



For further information, contact:

Newron Pharmaceuticals
Dr. Luca Benatti
CEO
+39 02 610 3461

Halsin Partners
Mike Sinclair
Director
+44 (0) 870 747 0880

For Immediate Release

**NEWRON'S SAFINAMIDE IS WELL TOLERATED WITHOUT SIGNIFICANT
DRUG TO DRUG INTERACTION IN AN OPEN STUDY IN UNCONTROLLED
SEIZURE PATIENTS**

Bresso, Milan, Italy, November 18, 2003 – Newron Pharmaceuticals SpA, a clinical-stage company focused on developing novel CNS therapies, announced today positive preliminary results from a Phase II trial of safinamide in epilepsy. In this interim analysis safinamide was shown to be well tolerated in patients with medically intractable seizures. No serious adverse events occurred in the study and safinamide did not alter the kinetics of the other antiepileptic drugs. If these results are confirmed on full analysis of the data, Newron will initiate efficacy studies with safinamide at three chosen doses.

This open labelled study, conducted in 7 centers in Italy and Germany, was initiated to assess tolerability and drug to drug interaction of safinamide in 48 patients with uncontrolled seizures that have already been treated with up to three other antiepileptic drugs. Starting with an initial oral dose of 50 mg once daily, safinamide was increased every two weeks up to 300 mg OD or to the maximum tolerated dose. An interim analysis of the first 29 patients who completed the study showed excellent tolerability. In this group no drug to drug interaction was noted at any of the tested doses. Even if the study was not designed and powered to provide proof of efficacy, Newron is pleased to report that preliminary data showed a significant reduction in median seizure frequency from 50 mg progressing up to the highest dose.

“These initial positive data for the role of safinamide in epilepsy are encouraging. We intend to quickly complete full analysis so that we can begin dose-specific efficacy trials if these preliminary results are confirmed,” commented Ruggero Fariello MD, CSO of Newron Pharmaceuticals. “Earlier this year, Newron also announced that safinamide had demonstrated robust proof of efficacy in Parkinson’s disease patients. Confirmatory efficacy trials for this indication are also being conducted.”

About Safinamide

Safinamide is an investigational new drug that is entering Phase III clinical trials in Europe for the treatment of Parkinson’s disease and in Phase II for epilepsy. Safinamide is a unique molecule with multiple mechanisms of action, including sodium channel blocking activity, calcium channel modulation, glutamate release and a potent, selective and reversible inhibition of monoamine oxidase (MAO)-B, without a MAO-A effect and dopamine re-uptake inhibition. Safinamide has demonstrated efficacy in preliminary clinical trials for Parkinson’s disease. The development of safinamide in Parkinson’s disease is supported in part by a €2.7 million grant from the Italian Ministry of Productive Development’s Innovation Technology Fund.

About Epilepsy

Epilepsy is a number of diversified conditions characterized by recurrent seizures, abrupt disturbances in consciousness, behavior, emotion, motor function or sensation resulting from abnormal electrical discharge spreading over the brain. Epilepsy is categorized by type of seizure and can be divided into two major subgroups: partial seizures, where the site of origin is localized; and generalized seizures, where the activity occurs simultaneously in large areas of the cortex and usually involves both hemispheres. There are a number of known causes of epilepsy including head injuries, infections, drugs and alcohol. However, in approximately 35% of cases, the cause of epilepsy is unknown. In addition there are certain factors that trigger seizures, such as stress, sleep deprivation, a sudden stop of medication, hormonal changes of the menstrual cycle, and flickering or flashing lights. Epilepsy affects around 1% of all people, across all age groups, although slightly more in the elderly. There are more than 50 people suffering from epilepsy worldwide. Not all of these people require treatment, as some are able to cease medication after a period of time during which they have been seizure-free. The proportion of individuals on medication is thought to be around 70%, over half of whom require a combination of more than one drug, although treatment with one drug is preferable.

About Newron Pharmaceuticals

Newron Pharmaceuticals SpA is a clinical stage biopharmaceutical company focused on novel ion channel-based therapies for diseases of the central nervous system (CNS), particularly epilepsy, Parkinson's disease, neurodegeneration and pain. In addition to safinamide, Phase II clinical trials with ralfinamide, a potent sodium channel blocker for the treatment of neuropathic pain are about to start. Newron's clinical pipeline is supported by a broad portfolio of early stage products fueled by the company's discovery pipeline. Newron is headquartered in Bresso, near Milan, Italy. For further information visit www.newron.com.