

**ADVANCED BLADDER CANCER: PROMISING NEW TREATMENT**

***Sunnybrook-led study shows highest reported treatment response rate with one third of patients having benefit to Abraxane\* as a novel second-line chemotherapy.***

Toronto (February 19, 2011) – For the treatment of bladder cancer that has spread, Sunnybrook researchers report for the first time, the use of a novel second-line chemotherapy, Abraxane\* currently only used for metastatic breast cancer, is effective with the highest reported response-to-treatment rate, as released today at the annual American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) Genitourinary Cancers Conference.

Bladder cancer or urothelial carcinoma that has spread from the bladder is known as Stage IV bladder cancer or metastatic bladder cancer. For treatment of this stage of disease, cisplatin-based chemotherapy is the standard of care. However, there is currently no accepted standard second-line chemotherapy (therapy used after first-line treatment no longer stops progression or the point at which the disease is identified as refractory). The drugs paclitaxel and docetaxel are commonly used in second-line treatment but with less success, with treatment response in fewer than one in five patients.

“Our study shows a strong potential for Abraxane\* to provide patients with a better option for extended quality of life,” says Dr. Yooj Ko, lead investigator and medical oncologist, Sunnybrook’s Odette Cancer Centre Genitourinary Cancer Care Team.

Study findings indicate 32 percent of patients had a partial response to Abraxane\*, and a total clinical benefit of partial response, or stable disease (no change progression after treatment) in 58 percent of patients.

The study involved 48 patients with platinum-refractory urothelial carcinoma, with disease progression on or after undergoing first-line chemotherapy. Abraxane\*, an albumin-bound nanoparticle formulation of paclitaxel, was given as a single agent to patients at a dosage of 260 mg/m<sup>2</sup> IV three times weekly as second-line chemotherapy.

The multi-institutional phase II study was conducted across Ontario at Sunnybrook’s Odette Cancer Centre and Princess Margaret Hospital in Toronto, Ottawa Regional Cancer Centre, Juravinski Cancer Centre in Hamilton, and London Health Sciences Centre. The data was presented at the ASCO GU Conference by study co-investigator, Dr. Srikala Sridhar.

According to the Canadian Cancer Society, an estimated 5,300 Canadians will be diagnosed with bladder cancer, and an estimated 1,300 will have died of the disease in 2010.

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\*Abraxane is a registered trademark.

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