



## DIVE BRIEF

# Ventyx revises TYK2 drug plans after lackluster study data

Results showed Ventyx's drug met its goal in a Phase 2 psoriasis trial. But the "magnitude of efficacy" was less than targeted, leading the biotech to end the study.

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**Dive Brief:**

- Ventyx Biosciences on Monday said it will stop testing an experimental inflammatory disease drug in two conditions after results from a mid-stage study fell short of its expectations.
- The drug, dubbed VTX958, actually met the main and secondary goals in a Phase 2 trial testing it for moderate-to-severe plaque psoriasis. But the "magnitude of efficacy" reported was less than what Ventyx had targeted, leading the company to terminate that trial as well as another in psoriatic arthritis.
- VTX958 is a so-called TYK2 inhibitor, one of a class of drugs that have drawn significant interest from drugmakers. Ventyx, along with others in the field, hope to match or surpass Bristol Myers Squibb's first-to-market therapy, Sotyktu, which the pharmaceutical company forecasts will earn \$4 billion in annual sales.

**Dive Insight:**

The U.S. approval of Bristol Myers' TYK2 drug Sotyktu in psoriasis sparked a drug development race that has raised the profile of companies like Ventyx. Developers see these treatments as working well for psoriasis and in other inflammatory conditions like psoriatic arthritis and Crohn's disease — both indications Bristol Myers is currently studying Sotyktu in.

TYK2 is part of a family of proteins known as Janus kinases, or JAKs, which help control the body's immune regulation. Several JAK inhibitors are approved, but have safety concerns that TYK2 blockers might sidestep. As pills, meanwhile, TYK2 drugs could be more convenient alternatives to injectable drugs like AbbVie's Humira or Amgen's Enbrel.

With Monday's results, Ventyx now appears to be out of the TYK2 race in two indications. The company will continue testing VTX958 in Crohn's disease, for which it will conduct an interim efficacy analysis early next year.

"While the Phase 2 trial of VTX958 in plaque psoriasis met the primary and key secondary endpoints, we are disappointed by the magnitude of efficacy observed, despite having achieved target levels of drug exposure in the trial," said Ventyx CEO Raju Mohan, in a statement.

Shares in Ventyx fell by 80% in Tuesday morning trading, erasing hundreds of millions of dollars in market value.

Other drugmakers developing TYK2 inhibitors include Takeda, Priovant Therapeutics and Alumis. On Wednesday, Takeda released new mid-stage study data for its TYK2 drug in psoriatic arthritis, building on results earlier this year in psoriasis. Priovant is developing its drug, brepocitinib, in dermatomyositis and lupus.