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InterVenn BioSciences Enrolls First Patients in VOCAL Trial

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New ovarian cancer test combines AI and Mass Spec in an effort to better identify cancerous ovarian tumors from benign ones through a simple blood draw

CHICAGO & REDWOOD CITY, Calif.

InterVenn BioSciences, a life sciences and technology company developing an AI-driven mass spectrometry platform, announced today the first patients have been enrolled in a new clinical trial to better distinguish benign from malignant ovarian masses through a simple blood test. The VOCAL test is a liquid biopsy that combines mass spectrometry and artificial intelligence and machine learning to analyze tumor-associated changes in circulating glycoproteins. The announcement was made at the 2019 ASCO® Annual Meeting in Chicago.

Ovarian cancer ranks fifth in cancer deaths among women, accounting for more deaths than any other cancer of the female reproductive system, according to the American Cancer Society. In the U.S., it is estimated about 22,530 women will receive a new diagnosis of ovarian cancer in 2019, and more than 60 percent of these women will die from ovarian cancer. The prospective, international, multi-center, observational study will collect de-identified samples and data from 1,200 women, in both the United States and abroad, in order to validate ovarian cancer-specific glycoproteomic signatures in the blood based on histologically confirmed malignancy status of the mass. The primary endpoint will evaluate predictive values of the VOCAL test, with a secondary outcome analyzing the relationship between glycoproteins and survival rates among women with ovarian cancer.

"There is so little we understand about ovarian cancer that the primary course of treatment for women with a tumor in their ovaries is the partial or total removal of the organs and sometimes even the uterus," said Aldo Carrascoso, CEO of InterVenn BioSciences. "Through VOCAL, we hope to help physicians and patients better select a course of treatment most appropriate for their disease through an easy blood test that results in an improved quality of life."

Glycoproteomics, an emerging field combining proteomics and glycomics, can help with better biomarker and target discovery but produces an enormous amount of data that historically takes months to fully analyze and is often difficult to reproduce. By leveraging mass spectrometry, hi-res characterization of post-translational modifications, and artificial intelligence, InterVenn streamlines and expedites this process and ensures that any variability in the workflow--from the sample collection, processing, and all the way to tryptic digestion-- is minimized and the results are reproducible.

In December 2018, InterVenn secured an institutional investment of $9.4 million led by seasoned biotech investor Genoa

Ventures, with participation from True Ventures, Amplify Partners, Boost VC, and Prado SV.