

# Catabasis Extends Series A To \$47.6M For Diabetes, Lipid Drugs

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Catabasis Pharmaceuticals Inc. said it has increased its Series A round to \$47.6 million and given itself the ability to advance treatments for Type 2 diabetes and very high triglyceride levels through proof-of-concept clinical trials.

The extra \$8 million, which closed on Dec. 2, adds to the \$39.6 million Catabasis raised in 2010 from Clarus Ventures, MedImmune Ventures and SV Life Sciences, which led the round, and Advanced Technology Ventures. All four firms participated in this new financing.

Catabasis, which has funds to last into 2013, will use the new capital to move its triglyceride-lowering drug into clinical trials in 2012, according to co-founder and Chief Scientific Officer Michael Jirousek. A treatment for Type 2 diabetes entered the clinic in October.

Catabasis aims to develop drugs that enhance the therapeutic effects of omega-3 fatty acids, docosahexaenoic acid and eicosapentaenoic acid. This financing will enable it to accelerate testing of CAT-2003, an omega-3-conjugated compound for very high triglycerides, or hypertriglyceridemia. The condition, defined as triglyceride levels greater than 500 milligrams per deciliter, is a risk factor for acute pancreatitis, according to the company.

Animal research suggests that CAT-2003 may be a better option for lowering triglycerides than existing treatments, such as Lovaza, an omega-3-acid ethyl esters treatment sold by GlaxoSmithKline PLC, according to Jirousek.

The Catabasis drug, which may be used as a first-line treatment or with another type of drug, fenofibrate, will enter Phase I studies in healthy volunteers. After showing the drug is safe in humans, Catabasis plans to initiate Phase Ib/IIa proof-of-concept studies in late 2012 in patients.

Meanwhile, Catabasis is positioning CAT-1004, its Type 2 diabetes drug, as a product that could help various types of patients by countering inflammation that contributes to a decline in pancreas function and to cardiovascular complications of the disease. The company intends to find a corporate partner to help develop the drug and is already fielding interest in the product, according to Jirousek.

Because CAT-1004 works differently from existing diabetes treatments, it might be used at various stages of the disease, such as with metformin when patients are first diagnosed and also later on when they start taking insulin, according to Jirousek.

In 2013, Catabasis expects to have proof-of-concept data for both the hypertriglyceridemia and the Type 2 diabetes medications, according to Chief Executive Jill Milne.

Cambridge, Mass.-based Catabasis also sees potential to treat other conditions through its technology, including multiple sclerosis, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis and muscular dystrophy, according to Jirousek.