



June 16, 2017

## **Conatus Pharmaceuticals Announces Poster Presentation at International Liver Cell Conference**

### **Emricasan Improves and Sustains Key Functions in Cirrhotic Liver Cells**

GALWAY, Ireland, June 16, 2017 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Conatus Pharmaceuticals Inc. (NASDAQ:CNAT) announced today that a poster addressing preclinical results with the company's lead pancaspase inhibitor, emricasan, will be displayed from 12:45 p.m. to 2:15 p.m. IST today at the 19<sup>th</sup> International Symposium on Cells of the Hepatic Sinusoid in Galway, Ireland, June 14-17, 2017. The poster, entitled, "The pancaspase inhibitor emricasan improves the phenotype of hepatocytes from human and rat cirrhotic livers without evidence of hepatotoxicity," will be presented by senior author Jordi Gracia-Sancho, Ph.D., Head of the Liver Vascular Biology Research Group, IDIBAPS Biomedical Research Institute & CIBEREHD, Barcelona, Spain. A copy of the poster will be available after the opening of the poster session in the Data section of the Conatus website at [www.conatuspharma.com](http://www.conatuspharma.com).

Human cirrhotic hepatocytes cultured in an advanced fluidic device that mimics the liver sinusoid, and treated in vitro with emricasan for 24 hours, exhibited higher albumin (+60%) and urea (+17%) production than vehicle-treated control hepatocytes, suggesting improved synthetic capacity. Similarly, hepatocytes isolated from cirrhotic rats after treatment with emricasan for 7 days showed increased production of urea (+160%) and albumin (+156%), and higher cytochrome P450 3A4 (a liver enzyme) activity (+101%) compared with hepatocytes isolated from vehicle-treated control cirrhotic rats, suggesting improved synthetic and detoxification capacity.

Improvements in the hepatocyte phenotype were maintained as evidenced by sustained expression of the master regulator HNF4a and selected transporters. Cell viability was maintained; levels of transaminases and LDH in cell media (in vitro) were normal; and biochemical tests in treated rats (in vivo) were improved, indicating no hepatotoxicity with emricasan in either human or rat hepatocytes.

Dr. Gracia-Sancho stated "the results from this study demonstrate the hepatoprotective effects of emricasan in a pre-clinical model of cirrhosis and importantly in cells from cirrhotic patients, altogether adding a significant piece of data to our understanding of the molecular mechanisms of this drug. Considering these data, and those presented at the last Liver Meeting demonstrating the beneficial effects of emricasan improving liver fibrosis and portal hypertension in a rat pre-clinical model of cirrhosis, its clinical evaluation for the treatment of chronic liver disease is highly encouraged."

### **About Conatus Pharmaceuticals**

Conatus is a biotechnology company focused on the development and commercialization of novel medicines to treat liver disease. Conatus is developing its lead compound, emricasan, for the treatment of patients with chronic liver disease. Emricasan is designed to reduce the activity of enzymes that mediate inflammation and apoptosis. Conatus believes that by reducing the activity of these enzymes, emricasan has the potential to interrupt the disease progression across the spectrum of liver disease. For additional information, please visit [www.conatuspharma.com](http://www.conatuspharma.com).

### **Forward-Looking Statements**

This press release contains forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended. All statements other than statements of historical facts contained in this press release are forward-looking statements, including statements regarding emricasan's potential to interrupt the disease progression across the spectrum of liver disease. In some cases, you can identify forward-looking statements by terms such as "may," "will," "should," "expect," "plan," "anticipate," "could," "intend," "target," "project," "contemplates," "believes," "estimates," "predicts," "potential" or "continue" or the negative of these terms or other similar expressions. These forward-looking statements speak only as of the date of this press release and are subject to a number of risks, uncertainties and assumptions, including those risks described in the company's prior press releases and in the periodic reports it files with the Securities and Exchange Commission. The events and circumstances reflected in the company's forward-looking statements may not be achieved or occur and actual results could differ materially from those projected in the forward-looking statements. Except as required by applicable law, the company does not plan to publicly update or revise any forward-looking statements contained herein, whether as a result of any new information, future events, changed circumstances or otherwise.

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