

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

BEFORE THE PATENT TRIAL AND APPEAL BOARD

WOCKHARDT BIO AG,
Petitioner,

v.

ELI LILLY & COMPANY
Patent Owner.

Case IPR2016-01393
Patent 7,772,209 B2

Before MICHAEL P. TIERNEY, JACQUELINE WRIGHT BONILLA, and
TINA E. HULSE, *Administrative Patent Judges*.

TIERNEY, *Administrative Patent Judge*.

DECISION

Institution of *Inter Partes* Review and Grant of Motion for Joinder
37 C.F.R. § 42.108; 37 C.F.R. § 42.122(b)

I. INTRODUCTION

Wockhardt BIO AG (“Petitioner” or “Wockhardt”), filed a Petition requesting an *inter partes* review of claims 1–22 of U.S. Patent 7,772,209 B2 (Ex. 1001, “the ’209 patent”). Paper 1 (“Pet.”). Concurrent with the filing of the Petition, Petitioner filed a Motion for Joinder seeking to join the current proceeding to IPR2016-00318.¹ Motion for Joinder, Paper 3. Patent Owner and Petitioner filed a Joint Notice of Stipulation Concerning Joinder that states, among other things, that Patent Owner waives its right to file a Preliminary Response to the Petition. Paper 8. We have jurisdiction under 35 U.S.C. § 314.

To institute an *inter partes* review, we must determine that the information presented in the Petition shows “a reasonable likelihood that the petitioner would prevail with respect to at least 1 of the claims challenged in the petition.” 35 U.S.C. § 314(a). For the reasons set forth below, upon considering the Petition, we conclude that the information presented in the Petition establishes a reasonable likelihood that Petitioner will prevail in challenging claims 1–22 of the ’209 patent. We authorize an *inter partes* review to be instituted as to those claims. Our Decision to Institute in this proceeding is consistent with our institution of *inter partes* review in IPR2016-00318. IPR2016-00318, Paper 14 (“’318 Inst. Dec.”).

Additionally, all parties have stipulated that, subject to our approval, Wockhardt shall join the proceeding with Sandoz designated as Lead Petitioner and that Wockhardt will act as a silent understudy and will not file any papers or exhibits in the Joined Proceeding, except *pro hac vice* motions

¹ Sandoz Inc. (“Sandoz”) v. Eli Lilly & Company (“Patent Owner”), IPR2016-00318.

and administrative filings. Paper 8, 2–3. For the reasons provided below, we grant Wockhardt’s Motion for Joinder and exercise our discretion to join Wockhardt and the present proceeding to the IPR2016-00318 proceeding.

Our factual findings and conclusions at this stage of the proceeding are based on the evidentiary record developed thus far. This decision to institute trial is not a final decision as to the patentability of claims for which *inter partes* review is instituted. Our final decision will be based on the full record developed during trial.

A. Related Proceedings

The ’209 patent is the subject of litigation in the Southern District of Indiana, including *Eli Lilly & Co. v. Teva Parenteral Medicines, Inc.*, Case No. 1:10-cv-1376. Pet. 4–6.

The ’209 patent also has been challenged in the following instituted *inter partes* reviews IPR2016-00237 and IPR2016-00240 by Neptune Generics, LLC, and in IPR2016-00318 by Sandoz Inc. Several parties, including Petitioner, seek to join the instituted reviews. Specifically, in addition to the current Petitioner, Petitioners in IPR2016-01429 (Apotex et al.) and IPR2016-01340 (Teva and Fresenius) requested to join IPR2016-00318 and we have granted those requests.² Also, IPR2016-01190 (Apotex Inc. and Apotex Corp.), IPR2016-01335 (Wockhardt) and IPR2016-01341 (Teva and Fresenius) seek to join IPR2016-00237.³ Additionally, IPR2016-

² Apotex et al.’s request to join was granted, as was Teva et al.’s. IPR2016-00318, Papers 37 and 38.

³ Apotex’s request to join was granted, as was Teva et al.’s. IPR2016-00237, Papers 31 and 35. In a separate paper filed in IPR2016-01335 and

01191 (Apotex Inc. and Apotex Corp.), IPR2016-01337 (Wockhardt) and IPR2016-01343 (Teva and Fresenius) seek to join IPR2016-00240.⁴

B. The '209 Patent

The '209 patent claims priority benefit of a series of applications, the earliest of which was filed on June 30, 2000. Ex. 1001, 1:2–10.

Rapidly-dividing cancer cells generally have a higher folate requirement than normal cells. Declaration of Ron D. Schiff, Ex. 1004 ¶ 29. Antifolates are a well-studied class of antineoplastic agents that “inhibit one or several key folate-requiring enzymes of the thymidine and purine biosynthetic pathways.” Ex. 1001, 1:19–20, 1:36–41. As antifolates interfere with DNA synthesis, antifolates are used as chemotherapeutic drugs to treat certain types of cancer. Ex. 1004 ¶ 28.

A limitation on the use of antifolate drugs is “that the cytotoxic activity and subsequent effectiveness of antifolates may be associated with substantial toxicity for some patients.” Ex. 1001, 1:62–64. Homocysteine levels have been shown to be a predictor of cytotoxic events related to the use of certain antifolate enzyme inhibitors. *Id.* at 2:16–26. The '209 patent states that folic acid has been shown to lower homocysteine levels. *Id.* Additionally, the patent states that it was known in the art to treat and

IPR2016-00237, we have granted Wockhardt's request to join IPR2016-00237 concurrently with our grant of the request to join here.

⁴ Apotex's request to join was granted, as was Teva et al.'s. IPR2016-00240, Papers 33 and 34. In a separate paper filed in IPR2016-01337 and IPR2016-00240, we have granted Wockhardt's request to join IPR2016-00240 concurrently with our grant of the request to join here.

prevent cardiovascular disease with a combination of folic acid and vitamin B12. *Id.* at 2:50–54.

The '209 patent describes “[a] method of administering an antifolate to a mammal in need thereof.” Ex. 1001, abstract. The method is said to improve the therapeutic utility of antifolate drugs by administering a methylmalonic acid (“MMA”) lowering agent, such as vitamin B12, to the host undergoing treatment. *Id.* at 2:37–46. The '209 patent also states that a combination of a MMA lowering agent, such as B12, and folic acid “synergistically reduces the toxic events associated with the administration of antifolate drugs.” *Id.* at 2:47–50

The term antifolate is said to encompass “chemical compound[s] [that] inhibit[] at least one key folate-requiring enzyme of the thymidine or purine biosynthetic pathways.” *Id.* at 4:28–34. Pemetrexed disodium is the most preferred antifolate for the '209 patent. *Id.* at 4:28–43. Pemetrexed is also referred to in the art as a “multitargeted antifolate” (“MTA”). Ex. 1004 ¶ 35.

C. Illustrative Claims

The '209 patent contains twenty-two claims, all of which are challenged by Petitioner. Independent claim 1 is directed to a method for administering pemetrexed disodium to a patient in need thereof, where folic acid and a MMA lowering agent, such as B12, is administered, followed by administering an effective amount of the pemetrexed disodium. Independent claim 12 is written in a Jepson claim format, where the preamble defines the admitted prior art as administering pemetrexed disodium to a patient in need of a chemotherapeutic treatment. Independent claim 12 further recites

specific dosage amounts of folic acid and vitamin B12 that are administered to the patient prior to the first administration of the pemetrexed disodium. Dependent claim 2 requires the MMA lowering agent of claim 1 to be vitamin B12 and the remaining dependent claims recite various dosages of folic acid and B12, and times for administering folic acid. Certain claims also require the administration of cisplatin to the patient.

Claims 1 and 12 are illustrative of the challenged claims and are reproduced below:

1. A method for administering pemetrexed disodium to a patient in need thereof comprising administering an effective amount of folic acid and an effective amount of a methylmalonic acid lowering agent followed by administering an effective amount of pemetrexed disodium, wherein
the methylmalonic acid lowering agent is selected from the group consisting of vitamin B12, hydroxycobalamin, cyano-10-chlorocobalamin, aquocobalamin perchlorate, aquo-10-cobalamin perchlorate, azidocobalamin, cobalamin, cyanocobalamin, or chlorocobalamin.

12. An improved method for administering pemetrexed disodium to a patient in need of chemotherapeutic treatment, wherein the improvement comprises:
 - a) administration of between about 350 μg and about 1000 μg of folic acid prior to the first administration of pemetrexed disodium;
 - b) administration of about 500 μg to about 1500 μg of vitamin B12, prior to the first administration of pemetrexed disodium; and
 - c) administration of pemetrexed disodium.

D. Prior Art Relied Upon

In the ground challenging the claims, Petitioner relies on the following prior art:

Calvert H, *An Overview of Folate Metabolism: Features Relevant to the Action and Toxicities of Antifolate Anticancer Agents*, Seminars in Oncology, Vol. 26, No. 2, Suppl 6 (April), 1999, pp. 3–10 (“*Calvert*”) (Ex. 1007)

Hammond et al., *A Phase I and pharmacokinetic (PK) study of the multitargeted antifolate (MTA, LY231514) with folic acid (FA)*, Annals of Oncology, Vol. 9, Suppl. 4, 1998, Abstract 620P, pg. 129 (“*Hammond*”) (Ex. 1015)

Niyikiza et al., *MTA (LY231514): Relationship of vitamin metabolite profile, drug exposure, and other patient characteristics to toxicity*, Annals of Oncology, Vol. 9, Suppl. 4, 1998, Abstract 609P, pg. 126 (“*Niyikiza I*”) (Ex. 1006)

Worzalla et al., *Role of Folic Acid in Modulating the Toxicity and Efficacy of the Multitargeted Antifolate, LY231514*, Anticancer Research 18:3235-3240 (1998) (“*Worzalla*”) (Ex. 1013)

Petitioner also points us to numerous pieces of prior art, including:

U.S. Patent No. 5,217,974 (“*the '974 Patent*”) (Ex. 1005)

European Patent Application No. 0,595,005 A1 (“*EP 005*”) (Ex. 1033)

Petitioner contends that the challenged claims are unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103 based on the following grounds (Pet. 8–9):

References	Basis	Claims challenged
Calvert in view of Niyikiza I, Worzalla, EP 005 and the '974 Patent	§ 103	1–22
Calvert in view of Niyikiza I, Hammond I, EP 005 and the '974 Patent	§ 103	1–22

II. ANALYSIS

A. Claim Interpretation

Petitioner identifies several claim terms in the challenged claims and provides definitions for those terms. Pet. 20–24. Patent Owner did not take a position on claim construction at this time.

We determine that it is unnecessary to construe explicitly the claim terms for purposes of this Decision. *See Wellman, Inc. v. Eastman Chem. Co.*, 642 F.3d 1355, 1361 (Fed. Cir. 2011) (“[C]laim terms need only be construed ‘to the extent necessary to resolve the controversy.’” (quoting *Vivid Techs., Inc. v. Am. Sci. & Eng’g, Inc.*, 200 F.3d 795, 803 (Fed. Cir. 1999))).

B. Section 103 Obviousness Challenge

Petitioner raises two challenges based on 35 U.S.C. § 103. Generally, Petitioner contends that the challenged claims merely require administering a specific antifolate cancer drug, which was known to elevate a patient’s homocysteine levels, with compounds known to decrease homocysteine levels, folic acid and vitamin B12. Pet. 13–17.

Petitioner contends that it was well known in the art that antifolates, such as MTA, had anticancer properties, and that it was

known that toxicity had limited the administration of antifolates. *Id.* at 11. Petitioner states that it was known in the art that MTA has activity in a variety of tumors and that elevated levels of homocysteine were observed in patients treated with antifolates, such as MTA. *Id.* at 11, 15 (citing Niyikiza I, Ex. 1006, 126). Petitioner explains that it was known in the art that homocysteine could be reduced by folic acid and vitamin B12. *Id.* at 11–12 (citing Calvert, Ex. 1007, 8–9). Additionally, Petitioner states that one skilled in the art would have understood from Calvert, Worzalla, and Hammond I that it was desirable to treat patients with MTA and that administering an effective amount of folic acid would have reduced a patient’s MTA toxicity. *Id.* at 12–13.

Petitioner states that EP 005 teaches that one skilled in the art can control drug-induced homocysteine levels from any known cause, including antifolate drug induced levels, by treatment with vitamin B12. *Id.* at 34. Petitioner relies upon the teachings of the ’974 Patent as confirming that it was known in the art that folic acid pretreatment reduces toxicity without destroying the therapeutic benefits of MTA. *Id.* at 51 (citing Ex. 1005, 1:47–58, 5:31–48, 6:51–56, 10:12–21).

According to Petitioner, one skilled in the art would have added vitamin B12 to the folic acid pretreatment regime of Worzalla or Hammond I to reduce high homocysteine levels linked to MTA toxicity. *Id.* at 36. Petitioner’s contention is supported by the testimony of Dr. Schiff, who testifies that it was known in the art that MTA toxicity was linked to elevated baseline homocysteine levels

and that high levels of homocysteine are caused by deficiencies in either vitamin B12 and/or folate. Ex. 1004 ¶¶ 66–90.

In IPR2016-00318, we instituted *inter partes* review on the same grounds, same evidence, and same claims. We incorporate our analysis from our institution decision in IPR2016-00318. '318 Inst. Dec. 10–20. For the same reasons, we determine that Petitioner has demonstrated a reasonable likelihood that it will prevail with respect to its challenge to claims 1–22 of the '209 patent.

C. Motion for Joinder

Wockhardt seeks to join the present proceeding with IPR2016-00318. Paper 3. Wockhardt contends that joinder is appropriate as it will promote the efficient determination of patentability of the '209 patent without prejudice to prior Petitioners (Sandoz) or Patent Owner. *Id.* at 1. Wockhardt states that the present Petition raises the same ground of unpatentability over the same prior art as those instituted by the Board in the IPR2016-00318. *Id.* Wockhardt represents that it is willing to agree to consolidated filings with Sandoz and that joinder will not affect the pending schedule in IPR2016-00318. *Id.* at 7–8.

The parties in the present proceeding and IPR2016-00318 filed a Joint Notice of Stipulation Concerning Joinder. Paper 8. The Joint Stipulation generally provides that Sandoz and Patent Owner do not oppose the joinder of the present proceeding with IPR2016-00318. *Id.* at 2. Patent Owner waives its right to file a preliminary response in the present proceeding. *Id.* As long as Sandoz is not terminated as a party, Sandoz will be Lead Petitioner and will conduct all argument and examination of witnesses for

that side, and will submit all substantive written submissions for that side. *Id.* The Joint Stipulation further provides that Wockhardt will act as a silent understudy. *Id.* The Joint Stipulation also provides that the presence of Joined Petitioners shall not be a basis for alteration of the schedule or time allotted for cross-examination, redirect, or re-cross examination of any witness. *Id.* at 4.

We hold that Petitioner has satisfied the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 315(c) and we grant Petitioner's Motion for Joinder. We exercise our discretion and join the present *inter partes* review, IPR2016-01393, to IPR2016-00318 subject to the conditions set forth in the Joint Stipulation.

IV. CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, we determine that the information presented in the Petition establishes that there is a reasonable likelihood that Petitioner would prevail in demonstrating unpatentability of claims 1–22. The Board has not yet made a final determination of the patentability of any of claims 1–22 of the '209 patent. Additionally, for the foregoing reasons, we join the present proceeding with IPR2016-00318 subject to the conditions set forth in the Joint Stipulation.

V. ORDER

Accordingly, it is:

Ordered that Wockhardt's Motion for Joinder is granted;

Further Ordered that the instant proceeding is instituted, joined with IPR2016-00318, and terminated under 37 C.F.R. § 42.72, and all further filings in the joined proceeding shall be made only in IPR2016-00318;

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Further Ordered that trial is instituted on the grounds of unpatentability on which trial was instituted in IPR2016-00318 and that there is no change to the Scheduling Order in IPR2016-00318;

Further Ordered that the parties shall abide by the Joint Stipulation;

Further Ordered that the case caption in IPR2016-00318 shall be changed to reflect the joinder of Wockhardt as a Petitioner in accordance with the attached example; and,

Further Ordered that a copy of this Decision shall be entered into the file of IPR2016-00318.

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¹ Cases IPR2016-01429, IPR2016-01393 and IPR2016-01340 have been joined with the instant proceeding.