



MEDIMMUNE AND MEDAREX  
*Will Medi-Meda help Lupus Victims?*

MedImmune ([MEDI - news](#)) and Medarex ([MEDX - news](#)) filed for an investigational new drug application (IND) with the FDA for **MEDI-545**. The drug is a fully human monoclonal antibody (MAb) **targeting multiple interferon-alpha subtypes**. Data indicate that levels of interferon-alpha are elevated in many patients with active systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE or lupus) and other autoimmune disorders, and may be associated with disease activity. In preclinical trials, MEDI-545 has been shown to neutralize this activity.

The filing was based on data from experimentation that indicate the drug may suppress the abnormal immune activity associated with lupus by binding to the pattern of multiple interferon-alpha subtypes seen in the serum of lupus patients. Further, preclinical studies have shown that an inhibition of interferon-alpha signaling **corresponded to decreased autoantibody production and decreased disease activity**.

This news brings some hope as all suggested treatment for SLE have failed to pass the litmus test. For Medarex, the entry of this antibody into a clinical program would mark the twenty-fifth antibody utilizing this firm's UltiMAB® technology in clinical studies. **Read press release:** [MedImmune and Medarex Announce Filing of Investigational New Drug Application for Monoclonal Antibody for the Treatment of Lupus](#)

OTHER NEWS

GENENTECH paid CURIS ([CRIS - news](#)) For the second time this year Genentech elects to extend funding of the cancer therapeutic development **collaboration with Curis**. The money is to support Curis scientists developing the company's **Hedgehog antagonist technologies for treating solid tumor cancers**.

Genentech has selected a lead candidate, a small molecule antagonist of the Hedgehog pathway. Its continued funding support has been seen as further validation of Curis scientists' efforts spent towards Hedgehog inhibition solid tumor program. **Read more:** [Curis Announces the Receipt of Second Extension of Funding from Genentech](#)

**OSI Pharmaceuticals** ([OSIP - news](#)) estimated that the third-quarter performance of anti-cancer drug Tarceva reflected a **12% to 15% quarter-on-quarter growth** in overall market share of the brand. OSI and Genentech. co-market Tarceva. On Monday, Genentech reported that **Tarceva sales in the U.S. rose to \$73.2 million** in the third quarter from \$70.2 million in the previous quarter.

**We believe the drug is on its way to become a blockbuster. Read more:** [OSI Reiterates Confidence in Tarceva](#)

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