# Sonus Pharmaceuticals Enrolling Patients In Phase 1 Study With Novel Paclitaxel Formulation For Cancer Treatment

## Company Testing Paclitaxel Product in Humans for Reduced Side Effects, Shortened Administration Time and Increased Drug Dose

**BOTHELL, Washington, January 8, 2001-**Sonus Pharmaceuticals, Inc. (Nasdaq:SNUS) announced today that patients are being enrolled in a Phase 1 clinical study with the Company's first drug delivery product, S-8184, an injectable paclitaxel emulsion formulation. Paclitaxel is the active ingredient in the highly successful drug Taxol(R) that is used in the treatment of various cancers including breast, ovarian and non-small cell lung cancer.

Using the Company's TOCOSOL(TM) drug delivery system, S-8184 was shown in pre-clinical studies to be less toxic than the currently marketed formulation of paclitaxel. Sonus has launched its clinical development program to determine if this lower toxicity can result in a reduction or possible elimination of premedications in patients taking paclitaxel and permit administration of a higher dose of the drug. In addition, because of the anticipated lower toxicity of S-8184, the product will be given to patients in a matter of a few minutes compared to hours of infusion with the currently marketed formulation of paclitaxel.

The Phase 1 clinical study, conducted by Dr. Howard A. Burris III at the Sarah Cannon Cancer Center in Nashville, Tennessee, is a dose-escalating safety study in approximately 25 patients with advanced cancers, who have failed to respond to other therapies. S-8184 will be administered as a single, quick injection instead of the 3- to 24-hour infusion typically required with other paclitaxel formulations. The study will also test whether premedications, which are used to suppress allergic-type reactions to the currently marketed formulation of paclitaxel, may be eliminated with S-8184. Sonus expects patient enrollment in the S-8184 Phase 1 study to be completed in late 2001.

"The possibility of eliminating premedications and reducing administration time with S-8184 could, if proven, provide significant advantages to patients and physicians over the paclitaxel formulation currently in use," said Dr. Burris. "The Sarah Cannon Cancer Center has a long history of conducting clinical trials for cancer drugs, and we are excited about the potential opportunities for S-8184 in cancer therapy."

"The goal of our Phase 1 study is to see if our TOCOSOL technology in S-8184 has the ability to reduce side effects in humans, which could allow clinicians to administer higher doses of the cancer fighting drug paclitaxel," said Gordon Brandt, M.D., Vice President of Clinical and Regulatory Affairs at Sonus. "We are pleased to be working with Dr. Burris and the staff at the Sarah Cannon Cancer Center and that we were able to initiate our S-8184 Phase 1 study so quickly after receiving approval of our Investigational New Drug Application from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration." S-8184 is the first product using the Company's TOCOSOL drug delivery technology, which features a vitamin-E based carrier that may reduce toxicity and have other therapeutic benefits.

Sonus Pharmaceuticals, Inc., located near Seattle, Washington, is a developer of novel drug delivery systems that may reduce side effects and improve ease of administration. The Company is also developing an oxygen delivery product for potential use in situations of surgical blood loss or for improved treatment of radiotherapy resistant tumors.

The Company's news releases and other corporate information are available on its web site at www.sonuspharma.com. Sonus news releases may also be obtained via fax by calling 800-758-5804, Ext. 108377.

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Certain of the statements made in this news release are forward-looking such as those, among others, relating to the development of S-8184 and potential applications for the product. As discussed in the Company's annual report on Form 10-K and its quarterly reports on Form 10-Q filed with the SEC, actual results could differ materially from those projected in the forward-looking statements as a result of the following factors, among others: Sonus products will require extensive clinical testing and approval by regulatory authorities, which approvals are lengthy and expensive and may never occur, and may be subject to certain other regulatory requirements; there can be no assurance that the Company will be successful in its efforts to develop drug delivery and oxygen delivery products; there can be no assurance that Phase 1 clinicals for S-8184 will be successful; there can be no assurance that Sonus will complete pre-clinical trials and initiate human clinical trials with its oxygen delivery product; the Company's results from operations have varied and will continue to vary from quarter to quarter and will depend upon, among other factors, timing and cost of clinical trials planned by Sonus and receipt of collaborative partner payments if any; there can be no assurance that the Company will receive any future collaborative partner payments or that its

cash requirements will be met by any such payments; and Sonus may seek external financing through available means, which may include debt and/or equity financing or the licensing or sale of proprietary or marketing rights, and there can be no assurance that financing will be available on acceptable terms, if at all.