

New Therapy Provides Hope For Lung Cancer Patients

(NAPSA)—Researchers may have encouraging news for people with lung cancer. According to the American Cancer Society, it is estimated that more than 172,570 people will be diagnosed with lung cancer in the United States in 2005 and more than 163,510 lung cancer patients will die. Until recently, non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC) patients for whom chemotherapy had failed had few options that were proven to extend the chance for a patient's survival.

“When chemotherapy fails patients with advanced non-small cell lung cancer, they often feel like they are running out of options. Now, with the FDA (Food and Drug Administration) approval of Tarceva™ (erlotinib), patients not only have another option, but one that may extend survival. That is something lung cancer patients don't often get offered,” said Laurie Fenton, president and CEO of The Lung Cancer Alliance.

Hope For Many

Tarceva™ was recently approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for the treatment of locally advanced or metastatic NSCLC in patients for whom at least one type of chemotherapy failed.

Results from two earlier large, randomized, placebo-controlled clinical trials of the drug, when used at the same time as chemotherapy in patients with locally

advanced or metastatic NSCLC who had never been treated before, showed no clinical benefit and therefore it is not recommended for this use.

Tarceva™ is an oral tablet taken on a daily basis and is not chemotherapy, but belongs to a class of drugs called epidermal growth factor receptor inhibitors. The FDA based its approval on results from a large, randomized, placebo-controlled clinical trial in which patients who had previously received chemotherapy received Tarceva™ alone. Patients in this trial taking Tarceva™ had a median survival of 6.7 months versus 4.7 months for patients receiving placebo.

The most common side effects associated with Tarceva™ are rash and diarrhea. A lung injury called interstitial lung disease (ILD) has been seen in clinical trials. Reports of ILD were serious and have included fatalities. No differences were seen between those patients receiving Tarceva™ and patients who were on placebo.

This is the only drug in this class that has been shown in a large randomized, controlled clinical trial to extend survival in NSCLC. Patients should talk to their physician about treatment options for NSCLC and can obtain full prescribing information by calling 1-877-TARCEVA or visiting <http://www.tarceva.com>.