



## FOR 9:00 AM (EST) RELEASE

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## AEGERA INITIATES PHASE I COMBINATION ONCOLOGY TRIAL OF XIAP ANTISENSE

**MONTREAL. September 21, 2005** - Aegera Therapeutics Inc. is pleased to announce the initiation of its second Phase I human clinical trial for AEG35156, Aegera's proprietary second generation XIAP antisense therapeutic. The trial is studying AEG35156 in combination with docetaxel (Taxotere<sup>®</sup>) in patients with solid tumours, and is being coordinated by the National Cancer Institute of Canada Clinical Trials Group at Queen's University, a research group supported by funding from the Canadian Cancer Society.

This multicenter trial is being conducted at three leading Canadian cancer centers: Montreal Jewish General Hospital; Princess Margaret Hospital in Toronto; and the BC Cancer Agency in Vancouver. Principal Investigators for the three sites are Dr. Gerald Batist in Montreal, Dr. Lillian Siu in Toronto, and Dr. Kim Chi in Vancouver. The main objective of this study is to determine the recommended Phase II dose of AEG35156 to be administered in combination with docetaxel for future clinical research studies.

"We have now treated at least one patient at each of the three study sites," commented Dr. Jacques Jolivet, VP Clinical at Aegera, "We are pleased to benefit from the coordinated efforts of the NCIC CTG and of the three centres who have enrolled the initial study patients on a rapid timeline."

"The preclinical synergy shown with docetaxel in preclinical models makes this an interesting study design" said Dr. Gerald Batist from the Jewish General Hospital in Montreal, Chair of Oncology at McGill University and Study Chair of this clinical trial.

### About AEG35156

AEG35156 is an inhibitor of the X-linked Inhibitor of Apoptosis Protein (XIAP), a protein that is proprietary to Aegera. XIAP is a pivotal inhibitor of apoptosis induced by both intrinsic and extrinsic death cues, and most cancer cell lines over-express XIAP and high levels of XIAP are strongly correlated with poor prognosis in multiple cancers and leukemias. AEG35156 is a second generation XIAP antisense drug, and was designed to be used in combination with a host of traditional and newly-developed cancer therapies to significantly improve treatment efficacy for multiple cancer types. AEG35156 has demonstrated efficacy in all of the in vivo models we have employed, as a stand-alone therapy and in combination with multiple chemotherapy compounds. The combination of AEG35156 with chemotherapeutic agents such as docetaxel represents a potential breakthrough approach to combating resistant cancers.

## **About Aegera**

Aegera Therapeutics Inc. (“Aegera”) is a clinical stage biotechnology company uniquely focused on developing cancer drugs by controlling apoptosis: inducing apoptosis to kill cancer cells and preventing apoptosis to save neuronal cells injured by chemotherapy. Our lead product, AEG35156, is currently in two separate Phase 1b human clinical trials as a mono-therapy and as combination therapy, in solid tumors and leukemia. Our second product, AEG33783, designed to protect nerve cells from multiple chemotherapy insults, is in late preclinical development. For more information, please visit Aegera’s website at [www.aegera.com](http://www.aegera.com).

## **About the National Cancer Institute of Canada Clinical Trials Group (NCIC CTG) at Queen’s University**

Funded by the Canadian Cancer Society through the National Cancer Institute of Canada, the NCIC CTG is a national cooperative research group comprised of more than 90 cancer centres and hospitals located throughout Canada. Its central organizational and operations office is located at Queen’s University in Kingston, Ontario. The mission of the NCIC CTG is to undertake and support cancer research and related programs in Canada that will lead to reduction of the incidence, morbidity and mortality from cancer.