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ASIA EDITION

Akeso launches US Phase II cadonilimab study in gastric cancer

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The Memorial Sloan Kettering-led study will evaluate a PD-1/CTLA-4 bispecific antibody combination in perioperative gastric cancer treatment.

Akeso has launched a Phase II clinical study in the United States evaluating a cadonilimab-based combination regimen for perioperative treatment of gastric cancer.

The study is being conducted in collaboration with Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center and is led by Dr Yelena Janjigian, a specialist in gastrointestinal malignancies. It is enrolling patients with locally advanced, resectable HER2-negative gastric or gastroesophageal junction adenocarcinoma.

This is relevant because gastric cancer remains a high-burden malignancy with limited long-term outcomes in locally advanced disease. Standard perioperative FLOT chemotherapy achieves a 3-year overall survival rate of only 48 per cent, leaving room for more effective treatment strategies.

Cadonilimab is Akeso's PD-1/CTLA-4 bispecific antibody. It is designed to combine checkpoint blockade against two immune pathways in a single molecule, potentially offering a differentiated approach compared with separate antibody combinations.

The Phase II study will generate clinical evidence to support a potential international multicentre Phase III trial. It builds on evidence from Akeso's Phase III COMPASSION-15 trial and prior Phase II neoadjuvant studies in gastric and gastroesophageal junction adenocarcinoma.

The U.S. launch is strategically important because it expands cadonilimab's development beyond China and into a major global oncology research setting. Collaboration with Memorial Sloan Kettering may also support stronger international clinical validation.