SK Biopharmaceuticals Epilepsy Drug Wins Korean Government Funding Support

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http://www.asianscientist.com/tech-pharma/sk-biopharmaceuticals-ykp3089-korean-drug-development-fund-2012/

AsianScientist (Mar. 5, 2012) - South Korean pharmaceutical company SK Biopharmaceuticals' lead refractory epilepsy drug, YKP3089, has been awarded funding from the Korean Drug Development Fund.

Funding is expected to support clinical development of YKP3089 over the next three years. An agreement between the two parties was signed on February 22, 2012.

> “The selection of YKP3089 by the Korean Drug Development Fund is an acknowledgement of its potential to become a global blockbuster. If our Phase II and Phase III clinical trials go smoothly, we will be able to market the drug in 2017,” said Dr. Jeong Woo Cho, Vice President for SK Biopharmaceuticals’ Drug Development Business.

The Korea Drug Development Fund was established in September 2011 with assets of US$1 billion to develop at least ten new drugs by 2019. The fund is run by a consortium of three health-related Korean ministries: The Ministry of Knowledge Economy; the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology; and the Ministry of Health and Welfare.

YKP3089 is the lead molecule in SK Biopharmaceuticals’ pipeline. The molecule was discovered early on to have a broad spectrum of action in animal models of epilepsy and seizure disorders. A pilot study in the U.S. demonstrated efficacy in human patients who were sensitive to light-induced seizures.

It is also active in other models of behavioral disorders and has authorized Investigational New Drug (IND) status from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Government funding will support global late Phase II clinical trials in refractory epilepsy.

> “As the drug has shown marked efficacy in reducing pain in various animal models of neuropathic pain as well in epilepsy, we will be conducting simultaneous Phase II trials for this additional indication,” said Cho.
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> “The worldwide neuropathic pain market is US$2.5 billion in size, and if YKP3089 shows efficacy in various types of this pain, the value of the drug will be tremendous,” he said.

SK Biopharmaceuticals is a newly-independent development-stage South Korean pharmaceutical company, spun out from SK Holdings in April 2011.

Source: SKBP.
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