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The lowdown on what's inside the pipeline

January 1, 2000 By Tim Horn

Brand Name: To be announced
Generic Name: Tipranavir
Company: Pharmacia & Upjohn
For: HIV
Class: Protease Inhibitor (PI)
Status: Phase II trials under way
Standard Treatment: Highly active antiretroviral therapy (HAART)
Notes: Designed with resistance
in mind. A test-tube study found tipranavir to be 90 percent effective against HIV strains resistant to three or more PIs. Information about dosing and side effects to be determined.
From the gut of PWA Stephen Gendin: "I'm skeptical of claims of unique-resistance profiles—they usually don't pan out. Tipranavir's long-term toxicities and dosing are the drug's most promising aspects, though both are still unclear."

Brand Name: Coactinon
Generic Name: Emivirine
Company: Triangle Pharmaceuticals
For: HIV
Class: NNRTI
Status: Phase I/II trials under way
Standard Treatment: HAART
Notes: A non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor (NNRTI) similar to nevirapine (Viramune), delavirdine (Rescriptor) and efavirenz (Sustiva). Twice-daily dosing is the plan, and information about side effects is pending.
From the gut of PWA Stephen Gendin: "What's so exciting about an NNRTI with an overlapping resistance profile? It's only useful to the NNRTI-naive, and there's no evidence that it's better than the NNRTIs already available."

Brand Name: To be announced
Generic Name: T-20 (Pentafuside)
Company: Trimeris
For: HIV

Class: Fusion Inhibitor
Status: Phase II trials under way
Standard Treatment: HAART
Notes: This new class of anti-HIV drug prevents the virus from attaching to CD4 cells at one particular site. No major side effects reported, but dosing is a hassle: T-20 is not effective if taken orally, so twice-daily injections are needed.
From the gut of PWA Stephen Gendin: Finally, a drug that operates in a unique way! This drug is important for people who've run through all other drug options. For those in need of new therapies, self-injection is the least of their problems."

Brand Name: Pegasys
Generic Name: Pegylated Interferon
Company: Hoffman LaRoche
For: Hepatitis C (HCV)
Class: Interferon
Status: Phase III trials under way; approvals pending
Standard Treatment: Robertron (ribavirin and standard interferon)
Notes: A new formulation of an old drug, pegylated interferon can be taken just once a week. In two clinical trials—neither enrolled HIVers—the drug was more effective than standard interferon in combating hepatitis C.
From the gut of PWA Stephen Gendin: "More convenient and less toxic than the standard treatment, this drug will be very popular. But as with anti-HIV meds, it still needs to be teamed with other drugs to control hepatitis C."

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