

ENVOY'S COMPOUNDS REVERSE CATALEPSY IN TWO PARKINSON'S DISEASE ANIMAL MODELS



Jupiter, FL – January 23, 2012 – Envoy Therapeutics, Inc., a drug discovery company, today announced that it has achieved an important milestone in advancing compounds for Parkinson's disease (PD). Lead compounds in the company's program for PD have demonstrated efficacy in both mouse and rat models of the disease, bringing the program one step closer to testing in humans.

The drug levodopa currently provides Parkinson's patients with significant efficacy by activating a subset of dopamine D2-receptor-expressing neurons in the striatum region of the brain. However, because levodopa activates other members of the dopamine receptor family within the striatum as well as other brain regions, patients experience unwanted side-effects such as abnormal movements and hallucinations.

Using the company's bacTRAP® technology, Envoy scientists recently identified a novel target protein that is specifically expressed in D2-receptor-expressing neurons in the striatum and not in other cell types. Two high-throughput screens, each testing over 620,000 compounds against this target protein, identified certain chemical structures that acted on the target. Envoy optimized the potency, pharmacokinetics and brain penetration of several candidate compounds, after which the company achieved proof-of-concept in two well established animal models used to evaluate compounds for efficacy in PD. Catalepsy induced by haloperidol treatment was reversed in a dose-dependent manner in both mice and rats. Based on this success, the company is now further optimizing its lead compounds in advance of preclinical efficacy and safety studies.

"We are excited that compounds acting by this new mechanism are likely to provide the efficacy of levodopa but without the side-effects," said Stephen Hitchcock, Ph.D., Senior Vice President of Drug Discovery. "We look forward to further advancing this compound with the goal of beginning human clinical trials in 2013."

About Envoy Therapeutics

Envoy Therapeutics' mission is to discover new drugs with superior efficacy and fewer side effects than existing treatments. The company's bacTRAP® technology enables the identification of proteins in vivo that are produced by specific cell types without requiring the isolation of those cells. The technology is especially powerful in tissues of the brain, where many hundreds of cell types are intermingled. Because therapeutically modulating the activity of a specific cell type has until now been prevented by the inability to determine which proteins are uniquely expressed by that cell type, Envoy brings a new day in drug discovery.

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