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Is this the pioneering DNA vaccine we've been waiting for?

The clocks go forward at the end of the week: British Summer Time is finally upon us. In typical Brit fashion, many of us will rush outside to bask in the sun at every possible chance we get.



And while I don't want to be a spoilsport, the fact is that this can be dangerous. We all too often overlook the harmful impact the sun can have. The most lethal effect of over-exposure of course is melanoma. This can be a killer. If you ever discover a small, itchy, bleeding mole then you need to get down to the doctor quick, before it spreads. The latest figures from Cancer Research UK show that in 2008, 11,767 new cases of malignant melanoma were diagnosed and more than 98,800 non-melanoma skin cancers were registered.

But here's the good news. One AIM-listed penny share company believes that it could beat not only melanoma, but other types of cancer too. And it's not the only company making serious advances in the treatment of cancer right now (more on that later).

So to find out all about it, I headed up the offices of **SCANCELL HOLDINGS (AIM:SCLP)**, on the site of Nottingham's City Hospital to meet joint chief executives Richard Goodfellow and Professor Lindy Durrant, as well as chairman David Evans whose many stock market successes in the field of healthcare include **EPISTEM (EHP)** and **IMMUNODIAGNOSTICS (IDH)**.

Cancer research continues to make headway

Cancer is the foremost target of drug research and progress is being made. Early drugs were highly toxic and roamed around the body looking for any cell that was rapidly sub-dividing. While these included fast growing

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Shares in FITBUG (AIM:FTBG) add 10% to 1.8p

- Fitbug shares prices increased 10% after reports 'of solid growth' in France and the launch of its fitness tracking device in Germany.
- An additional order from the Holmes Place fitness clubs suggests growing interest in Fitbug's portable device
- The device measures a person's level of activity and is part of a computerised, self-help solution to personal fitness.

Something astonishing is buried deep beneath Yorkshire...

If unleashed, this could be THE commodity story of 2012

There's a window of opportunity here for smart investors with an eye for big, bold stock stories.

Watch this and find out what's buried beneath Yorkshire and how I think you could profit from this information:

cancer cells they also included, for instance, hair follicles, which is why cancer patients suffered hair loss.

Today though, we know of particular proteins, or pathways involved in cell reproduction that cause cancer and having identified these with diagnostic tests we can target them specifically. The most celebrated example is the drug Herceptin, successfully used to treat women with a certain type of breast cancer.

The exciting discovery of the body's own protective mechanisms

Thanks to these advances there are now more than 20 billion-dollar selling cancer drugs. Scancell, though, thinks that vaccines could offer a more effective approach. By harnessing the body's own protective mechanisms, vaccines have virtually eliminated polio and smallpox and the search is on for vaccines to beat cancer. There are two types of vaccine.

Prophylactic vaccines prevent the onset of disease. Examples are Gardasil and Cervarix, both human papillomavirus vaccines that are given to young women to protect them against the threat of cervical cancer. The other type is the therapeutic vaccine, delivered to the patient after a problem has emerged.

For therapeutic vaccines, the hunt is on. **Oxford Biomedica (AIM: OXB)** and **Vernalis (LSE: VER)** have raised money for cancer vaccine research. Roche has recently won EU approval for the launch of Zelboraf. This twice-daily pill for skin cancer is designed to be used alongside a companion diagnostic test that identifies a specific genetic mutation but, according to Scancell, it treats only some forms of skin cancer and may only have a temporary effect.

Meanwhile, in the United States, Provenge, a drug approved for prostate cancer, has seen its sales rise quickly to \$100m – but this involves taking blood from the patient, mixing it in a bespoke manner with proteins and then injecting it back to the patient. A course of three injections can cost \$93,000.

How does it all work?

Scancell has developed a therapeutic DNA vaccine. These third generation vaccines are made up of a small, circular piece of bacterial DNA (called a plasmid) that has been genetically engineered to produce one or two specific proteins.

Once injected, with the aid of rather nasty looking multi-pronged device that electrically stimulates the pulse at the

Quote of the Day

"I think property is a lousy investment. No one ever tells you the truth about property – they forget the legal fees, the repairs and renewals, the stamp duty and the estate agent's fees when they sell it."

– Peter Hargreaves of Hargreaves
Lansdown

Reader's Comment of the Day

" Thanks for exposing this city racket, Tom and for trying to suggest an eminently sensible way forward. Let's hope it happens but I shan't be holding my breath! It is high time all that gobbledygook on those ridiculously thick rights offer documents etc. were simplified to a bare minimum. Surely nobody can read it, let alone understand it.

It seems to me the world needs oil now! Today the window of opportunity will only be opened for a short time when the states elect romney(not if) the only area not be drilled will be the white-house front lawn delay will be costly."

moment of the drug injection, this DNA is then read by cells that consequently start to make specific proteins. The body recognises these proteins as foreign. This alerts and re-educates the immune system, which produces 'T cells' that zap the cancer tumours and prevents the spread of the disease.

Scancell could smash the \$50bn market

Scancell tested this method in animal models in 2008 with "stunning" results and has now embarked upon the first human trial. The first patient, suffering from severe melanoma, was recruited in 2010 and was given the DNA vaccine. Although patient recruitment has been a little slow, nine have now been enrolled and have been dosed with no serious side effects. Phase two will see an upping of the dose and recruitment of 13 more patients and results should be seen at the end of 2013.

If it works then Scancell believes that this ImmunoBody platform could be used to treat many other forms of cancer and has made no secret of its plan to sell out the business to an industry partner. That could net a healthy profit for its investors.

Worldwide sales of cancer drugs top \$50bn and are growing at 12% per year. Any therapy that looks as if it can beat this killer disease has enormous value.

Until next time,

Tom Bulford
The Penny Sleuth

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Today's biggest AIM movers

XTRACT ENERGY (XTR)	+22.7%
PORTA COMMUNICATIONS (PTCM)	+22.6%
STRAIGHT PLC (STT)	+16.7%
THEO FENNELL PLC (TFL)	-18.0%
SUNKAR RESROUCES (SKR)	-17.9%
AIREA PLC (AIEA)	-17.0%

Quotes taken from Bloomberg at 1.00pm today.

This is your final notice

Britain is drowning in debt.

We now owe £79,000 for every working Brit.

But what will really make you angry is that the authorities want YOU to help pay for this mess.

And they're targeting your cash savings, pension, and potentially even your house, to help them pay back these debts.

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