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Inhibition of Hsp90 function downregulates EGFR and sensitizes EGFR-mutant xenografts to paclitaxelA. Sawai¹, H. Greulich², Q. Ye¹, W. Sellers², N. Rosen¹, D. Solit¹.¹Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, Medicine, New York, USA;²Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, Boston, MA

Background: Somatic mutations in the kinase domain of the epidermal growth factor receptor (EGFR) receptor tyrosine kinase (RTK) are found in a subset of patients with lung cancer. These mutations correlate with response to the EGFR tyrosine kinase inhibitors (TKIs) gefitinib and erlotinib. Resistance to these agents invariably develops and current treatment strategies have limited efficacy in this setting. Hsp90 is a molecular chaperone required for protein refolding and the conformational maturation of a variety of signaling proteins. Hsp90 inhibitors such as 17AAG (17-allylamino-17-demethoxy geldanamycin) induce the degradation of "client" proteins which require Hsp90 for maturation, activation or stability.

Methods: We studied the effects of 17AAG alone and in combination with paclitaxel on EGFR expression and signaling, cell proliferation and xenograft tumor growth, using a panel of isogenic and human lung cancer cell lines expressing wt EGFR and EGFR kinase domain mutants.

Results: The EGFR point and deletion mutants found commonly in the tumors of patients who respond to EGFR TKIs are potently degraded by 17AAG. Although wild-type EGFR was also degraded by 17AAG, its degradation required higher concentrations of drug and a long-duration of exposure to 17AAG than the EGFR mutants. Degradation of mutant EGFR was accompanied by downregulation of Akt and MAPK activity, loss of cyclin D1 expression, growth arrest and induction of apoptosis. A single dose of 17AAG was sufficient to induce the dose-dependent degradation of mutant EGFR and downregulate Akt and MAPK activity in tumor xenografts. 17AAG at non-toxic doses (75–100 mg/kg 3×/wk) was active as a single agent in all three EGFR mutant xenograft models studied. These included tumors with the L858R point mutation (H3255), an exon 19 deletion (H1650) and the L858R-T790M double mutant (H1975). These later two cell lines are resistance to EGFR TKIs. Full doses of 17AAG and paclitaxel could be co-administered without evidence of enhanced toxicity to mice bearing H1650 and H1975 xenografts, and the combination of 17-AAG and paclitaxel was significantly more effective than either drug alone.

Conclusions: 17AAG induces the degradation of mutant EGFR and has anti-tumor activity alone and in combination with paclitaxel in tumor xenografts with EGFR kinase domain mutations. These data suggest that Hsp90 inhibition may represent an effective treatment strategy for patients with EGFR TKI-resistant lung cancer.

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SNX5542, an oral Hsp90 inhibitor, causes Her2 degradation and inhibition of tumor growth in models of Her2 amplified breast cancer.S. Chandarlapaty¹, Q. Ye¹, K. Huang², P. Fadden², N. Rosen¹, D. Solit¹.¹Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, Medicine, New York, USA;²Serenex Inc., Durham, USA

Background: Hsp90 is a molecular chaperone required for the conformational maturation and stability of a variety of signaling proteins. Natural products that bind to the Hsp90 ATP pocket (e.g. geldanamycin) cause the proteosomal degradation of Hsp90 "client" proteins. We find the HER2 oncogene to be the client that is most sensitive to Hsp90 inhibition. Moreover, 17-AAG (a geldanamycin derivative) has shown promising clinical activity in patients with HER2 amplified breast cancer. However, the limitations of the natural product inhibitors have prompted us to develop selective, small-molecule inhibitors of Hsp90.

Methods: We compared the pharmacokinetics, pharmacodynamics and anti-tumor effects of 17-AAG with SNX-2112 and its pro-drug SNX5542, a water-soluble, orally bioavailable Hsp90 inhibitor. Drug accumulation and changes in Hsp90 client expression were assayed in both normal and tumor tissues.

Results: SNX2112 has similar potency to 17-AAG across a panel of human cancer cell lines. For example, SNX2112 inhibits the growth of HER2 amplified breast cancer cells at IC50s below 5 nM. SNX2112 causes degradation of HER2 and inactivation of AKT and ERK signaling. This results in downregulation of cyclinD1 expression and induction of a pro-apoptotic response. We evaluated the pharmacokinetics and tissue localization of SNX5542 in BT-474 tumor bearing mice. SNX5542 accumulated in tumors to concentrations over ten-fold higher than those in normal tissues (e.g. lung, liver, and brain). A single, non-toxic, oral dose of SNX5542 (75–150 mg/kg) was effective in potently downregulating the expression of HER2 in BT-474 tumor xenografts for over 24 hours. The degradation of HER2 was associated with inhibition of AKT and ERK activity, loss of cyclinD1 expression, and induction of apoptosis in the tumors of SNX5542-treated mice. Degradation of HER2 was accompanied

by tumor regression in mice treated 3–5×/week with SNX-5542. For example, treatment of BT474 xenografts with SNX5542 50 mg/kg 5×/week was non-toxic and resulted in a greater than 50% tumor regression (vs. 300% increase in vehicle-treated control tumors). These effects were durable and preserved for 3 weeks beyond the cessation of treatment.

Conclusions: Oral SNX5542 potently degrades HER2, induces apoptosis and tumor regression in HER2-dependent breast cancer models. The results suggest that SNX5542 may represent a promising strategy for the treatment of advanced breast cancers.

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SNX-2112: a novel, selective, potent small molecule inhibitor of Hsp90 with unique pharmacodynamic properties

P. Steed, H. Huang, P. Fadden, J. Rice, J. Eaves, A. Barbasz, B. Foley, J. Partridge, A. Scott, S. Hall. Serenex, Inc., Durham, USA

Background: The preclinical and clinical data for HSP90 inhibitors such as 17-AAG and 17-DMAG, both derivatives of geldanamycin (GDN), support this molecular chaperone as a promising target for cancer therapy. However, the utility of these GDN derivatives has been limited due to potential off-target toxicity and formulation challenges. For this reason, there continues to be a growing interest in orally-active, small molecule HSP90 inhibitors. Serenex has discovered and developed novel small molecules, represented by SNX-2112, that display the desired pharmacodynamic profile. Here we describe the preclinical evaluation of this compound.

Methods: SNX-2112 was identified and characterized using Serenex's proprietary purine proteome mining technology, which enables evaluation of binding to the ATP site of HSP90 simultaneously with hundreds of purine binding proteins. This allowed simultaneous assessment of Hsp90 affinity and target selectivity. In parallel, compounds were evaluated in tumor cell proliferation assays as well as high-content screens for HSP90 client effects. For *in vivo* evaluation, SNX-2112 was delivered using the prodrugs SNX-5422 and SNX-5542 to facilitate formulation. Xenografts were performed with oral administration in D5W using a 3 times weekly regimen, compared to 17-DMAG on the previously reported MTD dose and regimen. Tumor progression and body weight was monitored while plasma, tumor and other tissues were harvested for evaluation of HSP90 client proteins.

Results: SNX-2112 exhibits a higher affinity for the ATP site of HSP90 than 17-AAG and 17-DMAG. Against a panel of more than 12 tumor cell lines, SNX-2112 blocked cell proliferation with a potency of 1–140 nM. One significant difference between SNX-2112 and the GDN derivatives was its effects on HSP90 clients and their downstream signaling markers. Whereas 17-AAG affected the Akt pathway in A375 cells, as measured by phosphorylated S6 kinase levels, with a potency of 308 nM, SNX-2112 was nearly 100-fold more active with an IC50 value of 4 nM. As expected, SNX-2112 exhibits potent pro-apoptotic effects in cellular assays, as measured by caspase induction. In animal studies, SNX-2112, delivered as a prodrug, consistently delayed tumor growth more profoundly than GDN derivatives. 17-DMAG at the reported MTD caused a tumor growth delay in HT29 xenograft of 2%, while SNX-5422 at 100 mg/kg PO 3X weekly had a delay of 52%.

Conclusions: SNX-2112 exhibits an *in vitro* HSP90 inhibitory profile consistent with its high potency and selectivity. This compound uniformly targets both the pro-proliferation pathways driven by Her2 and ERK as well as the anti-apoptotic Akt pathway and exhibits potent *in vivo* anti-tumor activity that extends significantly beyond the effects observed with GDN analogs.

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Efficacy of a selective small molecule IGF-IR kinase inhibitor in mouse xenografts models as a single agent and in combination with erlotinib

Q. Ji, M. Mulvihill, M. Franklin, G. Mak, M. O'Connor, Y. Yao, C. Pirrit, D. Landfair, E. Brown, N. Gibson. OSI Pharmaceuticals, Inc. (OSI) Oncology, Melville, New York, USA

Insulin-like growth factor-I receptor (IGF-IR) and its ligands, IGF-I and IGF-II, are upregulated in a variety of human cancers. In tumors, such as colorectal and NSCLC cancers, which may drive their own growth and survival through autocrine expression of IGF-II, the role of IGF-IR is especially critical. In addition, activation of the IGF-IR protects tumor cells from apoptosis induced by a variety of anti-cancer agents. Thus IGF-IR represents as an important therapeutic target for the treatment of human cancer. Here, we present a novel small molecule IGF-IR kinase inhibitor, *cis*-3-[3-(4-methyl-piperazin-1-yl)-cyclobutyl]-1-(2-phenyl-quinolin-7-yl)-imidazo[1,5-a]pyrazin-8-ylamine (Compound-1) that was identified through a structure-based drug design approach. This compound displayed a cellular IC₅₀ of 19 nM for inhibition of ligand-dependent autophosphorylation of IGF-IR with 14-fold cellular selectivity over the human