FDA approves skin cancer drug

October 13 2006

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved a new drug to treat a rare, slow-growing skin cancer.

The FDA approved Zolinza capsules for the treatment of cutaneous T-cell lymphomalymphoma, a lymphoma that affects the skin. The FDA, in a news release, said the drug was approved to use when the disease worsens, is persistent or returns after treatment with other drugs.

About 3 in 1 million people, mainly middle-aged men, are diagnosed with CTCL each year, the FDA said.

The FDA said it approved Zolinza as part of its Orphan Drug program, which offers companies financial incentives to develop medicines for diseases and conditions affecting fewer than 200,000 people in the United States a year.

Zolinza is manufactured by Pantheon Inc. for Merck & Co. Inc., the FDA said.