

Astra joins Glaxo in lupus



[Madeleine Armstrong](#)

Astrazeneca has managed to bag US approval for anifrolumab in systemic lupus erythematosus, [despite its mixed data package](#). The next question is whether the interferon type I inhibitor, now branded Saphnelo, can challenge the leading SLE therapy, Glaxosmithkline's Benlysta. The latter has disappointed commercially since its launch in 2011 but is expected to finally become a blockbuster this year; sellside consensus compiled by *Evaluate Pharma* forecasts Benlysta sales of \$1.5bn by 2026, versus Saphnelo's \$488m. At least Astra does not have too many other rivals breathing down its neck, a look at the late-stage pipeline shows. Interestingly, Biogen has two shots on goal here, [having recently started pivotal development](#) of its second contender, BIIB059. And Roche is also developing Gazyva in lupus nephritis, where Aurinia [got approval of Lupkynis earlier this year](#). Meanwhile, a [previous pivotal failure](#) has not put off Immupharma, which is apparently [now pushing Lupuzor into a second phase 3](#), funded by its partner Avion.

The late-stage systemic lupus erythematosus pipeline

| Project | Company | Description | Trial details |
|---------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| Olumiant | Lilly/Incyte | Jak 1 & 2 inhibitor | Brave II ends Oct 2021; Brave I ends May 2022 |
| Dapirolizumab | Biogen/UCB | Anti-CD40L MAb | Phoenycs Go ends Feb 2023 |
| BIIB059 | Biogen | Anti-BDCA2 MAb | Topaz-1 ends Apr 2025; Topaz-2 ends Jun 2025 |
| Gazyva | Roche | Anti-CD20 MAb | Allegory ends Nov 2025 |
| Lupuzor | Immupharma/Avion Pharmaceuticals | Autophagy immunomodulator | Failed ph3 in Apr 2018 , new ph3 planned |

Source: *Evaluate Pharma & clinicaltrials.gov*.

[More from Evaluate Vantage](#)

Evaluate HQ
[44-\(0\)20-7377-0800](#)

Evaluate Americas
[+1-617-573-9450](#)

Evaluate APAC
[+81-\(0\)80-1164-4754](#)

© Copyright 2021 Evaluate Ltd.