

Edgar Filing: Aeterna Zentaris Inc. - Form 6-K

Aeterna Zentaris Inc.
Form 6-K
September 30, 2004

FORM 6-K
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20549

REPORT OF FOREIGN ISSUER

Pursuant to Rule 13a-16 or 15d-16 of
the Securities Exchange Act of 1934

For the month of September 2004

AETERNA ZENTARIS INC.

(Formerly named AEterna Laboratories Inc.)

1405, boul. du Parc-Technologique
Quebec, Quebec
Canada, G1P 4P5

(Address of principal executive offices)

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant files or will file annual reports
under cover of Form 20-F or Form 40-F.

Form 20-F Form 40-F X
----- -----

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant by furnishing the information
contained in this Form is also thereby furnishing the information to the
Commission pursuant to Rule 12g3-2(b) under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934

Yes No X
----- -----

If "Yes" is marked, indicate below the file number assigned to the registrant in
connection with Rule 12g3-2(b): 82-

DOCUMENTS INDEX

DOCUMENTS	DESCRIPTION
-----	-----
1.	Press release dated September 27, 2004 -- AEterna Zentaris to Present New IN VITRO Data on Antiangiogenic Properties of

Edgar Filing: Aeterna Zentaris Inc. - Form 6-K

Perifosine at Strategic Research Institute's Angiogenesis
Conference

[Aeterna Zentaris LOGO]

AETERNA ZENTARIS INC. 1405 du Parc-Technologique Blvd.
Quebec (Quebec) Canada G1P 4P5 418 652-8525 F 418 652-0881
www.aeternazentaris.com

PRESS RELEASE
For immediate release

AETERNA ZENTARIS TO PRESENT NEW IN VITRO DATA
ON ANTIANGIOGENIC PROPERTIES OF PERIFOSINE AT
STRATEGIC RESEARCH INSTITUTE'S ANGIOGENESIS CONFERENCE

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS, SEPTEMBER 27, 2004 -- AEtterna Zentaris Inc. (TSX: AEZ; NASDAQ: AEZS) today announced that it will present new IN VITRO data on antiangiogenic properties of perifosine, the Company's novel, first-in-class, oral signal transduction/AKT inhibitor, at Strategic Research Institute's 2nd Annual Angiogenesis conference being held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Cambridge, MA. today.

Prof. Jurgen Engel, Executive Vice President, Global R&D and Chief Operating Officer of AEtterna Zentaris and Prof. Marcel Verheij, M.D., Ph.D. of the Netherlands Cancer Institute, will present IN VITRO data demonstrating that perifosine inhibits (suppresses) the formation of new endothelial capillaries, characteristic of angiogenesis, which is considered to be an important process involved in the growth of solid tumors and their capability to metastasize (spread).

Previously reported IN VITRO data had demonstrated perifosine's ability to (i) modulate multiple key signal transduction pathways involved in growth/proliferation and survival of cancer cells; (ii) induce apoptosis (programmed cell death); and (iii) act as a radiosensitizer and to synergistically enhance radiation-induced apoptosis. Agents such as perifosine that possess antiangiogenic properties in addition to selective anti-tumor (cytotoxic) activity may potentially be more effective as cancer treatments, especially in combination with other cancer treatment modalities.

The IN VITRO data being presented today were generated in two established IN VITRO angiogenesis models using three different types of endothelial cells: the HMVEC (human microvascular endothelial cells), BAEC (bovine aortic endothelial cells) and HUVEC (human umbilical venous endothelial cells). The following observations were made: (i) perifosine is selectively (preferentially) taken up by and accumulates in proliferating endothelial cells as compared to confluent cells; (ii) perifosine induces a dose-dependent and preferential apoptotic effect in proliferating endothelial cells; and (iii) perifosine inhibits, in a dose-dependent manner, the length of capillary-like tubule formation, an essential step in angiogenesis.

Multiple Phase II trials are currently underway evaluating perifosine as a

Edgar Filing: Aeterna Zentaris Inc. - Form 6-K

single agent and in combination with chemotherapy in several tumor types through collaboration with Keryx Biopharmaceuticals Inc. (Nasdaq: KERX) and the United States National Cancer Institute.

[Aeterna Zentaris LOGO]

ABOUT AETERNA ZENTARIS INC.

Aeterna Zentaris Inc. is a biopharmaceutical company focused in oncology and endocrine therapy. Its extensive portfolio, from drug discovery to marketed products, includes perifosine, an orally-active AKT inhibitor in several Phase II trials for multiple cancers, and cetrorelix, an LHRH antagonist already marketed for IN VITRO fertilization under the brand name Cetrotide(R), and also in advanced clinical development for the treatment of uterine myoma, endometriosis and benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH).

Aeterna Zentaris also owns 62% of Atrium Biotechnologies Inc., which develops, distributes and markets active ingredients, specialty fine chemicals, cosmetic and nutritional products for the cosmetics, chemical, pharmaceutical and nutritional industries.

News releases and additional information about Aeterna Zentaris are available on its new Web site www.aeternazentaris.com.

FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

This press release contains forward-looking statements made pursuant to the safe harbor provisions of the U.S. Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. Forward-looking statements involve known and unknown risks and uncertainties, which could cause the Company's actual results to differ materially from those in the forward-looking statements. Such risks and uncertainties include, among others, the availability of funds and resources to pursue R&D projects, the successful and timely completion of clinical studies, the ability of the Company to take advantage of business opportunities in the pharmaceutical industry, uncertainties related to the regulatory process and general changes in economic conditions. Investors should consult the Company's quarterly and annual filings with the Canadian and U.S. securities commissions for additional information on risks and uncertainties relating to the forward-looking statements. Investors are cautioned not to rely on these forward-looking statements. The Company does not undertake to update these forward-looking statements.

-30-

CONTACTS:

MEDIA RELATIONS

Paul Burroughs
(418) 652-8525 ext. 406
paul.burroughs@aeternazentaris.com

U.S. INVESTOR RELATIONS

Lippert/Heilshorn & Associates
Kim Golodetz
(212) 838-3777

INVESTOR RELATIONS

Jacques Raymond
(418) 652-8525 ext. 360
jacques.raymond@aeternazentaris.com

EUROPE

Matthias Seeber
+49 69 42602 3425
matthias.seeber@zentaris.de

Edgar Filing: Aeterna Zentaris Inc. - Form 6-K

kgolodetz@lhai.com

SIGNATURE

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, the registrant has duly caused this report to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned, thereunto duly authorized.

AETERNA ZENTARIS INC.

Date: September 29, 2004

By: /s/ Mario Paradis

Mario Paradis
Senior Finance Director and
Corporate Secretary