FDA Approves First Therapy For The Initial Treatment Of Patients With Advanced Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer In More Than Four Years

(NAPSA)—A promising new treatment has been approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to treat lung cancer, the second most common cancer and the number one cancer killer in the United States. Lung cancer claims approximately 155,000 lives each year, with nearly 170,000 new cases projected in 2003 alone.

Unfortunately, physicians are often challenged when it comes to treating lung cancer because it is generally difficult to detect in the early stages, as symptoms usually do not surface until the disease is advanced. Given these challenges, patients with lung cancer have little chance of surviving beyond five years.

Recently, however, the FDA approved Taxotere® (docetaxel) for Injection Concentrate in combination with cisplatin, another chemotherapy, as a first-line treatment in patients with advanced non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC), which accounts for 80 percent of all lung cancer cases. This makes Taxotere® the only agent indicated both for patients with newly diagnosed NSCLC, when given with cisplatin, and for those with previously treated advanced disease, when given as a single agent.

"The approval of Taxotere® as a first-line treatment of advanced non-small cell lung cancer means that oncologists can now extend to newly diagnosed patients the benefits seen with this agent as second-line therapy," said Chandra P. Belani, MD, professor of medicine at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, and co-director of the Lung Cancer Program at the University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute. "In light of low survival rates among people with this disease, this approval means more patients can hope for longer survival."

Men are four times more likely to develop NSCLC, but lung cancer has now surpassed breast cancer as the number one cancer killer of women. For more information about Taxotere, visit www.taxotere.com or see full prescribing information including boxed WARNING. For more information about ongoing clinical trials, please call 1-800-RxTrial or visit www.aventisoncology.com.

The most common severe side effects associated with Taxotere® include low white blood cell count, fatigue, fluid retention and mouth sores. The most common non-severe side effects included hair loss, neurosensory, cutaneous, nail changes, nausea and diarrhea. These side effects are generally reversible and manageable. A premedication regimen with corticosteroids is recommended in order to prevent or reduce hypersensitivity and fluid retention. Taxotere® is not appropriate therapy for patients with significant liver impairment or a low white blood cell count.

TXT-AM-7179-1