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Algernon Announces Availability of its NP-120 Ifenprodil Drug for Compassionate Use for Coronavirus

VANCOUVER, British Columbia, March 06, 2020 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Algernon Pharmaceuticals Inc. (CSE: AGN) (FRANKFURT: AGW) (OTCQB: AGNPF) (the “**Company**” or “**Algernon**”) a clinical stage pharmaceutical development company is pleased to announce that it will set aside some of its NP-120 (Ifenprodil) drug supply from its planned phase 2 study for idiopathic fibrosis and chronic cough, to make it available on a compassionate use basis, to physicians and their patients with the most serious cases of coronavirus.

The decision was made based on the results of an independent study of Ifenprodil which showed a 40% improvement in mortality and significantly reduced acute lung injury (ALI) in a recent H5N1 animal study. H5N1 is one of the most lethal form of influenza known with a 53% mortality rate.

Since Ifenprodil is an already approved drug with a known safety history, it can be safely administered to patients without additional pre-clinical testing.

“If we see a similar response in coronavirus patients as seen in the H5N1 animal study, a far more lethal form of influenza, we believe that patient outcomes should be significantly improved”, said Christopher J. Moreau, CEO of Algernon.

Algernon welcomes contact from health organizations and physicians globally to learn more about NP-120 (Ifenprodil).

Management’s belief that NP-120 (Ifenprodil) is a possible treatment for COVID-19, (coronavirus) is based on historic animal studies and not on human trials.

About NP-120 (Ifenprodil)

NP-120 (Ifenprodil) is an N-methyl-d-aspartate (NMDA) receptor glutamate receptor antagonist specifically targeting the NMDA-type subunit 2B (Glu2NB). Ifenprodil also exhibits agonist activity for the Sigma-1 receptor, a chaperone protein up-regulated during endoplasmic reticulum stress. Although the anti-fibrotic activity of Ifenprodil in IPF is not known, recent studies have suggested a link between both receptors and pathways associated with fibrosis.

Glutamate (Glu) is the main excitatory neurotransmitter which acts on glutamate receptors in the central nervous system (CNS) but overactivation of these receptors can cause several damages to neural cells including death. Recent studies show that the glutamate agonist N-methyl-d-aspartate (NMDA) can trigger acute lung injury (ALI). ALI is a direct and indirect injury to alveolar epithelial cells and capillary endothelial cell, causing diffuse pulmonary

interstitial and alveolar edema and acute hypoxic respiration failure. ALI is characterized by reduced lung volume and compliance, and imbalance of the ventilation/perfusion ratio, inducing hypoxemia and respiratory distress and its severe stage (oxygen index <200) known as acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS). (1)

NP-120 (Ifenprodil - brand name Cerocal) was initially developed by Sanofi in the 1990s in the French and Japanese markets for the treatment of circulatory disorders. The drug is genericized and sold in Japan.

Algernon has filed new intellectual property rights for NP-120 (Ifenprodil) for the treatment of respiratory diseases.

About Algernon Pharmaceuticals Inc.

Algernon Pharmaceuticals is a clinical stage pharmaceutical development company focused on advancing its lead compounds for non-alcoholic steatohepatitis (NASH), chronic kidney disease (CKD) inflammatory bowel disease (IBD), idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis (IPF) and chronic cough.

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(1) <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5938426/>



Source: Algernon Pharmaceuticals