

Trial to test cancer-fighting drug

By Diana Balazs

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A clinical trial has begun at the TGen Clinical Research Services at Scottsdale Healthcare to test a new drug designed to target and destroy breast, prostate, endometrial, pancreatic, ovarian, skin and testicular cancers.

The Phase 1 study will help determine if the drug known as EP-100 is safe and effective for patients with solid cancer tumors, with fewer side effects than chemotherapy or radiation treatment, said Scottsdale Healthcare spokesman Keith Jones.

Phase 1 means it is the first time the drug is being tested in humans. It is followed by two additional rounds of human testing, with the ultimate goal of U.S. Food and Drug Administration approval.

Dr. Ramesh Ramanathan, principal investigator for the trial in Scottsdale, said the drug is a membrane-disrupting peptide designed to "seek and destroy" cancer cells by targeting those with ex-

cessive luteinizing hormone releasing hormone or LHRH receptors. The study will enroll up to 36 adults.

EP-100 will be given intravenously for three out of four weeks.

Once the maximum tolerated dose has been determined, additional participants with specific diagnoses of either breast, ovarian, endometrial, pancreatic or prostate cancer will be enrolled.

EP-100, produced by Esperance Pharmaceuticals Inc. of Baton Rouge, La., was chosen from a range of drugs tested at TGen Drug Development Services in Scottsdale.

More about the trial can be found at www.clinicaltrials.gov.

Patients interested in participating should call patient care coordinator Joyce Ingold at 480-323-1339, toll free at 1-877-273-3713 or at jingold@shc.org.

TGen Clinical Research Services at Scottsdale Healthcare is a partnership of the Translational Genomics Research Institute (TGen) in Phoenix and Scottsdale Healthcare.