

Estrigenix Therapeutics develops hot flash treatment that minimizes cancer risk

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A recently founded therapeutic company has re-invented estrogen treatment to target hot flashes in menopausal women without the risk of post-treatment health issues.

Hot flashes — a sudden feeling of warmth in the upper body that might be accompanied by reddening or sweating — is a common symptom of menopause. But not all women seek treatment for menopausal symptoms due to possible health issues, such as cancer or stroke, from treatment or hormone therapy, according to Estrigenix Therapeutics.

Estrigenix Vice President for Business Development Dr. Daniel Sem participated in a National Science Foundation program in which he interviewed menopausal women and found that “about 50 percent of the women’s biggest worry is hot flashes,” adding that “some women with breast cancer family history expressed even greater worry.”

Estrigenix Therapeutics can eliminate those negative consequences for menopausal women.

Estrigenix says its treatment includes a molecule that outdoes its competitors in effectiveness and in safety. The company says its molecule has a high “selectivity number,” which means it does well at treating hot flashes while avoiding the

potential downside of cancer cell proliferation.

The Estrigenix team has already received money from Small Business Innovation Research grants and seed funds, which has allowed them to file an investigational new drug application with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration after preclinical studies were completed of EGX358. After Phase 1 and Phase 2 clinical trials, EGX358 will then be licensed to seek pharma co-development partners and further development.

There are currently no approved drugs for treating hot flashes with the exception of non-selective estrogen receptor agonists. While other companies such as Bayer and Astellas are also developing new hot flash treatments, Estrigenix says it may stand out because of its selectivity number.

While the Estrigenix team is currently working to target hot flashes in menopausal women, the company's plans go beyond this symptom. After trials of pharmaceutical development for hot flashes are complete, they plan to pursue a subsequent Phase 4 study for a secondary target symptom: dementia.

Estrigenix presented at the Wisconsin Early Stage Symposium last week.

-By Riley Bell

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