Pilot study of pegylated interferon-alpha 2a in dialysis patients with chronic hepatitis C virus infection.

Chan TM, et al. *Nephrology (Carlton)*. 2007 Feb;12(1):11-7.

http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?db=pubmed&cmd=Retrieve&dopt=AbstractPlus&list_uids=17295655&query hl=6&itool=pubmed DocSum

Alcohol and hepatitis C mortality among males and females in the United States: a life table analysis. Chen CM, et al. *Alcohol Clin Exp Res*. 2007 Feb;31(2):285-92.

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A randomized trial of paroxetine to prevent interferon-alpha-induced depression in patients with hepatitis C. Morasco BJ, et al. *J Affect Disord*. 2007 Feb 8; [Epub ahead of print]

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Interferon-alpha-induced depressive symptoms are related to changes in the cytokine network but not to cortisol. Wichers MC, et al. *J Psychosom Res.* 2007 Feb;62(2):207-14.

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Effect of iron depletion on serum markers of fibrogenesis, oxidative stress and serum liver enzymes in chronic hepatitis C: results of a pilot study. Alexander J, Tung BY, Croghan A, Kowdley KV. *Liver Int.* 2007 Mar;27(2):268-73.

http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?db=pubmed&cmd=Retrieve&dopt=AbstractPlus&list_uids=17311623&query hl=4&itool=pubmed DocSum

Recent i.v.-drug users with chronic hepatitis C can be efficiently treated with daily high dose induction therapy using consensus interferon: an open-label pilot study. Witthoef T, Fuchs M, Ludwig D. *World J Gastroenterol.* 2007 Jan 28;13(4):579-84.

http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?db=pubmed&cmd=Retrieve&dopt=AbstractPlus&list_uids=17278224&query hl=6&itool=pubmed DocSum

Characterization of B cell lymphoma in patients with Sjogren's syndrome and hepatitis C virus infection Ramos-Casals M, et al.

http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?db=pubmed&cmd=Retrieve&dopt=AbstractPlus&list_uids=17266090&query hl=7&itool=pubmed DocSum

Treatment of chronic hepatitis C virus in African Americans with genotypes 2 and 3. Shiffman ML, et al. *Am J Gastroenterol.* 2007 Feb 22; [Epub ahead of print]

http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?db=pubmed&cmd=Retrieve&dopt=AbstractPlus&list_uids=17319933&query hl=3&itool=pubmed DocSum

Clinical spectrum and histopathologic features of chronic hepatitis C infection in children. Mohan P, et al. *J Pediatr.* 2007 Feb;150(2):168-74, 174.e1.

http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?db=pubmed&cmd=Retrieve&dopt=AbstractPlus&list_uids=17236895&query hl=2&itool=pubmed docsum

Sustained virological response to interferon-alpha is associated with improved outcome in HCV-related cirrhosis: A retrospective study. Bruno S, et al. *Hepatology.* 2007 Mar;45(3):579-87.

http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?cmd=Retrieve&db=PubMed&list_uids=17326216&dopt=Abstract

Hepatic oxidative DNA damage correlates with iron overload in chronic hepatitis C patients. Fujita N, et al. *Free Radic Biol Med.* 2007 Feb 1;42(3):353-62. Epub 2006 Nov 6.

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BASIC AND APPLIED SCIENCE, PRE-CLINICAL STUDIES

Genetic distance and heterogeneity between quasispecies is a critical predictor to IFN response in Egyptian patients with HCV genotype-4. Zekri AR, et al. *Virology.* 2007 Feb 14;4:16.

http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?db=pubmed&cmd=Retrieve&dopt=AbstractPlus&list_uids=17300723&query hl=2&itool=pubmed docsum

The nonstructural 5A protein of hepatitis C virus genotype 1b does not contain an interferon sensitivity-determining region. Brillet R, et al. *J Infect Dis.* 2007 Feb 1;195(3):432-41. Epub 2006 Dec 18.

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Inhibition of hepatitis C virus replication and expression by small interfering RNA targeting host cellular genes. Xue Q, et al. Arch Virol. 2007 Feb 3; [Epub ahead of print]
http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?db=pubmed&cmd=Retrieve&dopt=AbstractPlus&list_uids=17273891&query_hl=7&itool=pubmed_DocSum

Induction of high-molecular-weight (HMW) tumor necrosis factor(TNF) alpha by hepatitis C virus (HCV) non-structural protein 3 (NS3) in liver cells is AP-1 and NF-kappaB-dependent activation. Hassan M, et al. Cell Signal. 2007 Feb;19(2):301-11. Epub 2006 Aug 17.
http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?db=pubmed&cmd=Retrieve&dopt=AbstractPlus&list_uids=16916598&query_hl=2&itool=pubmed_DocSum

A new epitope peptide derived from hepatitis C virus 1b possessing the capacity to induce cytotoxic T-lymphocytes in HCV1b-infected patients with HLA-A11, -A31, and -A33. Matsueda S, et al. Cancer Immunol Immunother. 2007 Jan 31; [Epub ahead of print]
http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?db=pubmed&cmd=Retrieve&dopt=AbstractPlus&list_uids=17265020&query_hl=7&itool=pubmed_DocSum

Thymic stromal lymphopoietin transgenic mice develop cryoglobulinemia and hepatitis with similarities to human hepatitis C liver disease. Kowalewska J, et al. Am J Pathol. 2007 Mar;170(3):981-9.
http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?db=pubmed&cmd=Retrieve&dopt=AbstractPlus&list_uids=17322382&query_hl=3&itool=pubmed_DocSum

Interleukin-4 induces human hepatocyte apoptosis through a Fas-independent pathway. Aoudjehane L, et al. FASEB J. 2007 Feb 5; [Epub ahead of print]
http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?db=pubmed&cmd=Retrieve&dopt=AbstractPlus&list_uids=17283223&query_hl=6&itool=pubmed_DocSum

Vaccine-induced early control of hepatitis C virus infection in chimpanzees fails to impact on hepatic PD-1 and chronicity. Rollier CS, et al. Hepatology. 2007 Mar;45(3):602-13
http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?cmd=Retrieve&db=PubMed&list_uids=17326154&dopt=Abstract

HIV/HCV CO-INFECTION

Liver-related mortality in human-immunodeficiency-virus-infected patients between 1995 and 2003 in the French GERMIVIC Joint Study Group Network (MORTAVIC 2003 Study)*. Rosenthal E, et al. J Viral Hepat. 2007 Mar;14(3):183-8.
http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?db=pubmed&cmd=Retrieve&dopt=AbstractPlus&list_uids=17305884&query_hl=3&itool=pubmed_DocSum

Effect of hepatitis C virus (HCV) treatment in fibrosis progression rate (FPR) and time to cirrhosis (TTC) in patients co-infected with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV): A paired liver biopsy study. Rodriguez-Torres M, et al. J Hepatol. 2007 Jan 26; [Epub ahead of print]
http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?cmd=Retrieve&db=PubMed&list_uids=17316873&dopt=Abstract

Health-related quality of life in HIV-1-infected patients on HAART: a five-years longitudinal analysis accounting for dropout in the APROCO-COPILOTE cohort (ANRS CO-8). Protopopescu C, et al. Qual Life Res. 2007 Feb 1; [Epub ahead of print]
http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?db=pubmed&cmd=Retrieve&dopt=AbstractPlus&list_uids=17268929&query_hl=7&itool=pubmed_DocSum

Changes in the distribution of hepatitis C virus (HCV) genotypes over time in Spain according to HIV serostatus: implications for HCV therapy in HCV/HIV-coinfected patients. Ramos B, et al. J Infect. 2007 Feb;54(2):173-9. Epub 2006 Mar 29.

http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?db=pubmed&cmd=Retrieve&dopt=AbstractPlus&list_uids=16569433&query_hl=2&itool=pubmed_DocSum

CD4+ T Cell-Dependent Reduction in Hepatitis C Virus-Specific Humoral Immune Responses after HIV Infection. Netski DM, et al. *J Infect Dis.* 2007 Mar 15;195(6):857-63. Epub 2007 Feb 7.

http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?db=pubmed&cmd=Retrieve&dopt=AbstractPlus&list_uids=17299716&query_hl=3&itool=pubmed_DocSum

Mitochondrial DNA depletion in HIV-infected patients with chronic hepatitis C and effect of pegylated interferon plus ribavirin therapy. de Mendoza C, et al. *AIDS.* 2007 Mar 12;21(5):583-8.

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Self-reported hepatitis B and C virus infections had low sensitivity among HIV-infected patients. Lo Re V 3rd, et al. *J Clin Epidemiol.* 2007 Mar;60(3):294-9. Epub 2006 Nov 13.

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Factors associated with reported hepatitis C and HIV among injecting drug users in ten European cities.

March JC, Oviedo-Joekes E, Romero M. *Enferm Infecc Microbiol Clin.* 2007 Feb;25(2):91-97.

http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?db=pubmed&cmd=Retrieve&dopt=AbstractPlus&list_uids=17288906&query_hl=6&itool=pubmed_DocSum

Factors associated with seronegative chronic hepatitis C virus infection in HIV infection. Chamie G, et al. *Clin Infect Dis.* 2007 Feb 15;44(4):577-83.

http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?db=pubmed&cmd=Retrieve&dopt=AbstractPlus&list_uids=17243063&query_hl=2&itool=pubmed_docsum

The impact of cirrhosis on CD4+ T cell counts in HIV-seronegative patients. McGovern BH, et al. *Clin Infect Dis.* 2007 Feb 1;44(3):431-7. Epub 2006 Dec 21.

http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?db=pubmed&cmd=Retrieve&dopt=AbstractPlus&list_uids=17205454&query_hl=2&itool=pubmed_docsum

COMPLIMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE THERAPIES

Viusid, a nutritional supplement, in combination with interferon alpha-2b and ribavirin in patients with chronic hepatitis C. Vilar Gomez E, et al. *Liver Int.* 2007 Mar;27(2):247-59

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MISCELLANEOUS

Results of a general hepatitis C lookback program for persons who received blood transfusions in a neonatal intensive care unit between January 1975 and July 1992. Cagle HH, et al. *Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med.* 2007 Feb;161(2):125-30.

http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?db=pubmed&cmd=Retrieve&dopt=AbstractPlus&list_uids=17283296&query_hl=6&itool=pubmed_DocSum

Effectiveness of a multi-disciplinary standardized management model in the treatment of chronic hepatitis C in drug addicts engaged in detoxification programmes. Guadagnino V, et al. *Addiction.* 2007 Mar;102(3):423-431.

http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?db=pubmed&cmd=Retrieve&dopt=AbstractPlus&list_uids=17298650&query_hl=3&itool=pubmed_DocSum

The effects of HCV infection and management on health-related quality of life. Younossi Z, Kallman J, Kincaid J. Hepatology. 2007 Mar;45(3):806-16.

http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?db=pubmed&cmd=Retrieve&dopt=AbstractPlus&list_uids=17326207&query_hl=3&itool=pubmed_DocSum

Hepatitis C treatment candidacy and outcomes among 4318 US veterans with chronic hepatitis C virus infection: does a history of injection drug use matter? Seal KH, et al. J Clin Gastroenterol. 2007

Feb;41(2):199-205.

http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?db=pubmed&cmd=Retrieve&dopt=AbstractPlus&list_uids=17245220&query_hl=2&itool=pubmed_docsum

A novel, sensitive, and specific RT-PCR technique for quantitation of hepatitis C virus replication. Carriere M, et al. J Med Virol. 2007 Feb;79(2):155-60.

http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?db=pubmed&cmd=Retrieve&dopt=AbstractPlus&list_uids=17177304&query_hl=2&itool=pubmed_docsum