DNAtrix enters into license agreement with University of Florida to develop new oncolytic virus platform

DNAtrix, a clinical stage biotechnology company developing virus-driven immunotherapies for cancer, announced it has entered into an exclusive license agreement with the University of Florida, Gainesville to develop a novel oncolytic virus platform. The platform is based on myxoma virus, a poxvirus that has been shown to have beneficial features for treating cancers.

A major advantage of the myxoma virus is its ability to attach to T lymphocytes and other white blood cells, which are then delivered to the patient to trigger tumor cell killing and antitumor immunity. Myxoma virus can be armed with multiple immune stimulatory genes, a feature shared by other large DNA viruses such as herpes simplex and adenovirus.

"The myxoma virus has unique properties for attacking cancer," said CEO Frank Tufaro, Ph.D. "We think this technology platform provides a new modality for delivery of a potent oncolytic virus to tumors by co-administering it along with T cells. We look forward to testing this 'Trojan horse' strategy in the clinic."

"The myxoma virus is a novel oncolytic candidate that does not infect normal human cells but has a unique ability to identify the damaged signaling pathways found in the majority of human cancers; thus, resulting in productive infections in the patient's cancer cells," stated Grant McFadden, Ph.D., Professor in the Department of Molecular Genetics & Microbiology at the University of Florida, College of Medicine.

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