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Biocon, Advaxis joins hands for cancer therapy

31 January 2014 | News | By BioSpectrum Bureau



Biocon joined hands with Advaxis, the leading developer of immunotherapies for cancer. They have entered into an exclusive licensing agreement for co-development and commercialization of ADXS-HPV, a novel cancer immunotherapy for the treatment of human papillomavirus (HPV) associated cervical cancer in women, for India and emerging markets.

The agreement also gives biocon an upper hand by providing access to Advaxis's innovative and proprietary immunotherapy technology. The motto of gaining the access to innovative technology is to further develop new novel therapeutics for various other unmet medical conditions.

"Biocon is committed to finding solutions for women's health issues. This partnership will enable us to develop ADXS-HPV a novel immunotherapy to combat cervical cancer in women. It is a promising technology that has the ability to suppress the tumor inside the micro-environment" said Dr Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, chairperson and managing director, Biocon.

Commenting on the collaboration Mr Daniel J O'Connor, chief executive officer, Advaxis, commented that, "We are excited to partner with Biocon and bring our innovative cancer immunotherapy for cervical cancer to women with few alternatives." He further added, "This agreement give us the opportunity to penetrate into key markets where the number of patients with HPV-associated cancers is in masses."

According to the WHO, in 2008, 90 percent of cervical cancer were recorded in developing countries out of 530,000 new cases of cervical cancer all over the world. Over 366 million women of the age of over 15 years are at a risk of developing cervical cancer. It is reported that each year near around 134,000 women are diagnosed with cervical cancer in India and nearly 73,000 is the morbidity rate from this cancer.

Further to this, Biocon's president of R&D, Dr Abhijit Barve, expressed that, "The clinical data generated so far with ADXS-HPV look very encouraging in patients with advanced metastatic disease who were resistant or refractory to existing therapies. The clinical responses were comparable to prevalent chemotherapy agents and this was achieved with very low incidence of adverse events. Hence ADXS-HPV is likely to offer patients a safe and effective alternate to chemotherapeutic agents."