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PRESS RELEASE

## **AVESTHAGEN obtains India patent for AVENT™**

### ***Biosimilar drug effective in addressing arthritic conditions to make significant entry into the \$6.5 billion Enbrel market***

**Bangalore, September 02, 2010** – AVESTHAGEN, a leading life science company pioneering the convergence between Food, Pharma and Population Genetics, today announced that the company has been granted a patent from Indian patent office for its robust process of production of Etanercept biosimilar. The company has named this drug AVENT™.

The company was granted regulatory approval by RCGM, Indian Regulatory Body for conducting the pre-clinical efficacy and toxicity for AVENT™ which has been successfully carried out. The patent includes the gene sequence in the Vector, its expression in the mammalian cell line and the purification process from the cell media to the formulated therapeutic TNFR fusion product. Having successfully obtained the patent for its gene sequence to the therapeutic production of purified TNFR fusion protein, Avesthagen is fast moving to commercialize this product.

Etanercept is a recombinant human soluble tumor necrosis factor-alpha (TNF $\alpha$ ) receptor fusion protein, that binds to TNF $\alpha$  and decreases its role in disorders involving excess inflammation in humans and other animals, including autoimmune diseases such as ankylosing spondylitis, juvenile rheumatoid arthritis, psoriasis, psoriatic arthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, and, potentially, in a variety of other disorders mediated by excess TNF $\alpha$ . This therapeutic potential is based on the fact that TNF-alpha is the "master regulator" of the inflammatory response in many organ systems.

U.S. Food and Drug Administration (US FDA) announced the approval of Enbrel for the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis (RA) in 1998. Subsequently US FDA approved recombinant Etanercept for treating ankylosing spondylitis, psoriasis, Juvenile rheumatoid arthritis. Recently in 2008, FDA advisory panel voted in favor of using recombinant Etanercept in children with moderate-to-severe psoriasis. The estimated worldwide sales of Etanercept in 2009 were approximately \$ 6.5 billion. The population comprising of the patients of arthritis is more than 7 million in India alone.

As per **Dr. Viloo Morawala Patell, Founder & CMD, Avesthagen** said, "We are absolutely delighted to receive this news. With this milestone we hope to provide more cost effective health care solutions with biosimilar segment. AVENT™ is effective in addressing arthritic conditions and will be part of the US\$ 6.5 billion market."

### **About Avesthagen Limited**

AVESTHAGEN LIMITED ([www.avesthagen.com](http://www.avesthagen.com)) is India's leading integrated systems biology platform company that focuses on achieving convergence of food, pharma and population genetics leading to predictive preventive and personalized healthcare. It employs 400 people worldwide and is headquartered in Bangalore. Avesthagen Limited has established world class, state-of-the-art laboratory facilities in Bangalore. It began business operations in 2001. Since its inception Avesthagen has grown into one of India's leading healthcare technology group in India, and its activities include, in addition to its agri-biotechnologies product pipeline, development of clinically validated botanical bioActives, derived from Indian medicinal plants, as well as the development of a pipeline of bio-similar drugs. Avesthagen Limited has four strategic business units: bioPharmaceuticals, bioNutrition, bioAgriculture and Science & Innovation. Its partners include multiple top 10 global companies in each of its fields of research. Avesthagen Limited collaborates at every stage in the value chain with appropriate partners, both public and private, for access to and exchange of technology and overall commercial expertise to leverage the 'India advantage'.

### **For more information, please contact:**

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