New Drug Receives FDA Approval as Orphan Drug for the Treatment of Mesothelioma

Mesothelioma lawyers of The Law Office of Melinda J. Helbock A.P.C. say the FDA’s approval of a drug designed to kill cancer stem cells as “orphan drug designation” gives hope to the future of mesothelioma patients.

(PRWEB) February 27, 2015 -- According to a Feb. 12, 2015 news release by Verastem, Inc., defactinib (VS-6063), a drug used to treat cancer by killing cancer stem cells, has received orphan drug designation from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for use in the treatment of mesothelioma.* According to the release, orphan drug designation was created by the FDA to encourage the development of drugs for the treatment of rare diseases.

“We are really excited about the FDA’s decision,” said Melinda Helbock, Founder of The Law Office of Melinda J. Helbock A.P.C. and sponsor of MesotheliomaTreatmentCenters.org. “According to researchers, use of this drug for the treatment of mesothelioma has resulted in positive activity; the FDA’s designation simply allows researchers to further explore the benefits.”

Verastem, Inc. issued a news release on Jan. 8, 2015 about the results of an ongoing study examining the benefits of defactinib (VS-6063). According to the release, 180 people are enrolled in COMMAND (Control Of Mesothelioma with MAinteNance Defactinib) at 55 centers in 13 different countries. Verastem Chief Medical Officer Dr. Joanna Horobin said the results have been surprisingly positive so far and that 70 percent of participants with pleural mesothelioma who were given VS-6063 for 12 days prior to surgery experienced a decrease in tumor size.**

“Receiving this designation is huge,” Helbock said. “The ability to continue to explore the benefits of this drug gives hope to the future of mesothelioma patients and their families.”

By receiving orphan drug designation, VS-5584 will receive benefits such as seven years of U.S. market exclusivity in the specific indications.*

“This is an important regulatory milestone for Verastem and, together with our European orphan medicinal product designation, will facilitate our global development of VS-5584 to help improve the available treatment options for patients suffering from this highly aggressive cancer,” said Robert Forrester, Verastem President and Chief Executive Officer. "We look forward to taking full advantage of the opportunities that orphan designation allows in order to bring this potential new treatment option to patients as rapidly as possible."*

About The Law Office of Melinda J. Helbock A.P.C.
The Law Office of Melinda J. Helbock A.P.C. is a personal injury law firm that represents the families of people with mesothelioma. The firm advocates for victims of asbestos exposure. For more information about the firm visit helbocklaw.com.
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Contact Information
Michael Helbock
The Law Office of Melinda J. Helbock APC
http://www.helbocklaw.com/
+1 760 271 5327

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