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Contacts:

Dr. Cyndy D. Sanberg, Natura Therapeutics, Inc.
cds@naturatherapeutics.com (813) 866-7818

Dr. Jun Tan, University of South Florida,
Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Medicine
Jtan@hsc.usf.edu (813) 974-9326

Tampa company, Natura Therapeutics, and University of South Florida, jointly receive NIH grant to study green tea compound for Alzheimer's prevention and therapy

TeaMem™ may block a key process in Alzheimer's development

Tampa, Florida (June 3, 2009) – Researchers affiliated with Natura

Therapeutics, Inc., Tampa, Florida, and the University of South Florida have jointly received a one-year, \$110,000 Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) grant from the National Institutes of Health's (NIH) National Center for Complimentary and Alternative Medicine to continue studying TeaMem™, a compound made from green tea. TeaMem™ holds promise for preventing and treating Alzheimer's disease (AD), a disease that the Alzheimer's Association says today affects as many as 5.2 million Americans. The most recent grant follows two other NIH grants to develop and evaluate TeaMem™ - a \$160,000 grant for 2007-2008 and a \$140,000 grant for 2008-2009. The research conducted under these three grants was

also supported through matching funds from the Florida High Tech Corridor Matching Grants Research Program.

According to Jun Tan, M.D., Ph.D., a professor in the USF Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Medicine, and one of the grant's principal investigators, the grant will be used to investigate the role of TeaMem[™] in opposition to cleavage of the amyloid precursor protein proteolysis (APP) into Abeta peptides and resultant cerebral amyloidosis, a process identified as a key feature in AD pathology.

“Our recent findings suggest that strategies that promote non-amyloidogenic/alpha-secretase APP processing may have significant potential for the treatment of AD,” said Tan.

This SBIR grant, the most recent of three NIH grants, allows the continuing development of TeaMem[™] and its evaluation in the test tube (*in vitro*). The latest grant provides for testing *in vitro* and in the body (*in vivo*) using mouse models to evaluate the effects of TeaMem[™]. Early tests will evaluate TeaMem[™] in promoting non-amyloidogenic APP alpha-secretase proteolysis and then examine its therapeutic and preventive effects on AD pathology and cognitive impairment.

“We expect to clearly define this non-amyloidogenic mechanism and identify the potential molecular drug targets essential for formulating novel,

effective treatments against AD,” explained Cyndy D. Sanberg, Ph.D., senior vice president of Natura Therapeutics, Inc. and the other PI on the grant.

Tests, including cognitive tests, will use mouse models for oral administration of TeaMem™ to a prophylactic treatment group that will be compared to a second group with AD-like pathology. Groups will be compared for the effect of reducing AD-like pathology and behavioral impairment. The studies, said Tan, could lay the groundwork for AD clinical trials in humans in the near future.

In their 2008 report, the Alzheimer’s Association (www.alz.org) noted that AD was the nation’s sixth leading cause of death and predicts that 10 million baby boomers will develop AD. The direct and indirect costs of AD exceed \$148 billion annually, said the Association.

News release by Randolph Fillmore, Florida Science Communications

Natura Therapeutics, Inc. is a science-based, nutritional products company founded by leading neuroscientists from the University of South Florida, Tampa.

The University of South Florida is one of the nation's top 63 public research universities and one of 39 community engaged four-year public universities as designated by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. USF was awarded more than \$360 million in research contracts and grants in FY 2007/2008. The University offers 219 degree programs at the undergraduate, graduate, specialist and doctoral levels, including the doctor of medicine. The University has a \$1.8 billion annual budget, an annual economic impact of \$3.2 billion, and serves more than 46,000 students on campuses in Tampa, St. Petersburg, Sarasota-Manatee and Lakeland. USF is a member of the Big East Athletic Conference.

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