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Can Invion's promising technology do more than just treat cancer patients?

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Highlights

- Invion is developing INV043, the latest active pharmaceutical ingredient, using its innovative Photosoft™ technology.
- Under the initial proof-of-concept tests, INV043 shows promise in treating a range of cancers and as a diagnostic tool.
- Cancers “glow” under blue light during in-vivo studies using INV043 and even small tumours that can’t be seen by the naked eye can be easily identified.
- This opens the potential for INV043 to be used to assist cancer surgeries or to identify remaining tumours following cancer treatments.
- The proof-of-concept tests showed no toxicity over the short (24 hours) or long term (1 week) when INV043 doses up to 5mg/kg were administered.

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Life sciences firm Invion Limited ([ASX:IVX](#)) is riding high in the cancer treatment space on the back of its innovative Photosoft™ technology, which may be useful as an alternative approach to fighting cancers.

Photosoft™ is being developed as the next-generation Photodynamic Therapy (PDT). A potential alternative to surgery, Photosoft™ uses non-toxic photosensitisers and visible light to destroy cancer cells and stimulate the immune system.

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But there could be more to Invion’s technology than meets the eye.

In a significant development, the initial proof-of-concept results have demonstrated the theragnostic potential of INV043, the latest Active Pharmaceutical Ingredient (API) using the Photosoft™ technology. Thus, INV043 can be used as both a therapy and a diagnostic tool.

The promising early indications may bring selective tumour localisation to the table, therefore smoothening the diagnosis and thereby treatment of some of the most difficult-to-treat cancers.

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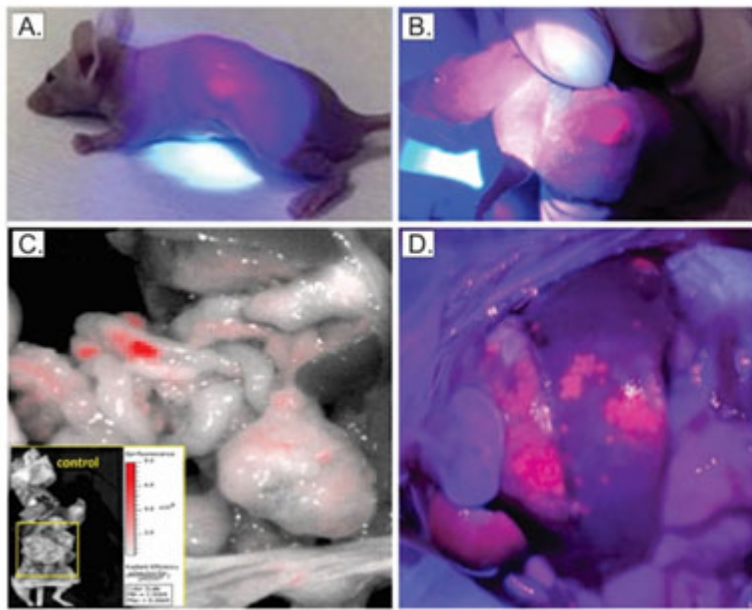
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(A, B) INV043 was strongly localised to tumour mass and margins in subcutaneous breast (A) and pancreatic (B) tumours; and within one hour of administration was excluded from surrounding healthy tissues. Fluorescence was retained within tumour mass for at least 3 days.

(C, D) INV043 rapidly localised to metastatic breast (C) and ovarian (D) cancer deposits in the peritoneal cavity after IP administration. Within 24 hours INV043 was not detectable in healthy tissues, but remained concentrated within tumour mass and metastatic nodules throughout peritoneal cavity for at least 3 days. Fluorescence highlighted small metastatic nodules in the peritoneal cavity that were not visible to the naked eye.

Source: IVX update, dated 25 May 2021

Proof-of-concept tests on multiple cancer types were undertaken by the Company in partnership with its research partner, the Hudson Institute of Medical Research.

Inside the Tumour Localisation potential of INV043

INV043 has highlighted the potential to diagnose cancer as it illuminated tumour growths. In proof-of-concept tests, localisation in vivo was monitored using the intrinsic fluorescence of INV043 under blue light.

The chromophore fluorescence excited by blue light provides a highly visible definition of tumour deposits and margins to the naked eye. This means INV043 could be useful during surgery to identify the boundaries of the cancer.

INV043 was administered either intratumorally (for subcutaneous tumours) or intraperitoneally (for metastatic peritoneal tumours), resulting in strong localisation to tumour deposits.

INV043 also shows non-toxicity and selective retention

INV043 was retained by both primary and metastatic tumour deposits for at least three days post its administration. Moreover, the metastatic deposits (less than 1mm) were highlighted fluorescence, readily visible under blue light.

Over the short (24 hours) or long term (1 week), no toxicity was identified when the doses up to 5mg/kg were administered. Meanwhile, INV043 also did not induce detectible photosensitivity under ambient light.

Cancer Expert's Comment on INV043 diagnostic potential

Leading cancer researcher Andrews Stephens is the Group Head of the Ovarian Cancer Biomarkers Research Group at Hudson Institute.

Commenting on the prospective diagnostic usage of INV043, Dr Stephens said: "There's also the potential to use INV043 in what we call the theragnostic space, which is as a therapeutic and/or as a diagnostic. And we can use it for doing things like looking at very small tumour deposits that can't be seen, for example, or to define margins of a tumour to assist in surgeries, or to treat or ablate any remaining tumour that's present."

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“The ability of INV043 to become fluorescent is so good and the fluorescence is so bright that in fact when you use a very low-intensity blue light, it fluoresces very brightly red, and you can see quite small tumour deposits by eye,” he added.

Watch the video interview with Dr Stephens to find out what’s exciting him about Invion’s INV043 [here](#).

After the promising initial results, Invion is focused on further proof-of-concept studies looking at INV043’s effect on immune response as well as exploring its potential to work together with other therapies.

IVX stock traded at AU\$0.013 on 3 September 2021.

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