A Varicella-Zoster Virus Mutant That Is Markedly Impaired for Latent Infection Available for the Development of Shingles Vaccines and Diagnostics

Description of Technology: Reactivation of latent Varicella-Zoster virus (VZV) infection is the cause of shingles, which is prominent in adults over the age of 60 and individuals who have compromised immune systems, due to HIV infection, cancer treatment and/or transplant. Shingles is a worldwide health concern that affects approximately 600,000 Americans each year. The incidence of shingles is also high in Europe, South America, and India; the latter having an estimated two million individuals affected, yearly. Recent research studies show that VZV vaccines have a significant effect on decreasing the incidence of shingles in elderly.

The current technology describes compositions, cells and methods related to the production and use of a mutant VZV and the development of vaccines against the infectious agent. Latent VZV expresses a limited repertoire of viral genes including the following six open reading frames (ORFs): 4, 21, 29, 62, 63, and 66. The present invention describes an ORF29 mutant VZV that demonstrates a weakened ability to establish latency in animal studies. The current technology provides methods for using the mutant in the development of live vaccines and diagnostic tools. A related invention is described in PCT/US05/021788 (publication number WO2006012092).

Applications: Development of vaccines and diagnostics for prevention of shingles.

Development Status: Pre-clinical studies have been performed to demonstrate the reduced latency of the ORF29 mutant VZV in animals.

Inventors: Jeffrey Cohen (NIAID) and Lesley Pesinšak (NIAID).


Licensing Status: Available for licensing and commercial development. Licensing Contact: Kevin W. Chang, Ph.D.: 301–435–5018; changke@mail.nih.gov.

Collaborative Research Opportunity: The NIAID Laboratory of Clinical Infectious Diseases is seeking statements of capability or interest from parties interested in collaborative research to further develop, evaluate, or commercialize vaccine strains of VZV vaccine with impaired latency. Please contact Kelly Murphy, J.D., M.S., at 301/451–3523 or murphykt@niaid.nih.gov for more information.

Anti-Plasmodium Compositions and Methods of Use

Description of Technology: The present invention comprises peptides/antibodies specific for the binding proteins of Plasmodium, a parasite responsible for malaria, hence in effect blocking the parasite’s binding to the erythrocytes. Also included are methods for their use in preventing, diagnosing or treating the related infections. Although malaria is virtually eradicated in the United States, it continues to be one of the most serious infectious diseases in the world, killing millions of people each year in the countries throughout Africa, Asia and Latin America. In fact, over 41% of the world population lives in the regions affected by malaria. In vitro studies using the antibodies described in the current technology showed ~80% reduction in the number of blood cells infected with Plasmodium parasite. Infectivity studies using peptides demonstrated that they are also specifically able to prevent binding of parasites to blood cells. The claimed antibodies and peptides can also be used for immunization of humans and animals, or for development of diagnostic kits capable of detecting the presence, localization and quantity of the Plasmodium parasites in tissues and cells.

Applications: Diagnostics development; Vaccines development. Inventors: David L. Narum and Kim Lee Sim (NIAID).

Relevant Publications:

3. Canadian Application No. CA236247

Licensing Status: Available for exclusive or non-exclusive licensing. Licensing Contact: RC Tang, J.D., LLM; 301–435–5031; tang@mail.nih.gov

Dated: December 1, 2008.

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Director, Division of Technology Development and Transfer, Office of Technology Transfer, National Institutes of Health.

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

Mandatory Guidelines for Federal Workplace Drug Testing Programs

Correction

In notice document E8–26726 beginning on page 71858 in the issue of Tuesday, November 25, 2008, make the following correction:

On page 71858, in the first column, under the DATES heading, in the first line, “Effective Date: March 25, 2008” should read “Effective Date: May 1, 2010”.

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