



Press release, March 8th 2019

## PROMISING AGENT FOR ISCHEMIC STROKE NOW TO BE TESTED IN HUMANS

**A compound developed by Danish researchers from the University of Copenhagen could be the key to one of the greatest unsolved challenges in modern medicine. The compound, which has shown very promising effects in animal models of ischemic stroke, is now to be tested in humans and also serves as a template for development of a marker for ischemic stroke.**

Ischemic stroke is one of the most frequent causes of death in the Western world and the primary cause of long-term disability such as paralysis and loss of function. In addition, ischemic stroke is one of the costliest diseases for Western countries often involving comprehensive hospital treatment, expensive medicine, rehabilitation, and long-term sick leave.

To date, only one drug, Alteplase, has been approved for the treatment of ischemic stroke. Nevertheless, the use of the drug requires a brain scan and acute treatment, which means that less than 10 percent of patients affected by ischemic stroke are actually treated.

Thus, treatment of ischemic stroke is one of the greatest challenges in modern medicine today.

### **New compound can be a paradigm shift in the treatment of ischemic stroke**

A compound denoted AVLX-144, originally discovered at the University of Copenhagen and subsequently developed by the Danish biotech company Avilex Pharma, has recently shown very promising results for the treatment of ischemic stroke.

The compound represents a new concept in the treatment of brain disorders, and preclinical studies have reinforced the expectation that AVLX-144 could become a drug for the acute treatment of ischemic stroke.

In a large, newly established, multiyear, international project supported by Innovation Fund Denmark, a group of experts from Denmark and abroad will collaborate to test AVLX-144 in human Phase 1 clinical trials.

The team will also develop a marker (PET tracer) for investigating whether AVLX-144 binds to the specific protein in the brain for which it was originally designed. Such a marker will be crucial for the further

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development of AVLX-144 and can also potentially be used for the diagnosis of patients who have been affected by ischemic stroke.

“We consider the investment from Innovation Fund Denmark a huge recognition of our previous work on developing AVLX-144. The investment will bring us a very decisive step forward in development, and we are convinced that if these studies turn out as we hope, it will result in great interest from investors and pharmaceutical companies. Ultimately, we can bring a paradigm shift in this type of treatment and help the millions of people affected by ischemic stroke each year.” says Kristian Strømgaard, co-founder of Avilex Pharma and Professor at the University of Copenhagen.

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### **Facts**

Program: Grand Solutions

Innovation Fund Denmark's investment: DKK 20 million

Total budget: DKK 26 million

Duration: 2.5 years

Official title: AVLX-144 as a novel treatment for ischemic stroke

### **About the project**

The project is a collaboration between Danish biotech company Avilex Pharma, the University of Copenhagen, Rigshospitalet, the University of Southern Denmark and Finnish Turku University. Together, the parties will examine AVLX-144 in clinical trials and develop a marker for diagnosis of blood clots in the brain based on the drug compound.

Press release translated from following source: <https://innovationsfonden.dk/da/nyheder-presse-og-job/lovende-middel-mod-blodpropper-i-hjernen-skal-nu-testes-pa-mennesker>

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