
NEWS RELEASE

Provid Pharmaceuticals Announces Celiac Disease Program and Grant.

May 10, 2005, Piscataway, NJ -- Provid Pharmaceuticals Inc. has been awarded an SBIR grant from the National Institute of Digestive Disorders and Kidney Disease (NIDDK) to pursue a novel therapeutic strategy for celiac disease (celiac sprue). Celiac is a disease of gluten intolerance that affects approximately 1/500 individuals, causing severe gastrointestinal and other reactions to gluten ingestion. Currently, celiac disease can only be treated by strict dietary abstinence from wheat and other grain products. The disease is also characterized by a genetic association to the MHC class II molecule, HLA-DQ2. Binding of gluten-derived peptides to HLA-DQ2 is the first step in triggering an immune response to gluten peptides. The immune response from autoreactive T cells that results from this trigger leads to destruction of the lining of the small intestine and to a variety of other symptoms. The Provid project seeks to block this first step with an orally administered inhibitor of HLA-DQ2. □□Provid's plan to develop a drug for celiac disease is based on the company's strategy for developing therapeutic drugs for other autoimmune diseases. The approach is based on blocking antigen binding to disease-associated MHC molecules by Provid's small molecule peptide mimetics. The company has other programs for multiple sclerosis (partnered with a pharmaceutical company) and rheumatoid arthritis in addition to the new celiac program. □□Provid is a chemistry-based drug discovery company with expertise in all aspects of medicinal chemistry, structure-based drug design, lead optimization, protein biochemistry and assay development. Provid pursues internal programs for the discovery of novel therapeutics for autoimmune diseases based on a platform technology in the field of peptide mimetics. The company also offers collaborative discovery services to biotech companies and academic groups that need medicinal chemistry expertise to transform their biologically driven research into drug molecules.

About Provid

Provid Pharmaceuticals Inc. is a drug discovery company that has expertise in the design and optimization of drug candidates for biological targets, using concepts of structure-aided design, medicinal chemistry, and peptide mimetics technology. The company has applied this capability to internal programs in autoimmune disease and oncology. In addition, Provid supplies expert medicinal chemistry services to the biotech and pharmaceutical industries to translate early biological discoveries into commercial opportunities.

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