October 28, 2011
SBI ALApromo Co., Ltd.

ALA Study Results Presented at the 49th Annual Meeting of Japan Society of Clinical Oncology (1)

- Success in diagnosis of peritoneal dissemination using ALA -

SBI ALApromo Co., Ltd., (Head office: Minato-ku, Tokyo; Representative Director and CEO: Yoshitaka Kitao; "SBI ALApromo"), a subsidiary of SBI Holdings, Inc. that conducts research and development of cosmetics, health foods and pharmaceuticals using 5-aminolevulinic acid (ALA)[*1], has succeeded in the detection of peritoneal dissemination of gastric cancer using ALA in collaborative research with a group led by Kentaro Kishi, assistant director of the surgical department, Osaka Medical Center for Cancer and Cardiovascular Diseases.

The study results were presented at the 49th Annual Meeting of Japan Society of Clinical Oncology (JSCO) held on October 27, 2011.

ALA-assisted photodynamic diagnosis (ALA-PDD) for cancer refers to a diagnostic method for the detection of cancer cells by imaging fluorescence from protoporphyrin IX (PPIX) which selectively accumulates in cancer cells after oral administration of ALA. ALA-PDD is believed to be applicable to a wide range of cancer types. SBI ALApromo has already been working on the development of ALA as an agent for urgent intraoperative photodynamic diagnosis of brain tumors.

In advanced gastric cancer, cancer cells spilling into the peritoneal cavity through the stomach wall cause a metastasis termed "peritoneal dissemination". While this metastasis is feared as the most common cause of recurrence, it is hard to detect with an existing imaging test, especially when it is a minute or flat lesion.

The Kishi team found that ALA-PDD made it possible to detect peritoneal dissemination of gastric cancer in an animal study. Furthermore, they applied the method to laparoscopy in patients with advanced gastric cancer and detected 4 cases of peritoneal disseminated metastasis and 1 case of liver metastasis among the 13 patients. Three of these 5 cases could not be detected under normal light so that the detections of metastasis allowed more appropriate treatment to be used. Thus, ALA-PDD for peritoneal dissemination of gastric cancer is expected to be a diagnostic method that is important in selecting the appropriate treatment option.

SBI ALApromo will make further efforts to pursue research on ALA-PDD so that it may help the many patients who are struggling with cancer.
Research outcomes and up-to-date information about ALA will be also available from ALAplus Lab (URL: http://www.ala-plus.jp/)

Glossary:

***1: 5-aminolevulinic acid (ALA)**

"ALA" is a type of natural amino acid that has survived the last 3,600 million years and is contained even in food products such as red wine and radish sprouts. It is known to get involved in production of chlorophyll, which is essential for photosynthesis in plants, and in production of vitamin B12, blood constituents and intracellular energy in animals. "ALA" is well known as an extremely important and essential ingredient for any species. It is used in a wide range of applications from intraoperative diagnosis of brain tumors and cancer screening in the medical field, anemia prophylaxis in the health foods field, to care for pimples and rough skin in the cosmetics field.