

Sunesis Pharmaceuticals Receives Milestone Payment From Biogen Idec

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SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO, Calif., July 13, 2009 /PRNewswire-FirstCall via COMTEX News Network/ -- Sunesis Pharmaceuticals, Inc. (Nasdaq: SNSS), a biopharmaceutical company focused on the development and commercialization of new oncology therapeutics for the treatment of solid and hematologic cancers, today announced that it has received a \$1.5 million milestone payment from Biogen Idec (Nasdaq: BIIB) for the selection of a Raf kinase inhibitor development candidate for the treatment of cancer. Biogen Idec is currently conducting IND-enabling GLP preclinical work with the Raf kinase development candidate.

"While our internal efforts are focused on the successful development of voreloxin, we are extremely pleased by the continued progress being made by Biogen Idec to advance a Raf kinase inhibitor toward the clinic," said Daniel Swisher, Sunesis' Chief Executive Officer.

In August 2004 the companies entered into a collaboration to discover and develop small molecule cancer therapeutics targeting kinases, a family of cell signaling enzymes that play a major role in the progression of cancer. The research term of this collaboration ended in June of 2008. Sunesis retains an option to participate in the co-development and co-promotion of the Raf kinase inhibitor resulting from this collaboration.

About Sunesis Pharmaceuticals

Sunesis is a biopharmaceutical company focused on the development and commercialization of new oncology therapeutics for the treatment of solid and hematologic cancers. Sunesis has built a highly experienced cancer drug development organization committed to advancing voreloxin in multiple indications to improve the lives of people with cancer. For additional information on Sunesis Pharmaceuticals, please visit <http://www.sunesis.com>.

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