

Press Release

Cytochroma Inc. Issued U.S. Patent For Vitamin D Regulating Enzyme

Patent Protects Technology For The Discovery Of Drugs To Treat Hypercalcemia And Hyperparathyroidism

KINGSTON, Ontario - October 23, 2000 - Cytochroma Inc., announced today that it has been issued United States Patent No. 6,096,876 entitled "1 α -HYDROXYLASE MATERIALS AND METHODS" with a total of 18 claims. This cytochrome P450 enzyme plays a key role in regulating vitamin D metabolism. The discovery and understanding of its biochemical structure enables Cytochroma to develop drug candidates directed to the treatment of vitamin D related disorders such as hypercalcemia and hyperparathyroidism.

"For 25 years the 1 α -hydroxylase has been the Holy Grail of the calcium & bone field and its discovery will reveal many secrets of how our blood calcium level is controlled," stated Dr. Glenville Jones, Co-Chief Scientific Officer and Vice President, Cytochroma Inc. "This will have profound implications for the treatment of bone disease and further, provides Cytochroma with a key molecular target for drug discovery."

The original discovery of the human 1 α -hydroxylase enzyme was made in the laboratories of Dr. René St-Arnaud, Montreal, Quebec and is licensed through Shriners Hospitals for Children, Tampa, Florida to Cytochroma Inc.

"The quest for the 1 α -hydroxylase enzyme was an epic race involving four different laboratories. We are proud to have won it, as evidenced by the awarding of the patent," said Dr. St-Arnaud, a Shriners Hospitals for Children Investigator. "We believe that the availability of the 1 α -hydroxylase gene sequence provides us with a unique tool to answer key questions pertaining to the vitamin D endocrine system, and may lead to novel approaches for the treatment of bone and kidney diseases."

Founded in 1996, Cytochroma Inc. is the leading biotechnology company focused on the identification and development of drugs based on the action of cytochrome P450 enzymes. To date, Cytochroma's drug discovery program has identified modulators of the cytochrome P450 enzymes that metabolize vitamin A and vitamin D as drug candidates for the treatment of skin, cancer and bone disorders.