

## **PRESS RELEASE**

**Tuesday 05 November 2013**

### **NEW DRUG EXTENDS LIFE IN WOMEN WITH ADVANCED OVARIAN CANCER**

WOMEN with ovarian cancer that has returned after previous treatment had their life extended by almost three months after treatment with a drug called cediranib, according to trial results presented today at the National Cancer Research (NCRI) Cancer Conference in Liverpool.

The Cancer Research UK-funded phase III trial found that cediranib, when given with chemotherapy, on average patients gained an extra 3.2 months before their cancer progressed (from 9.4 to 12.6 months). And, on average, women survived for an extra three months, from 17.6 to 20.3 months compared to women only given chemotherapy.

Professor Jonathan Ledermann, chief investigator based at the Cancer Research UK UCL centre, said: “While the increase in survival may seem modest, this is a significant finding for women with advanced ovarian cancer. Cediranib is the first drug of its kind that has been shown to delay tumour progression and improve overall survival in ovarian cancer that has returned.”

Cediranib, which is taken in pill form, is a type of drug called a tyrosine kinase inhibitor that stops tumours from being able to make new blood vessels that are essential for cancer growth.

In women whose ovarian cancer has returned and treated with the standard platinum-based chemotherapy it normally takes eight to nine months before the cancer starts to grow again. But when treated with ceradanib this was extended to over 12 months.

A total of 456 patients whose ovarian cancer had returned were enrolled in the trial at 63 centres from the UK, Canada, Australia and Spain. They were randomised to receive platinum-based chemotherapy together with a placebo, or 20 mg a day of cediranib during chemotherapy followed by placebo for 18 months, or 20 mg a day of cediranib during chemotherapy followed by cediranib as a maintenance treatment.

Professor Matt Seymour, NCRI clinical research director, said: “These results are very encouraging. They show clearly that this new drug, which works in a totally different way to conventional chemotherapy, can significantly help patients with ovarian cancer. The average benefit is modest – around 3 months – but worthwhile; and in the future it may be possible to identify who gains most from this drug.

“It’s also important to remember that, like most cancer treatment, progress in ovarian cancer is incremental. Over time, the small benefits from many different research programmes like this add together to make a huge difference to patients’ lives.”

NCRI Cancer Conference  
Press Office

Angel Building  
407 St John Street  
London EC1V 4AD

T: +44 (0)20 3469 8300

T: +44 (0)7050 264 059

(out of hours)

E: [press@ncri.org.uk](mailto:press@ncri.org.uk)

[conference.ncri.org.uk](http://conference.ncri.org.uk)

Each year around 7,000 women are diagnosed with ovarian cancer in the UK and despite ovarian cancer survival almost doubling in the last 30 years the survival rate remains at 43 per cent.

Kate Law, Cancer Research UK's director of clinical research, said: "Ovarian cancer can be hard to diagnose early and treat successfully, so it's significant that this study found a drug that can slow tumour growth following chemotherapy treatment. We urgently need better treatments for ovarian cancer and it's promising that this treatment appears to also give women valuable extra months of life. It's only through research like this that we can beat cancer sooner."

The ICON 6 trial was co-ordinated by the MRC Clinical trials unit at UCL and was also funded by AstraZeneca.

---

### ENDS

For Media Enquiries please contact  
Simon Shears on +44 (0)151 239 6061 or, out of hours,  
the duty press officer on +44 (0)7050 264 059

---

#### Notes to editors

\*The abstract can be accessed here:

<http://conference.ncri.org.uk/abstracts/2013/abstracts/LB80.htm>

\*\*For more information about the trial:

<http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/cancer-help/trials/a-trial-looking-at-standard-treatment-with-or-without-cediranib-for-ovarian-fallopian-tube-or-primary-peritoneal-cancer-that-has-come-back>

#### About UCL (University College London)

Founded in 1826, UCL was the first English university established after Oxford and Cambridge, the first to admit students regardless of race, class, religion or gender and the first to provide systematic teaching of law, architecture and medicine.

We are among the world's top universities, as reflected by our performance in a range of international rankings and tables. According to the Thomson Scientific Citation Index, UCL is the second most highly cited European university and the 15th most highly cited in the world.

UCL has nearly 27,000 students from 150 countries and more than 9,000 employees, of whom one third are from outside the UK. The university is based in Bloomsbury in the heart of London, but also has two international campuses – UCL Australia and UCL Qatar. Our annual income is more than £800 million.

#### About the NCRI Cancer Conference

The National Cancer Research Institute (NCRI) Cancer Conference is the UK's major forum for showcasing the best British and international cancer research. The Conference offers unique opportunities for networking and sharing knowledge by bringing together world-leading experts from all cancer research disciplines. The ninth annual NCRI Cancer Conference is taking place from 3–6 November 2013 at the BT Convention Centre in Liverpool. Roche is the principal sponsor of the 2013 NCRI Cancer Conference.

For more information visit [conference.ncri.org.uk](http://conference.ncri.org.uk)

NCRI Cancer Conference  
Press Office

Angel Building  
407 St John Street  
London EC1V 4AD

T: +44 (0)20 3469 8300

T: +44 (0)7050 264 059

(out of hours)

E: [press@ncri.org.uk](mailto:press@ncri.org.uk)

[conference.ncri.org.uk](http://conference.ncri.org.uk)

### About the NCRI

The National Cancer Research Institute (NCRI) was established in 2001. It is a UK-wide partnership between the government, charity and industry which promotes cooperation in cancer research.

NCRI members are: the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry (ABPI); Association for International Cancer Research; Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council; Breakthrough Breast Cancer; Breast Cancer Campaign; Cancer Research UK; Children with Cancer UK; Department of Health; Economic and Social Research Council; Leukaemia & Lymphoma Research; Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research; Macmillan Cancer Support; Marie Curie Cancer Care; Medical Research Council; Northern Ireland Health and Social Care (Research & Development Office); Prostate Cancer UK; Roy Castle Lung Cancer Foundation; Scottish Government Health Directorates (Chief Scientist Office); Tenovus; Welsh Government (National Institute for Social Care and Health Research); The Wellcome Trust; and Yorkshire Cancer Research.

For more information visit [www.ncri.org.uk](http://www.ncri.org.uk)

NCRI Cancer Conference  
Press Office

Angel Building  
407 St John Street  
London EC1V 4AD

T: +44 (0)20 3469 8300

T: +44 (0)7050 264 059

(out of hours)

E: [press@ncri.org.uk](mailto:press@ncri.org.uk)

[conference.ncri.org.uk](http://conference.ncri.org.uk)