



# Pioneering mRNA Cell Therapy for Autoimmunity

June 2026



# Forward-looking statements



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## Forward-looking Statements

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# Executive summary



Cartesian's lead asset, Descartes-08, **delivers deep and durable responses in MG through 12 months** following a single course of therapy—administered outpatient without lymphodepletion—positioning it to transform the current treatment landscape.



The Phase 3 AURORA trial positions Descartes-08 to capture a **\$1B+ market opportunity in MG\***, with **Phase 3 data expected in 1Q27 and BLA filing in mid-2027**



**Phase 2 TRITON trial in myositis initiated**, positioning Descartes-08 to address a **multi-billion dollar market opportunity** due to the significant unmet need, with **data expected in 1H27**



**Data from the Phase 1/2 HELIOS trial** in pediatric autoimmune diseases, including JDM, **expected in 1H27**



Strategic licensing agreement with WestGene Biopharma to **accelerate the development of in vivo CAR-T platform in autoimmune diseases**; Clinical trial expected to initiate in 2H26, **data expected in 1H27**



**US-based in-house manufacturing supports commercial readiness for MG launch** with potential biologic-like margins and full supply chain control – ongoing process optimization creates opportunity for further margin expansion.



**Cash runway into 2028**

# Late-stage clinical company pioneering mRNA cell therapy specifically designed to expand the reach of cell therapy to autoimmunity

- mRNA cell therapy designed to be dosed reliably and safely in an **outpatient setting without lymphodepletion**
- Descartes-08: Investigational mRNA CAR T-cell (CAR-T) with **deep and durable responses through 12 months** observed in randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled Phase 2b trial in patients with myasthenia gravis (MG)
- **US-based in-house manufacturing** supports commercial readiness with potential for biologic-like margins

## RECENT AND PLANNED ACTIVITY

### DESCARTES-08

- **Phase 3 AURORA trial data expected in 1Q27**; positions Descartes-08 to potentially access \$1B+<sup>1</sup> market opportunity in MG
- **Phase 2 TRITON trial in myositis data expected in 1H27**; positions Descartes-08 to address a multi-billion dollar market opportunity due to significant unmet medical need<sup>2</sup>
- **Data from Phase 1/2 HELIOS pediatric trial** in children and young adults with autoimmune diseases, including JDM, **expected in 1H27**
- **In vivo clinical trial** through partnership with WestGene **expected to initiate in 2H26**; **Clinical data expected in 1H27**

### CASH RESOURCES

- **Strong balance sheet with approximately \$120 million\***
- Secured up to \$150 million of non-dilutive financing from K2 HealthVentures; funding of \$50 million from initial tranche received in May 2026
- Expected to support planned operations into 2028

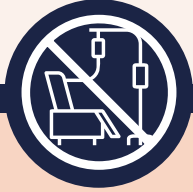
\*As of March 31, 2026; includes cash, cash equivalents and restricted cash; excludes cash obtained or committed through non-dilutive financing deal with K2 HealthVentures

SLE, Systemic Lupus Erythematosus  
CAR, Chimeric antigen receptor

1. Internal company projections

2. [Kronzer et al., 2021](#); [Coffey et al., 2021](#); [Marotta et al., 2020](#); [OCTAGAM efficacy data](#)

# Cartesian's mRNA approach is designed to expand the reach of potent cell therapy products to address autoimmunity



## No Lymphodepletion

No associated cytopenia, secondary malignancies, or other chemotherapy toxicities



## Administered Outpatient

Convenient dosing schedule



## Delivered at Therapeutic Levels

Administered at therapeutic doses without uncontrollable proliferation



## Transient Cell Modification

Does not carry risk of genomic integration

# Wholly-owned pipeline targets autoimmune disease



Asset	Indications	Discovery/Preclinical	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Descartes-08 Autologous mRNA CAR-T	Myasthenia Gravis	[Progress bar spanning Discovery/Preclinical, Phase 1, and Phase 2]			
	Myositis (Dermatomyositis & Antisynthetase Syndrome)	[Progress bar spanning Discovery/Preclinical and Phase 1]			
	Juvenile Dermatomyositis	[Progress bar spanning Discovery/Preclinical and Phase 1]			

# Descartes-08 is an mRNA CAR T-cell therapy in clinical development for autoimmune disease



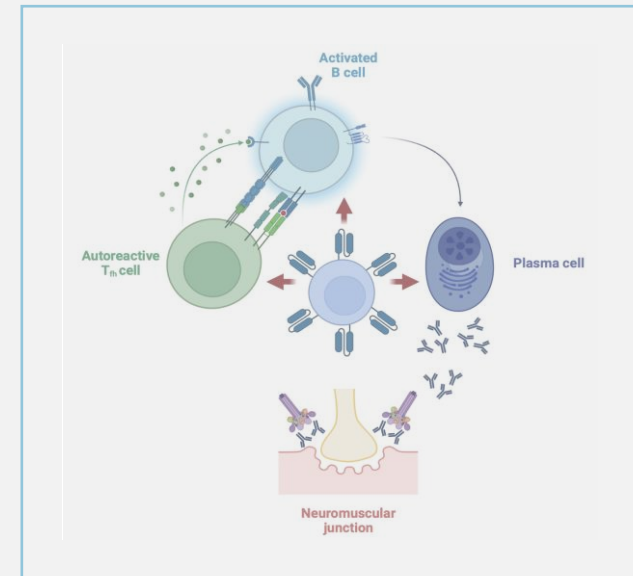
Engineered by transfection of autologous CD8+ T cells with mRNA encoding anti-BCMA CAR



Typical lot processed for infusion within as little as ~3 weeks



Granted **U.S. FDA orphan and RMAT designations** for generalized myasthenia gravis, and **RPDD** for juvenile dermatomyositis



# Descartes-08 in Myasthenia Gravis

# Myasthenia gravis is a rare, progressive autoimmune disease with significant unmet need



**106,000+**  
Patients in the U.S.<sup>1</sup>

Characterized by debilitating  
fatigue and muscle weakness



Limbs



Respiratory



Ocular



Facial



Current treatments require  
chronic or frequent  
administration and  
have limited durability



## Significant Unmet Need Remains

- **Highly heterogenous disease biology** makes a standardized treatment approach ineffective<sup>2</sup>
- **Limited durability from current therapies** requires patients to rely on chronic immunosuppression and dosing<sup>3</sup>
- **Suboptimal depth and durability of response** leaves white space for long-lasting remission<sup>3</sup>
- Achievement of **minimal symptom expression over time remains a key treatment goal** for physicians<sup>4</sup>

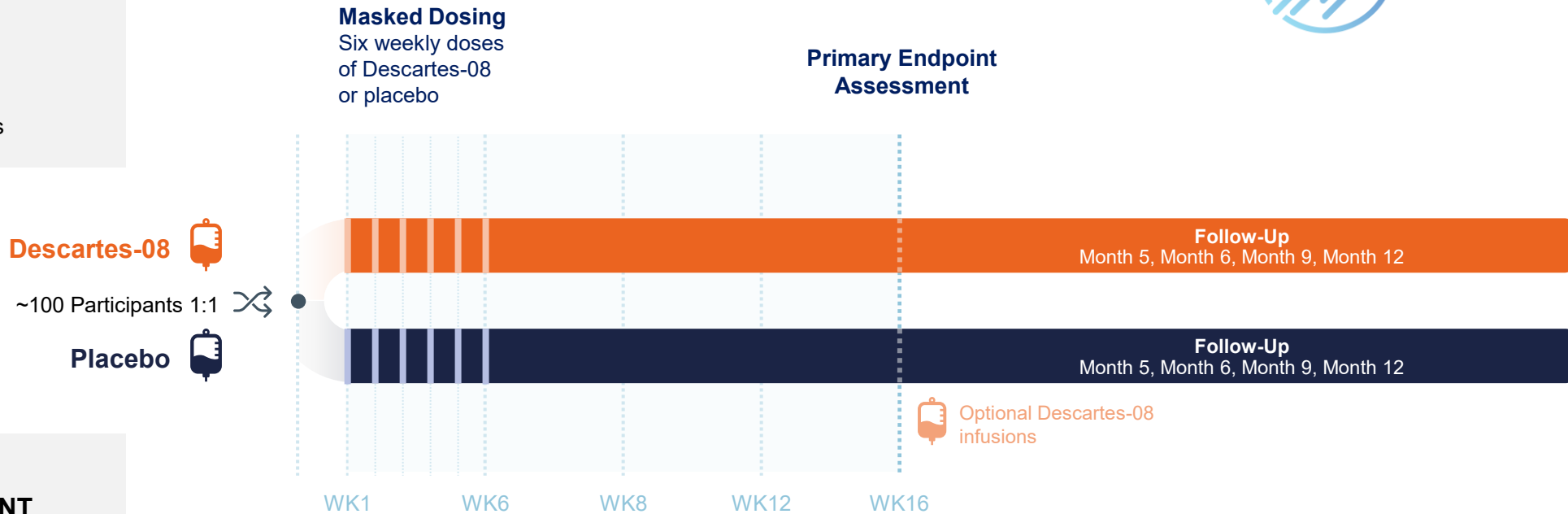
1. [Rodrigues et al. 2023](#)  
2. DOI: [10.1080/1744666X.2021.1936500](https://doi.org/10.1080/1744666X.2021.1936500)  
3. [VYVGART label](#)  
4. Company neurologist ad-board

# AURORA: Randomized double-blind, placebo-controlled Phase 3 trial of Descartes-08 in AChR Ab+ gMG with data expected in 1Q27



## INCLUSION CRITERIA

- AChR Ab+
- MGFA Class II-IV
- MG-ADL  $\geq 6$
- On stable doses of immunosuppressants



## PRIMARY ENDPOINT

- Proportion of participants with MG-ADL improvement of  $\geq 3$  points at Month 4, relative to placebo

## KEY SECONDARY ENDPOINTS

- Proportion of participants with MGC improvement of  $\geq 4$  points at Month 4
- MG-ADL and MGC change from baseline to Month 4
- Quantify clinical effect of Descartes-08 over 1 year

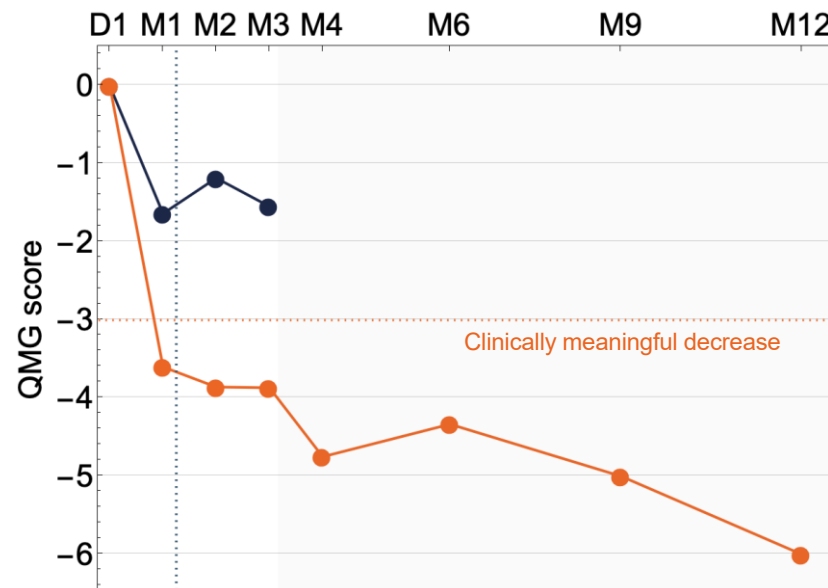
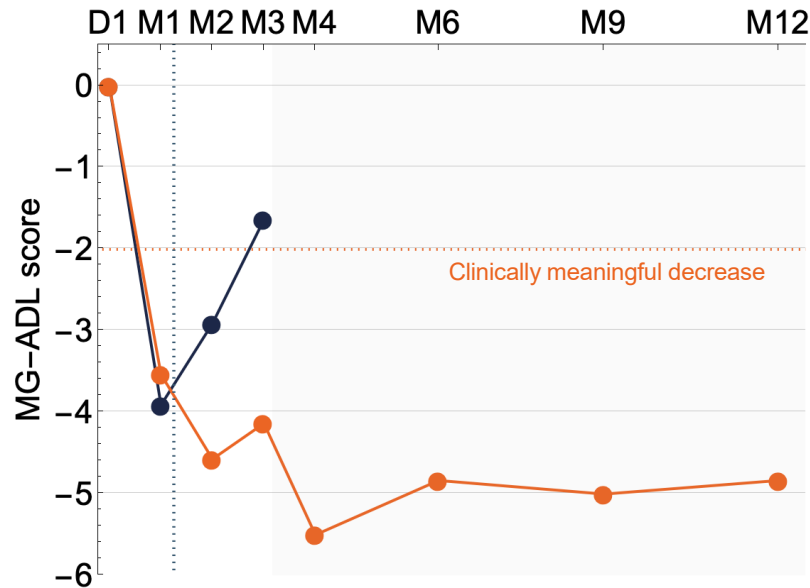
MG-ADL, Myasthenia Gravis Activities of Daily Living scale  
gMG, Generalized myasthenia gravis  
MGFA, Myasthenia Gravis Foundation of America  
MGC, Myasthenia Gravis Composite

MG QMG, Quantitative MG Scores  
MG QoL 15R, MG Quality of Life 15-revised  
AChR Ab+, Acetylcholine receptor autoantibody positive

# Deepening responses observed in participants treated with Descartes-08



## Primary Efficacy Dataset



■ Descartes-08 ■ Placebo

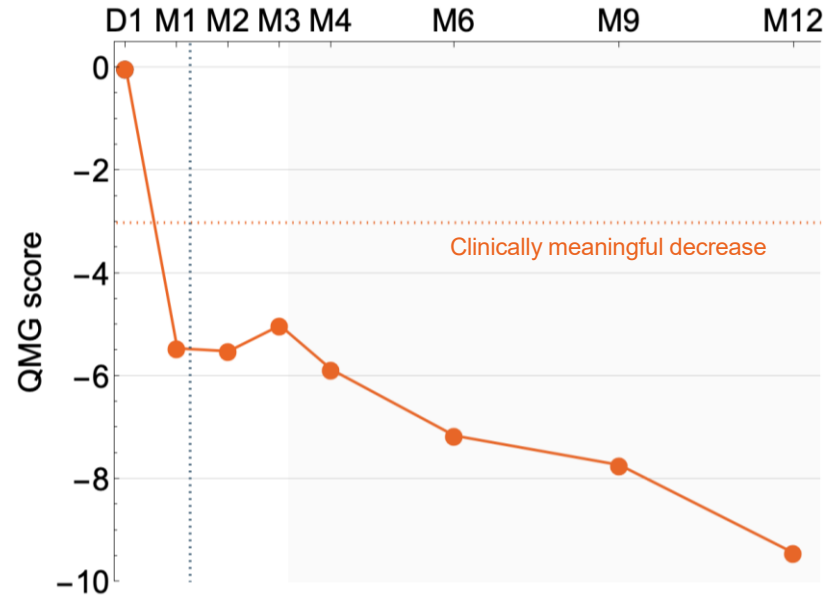
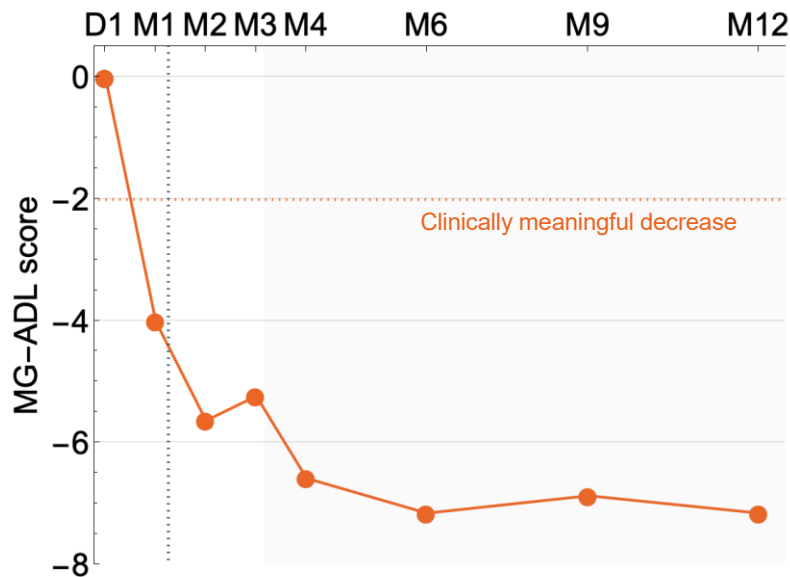
Month 3 (n=15), Month 4 to Month 12 (n=12\*)  
\*Three participants lost to follow-up

- Average MG-ADL reduction of 5.5 ( $\pm 1.1$ ) points at Month 4, **maintained through Month 12 ( $4.8 \pm 1.4$ )**
- Average QMG reduction of 4.8 ( $\pm 1.7$ ) points at Month 4, **deepened through Month 12 ( $6.0 \pm 2.1$ )**
- 83% of participants reaching Month 12 maintained clinically meaningful response

**33% of participants achieved minimum symptom expression at Month 6 and maintained it through Month 12**

# Deep responses observed in participants with no prior exposure to complement or FcRn inhibitors

## Primary Efficacy Dataset (No Prior Biologics)



### ■ Descartes-08

Month 3 (n=9), Month 4 (n=7\*), Month 6 (n=7), Month 9 (n=7), Month 12 (n=7)  
\*Two participants lost to follow-up

- Average MG-ADL reduction of 6.6 ( $\pm 1.5$ ) points at Month 4, **maintained through Month 12 ( $7.1 \pm 1.9$ )**
- Average QMG reduction of 6.0 ( $\pm 2.3$ ) points at Month 4, **deepened through Month 12 ( $9.4 \pm 2.3$ )**
- 100% of participants maintained clinically meaningful response at Month 12

**57% of participants achieved minimum symptom expression at Month 6 and maintained it through Month 12**

# Safety profile supports outpatient administration with no AEs reported after Month 3 through final follow-up

	Descartes-08 (n=20)			Placebo (n=16)		
	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
Headache	7 (35%)	4 (20%)		2 (13%)	3 (19%)	
Chills	8 (40%)	4 (20%)				
Nausea	3 (15%)	6 (30%)		1 (6%)	2 (13%)	
Fever	7 (35%)	4 (20%)	1 (5%)			
Fatigue	4 (20%)	1 (5%)		1 (6%)		
Myalgia	4 (20%)	2 (10%)				
Infusion related reaction	1 (5%)	2 (10%)	1 (5%)	1 (6%)		
Muscle weakness	1 (5%)	1 (5%)		1 (6%)		
Arthralgia	1 (5%)	1 (5%)			1 (6%)	
Tachycardia	3 (15%)					
Upper respiratory infection		1 (5%)			1 (6%)	
Herpes simplex reactivation	1 (5%)		1 (5%)			
Dysgeusia	3 (15%)					
Diarrhea	1 (5%)				1 (6%)	
Sweating	1 (5%)			1 (6%)		
Limb edema	1 (5%)	1 (5%)				
Flushing	2 (10%)					
Dyspnea	1 (5%)	1 (5%)				
Insomnia	2 (10%)					
Vomiting	2 (10%)	1 (5%)				
Tremor	2 (10%)					

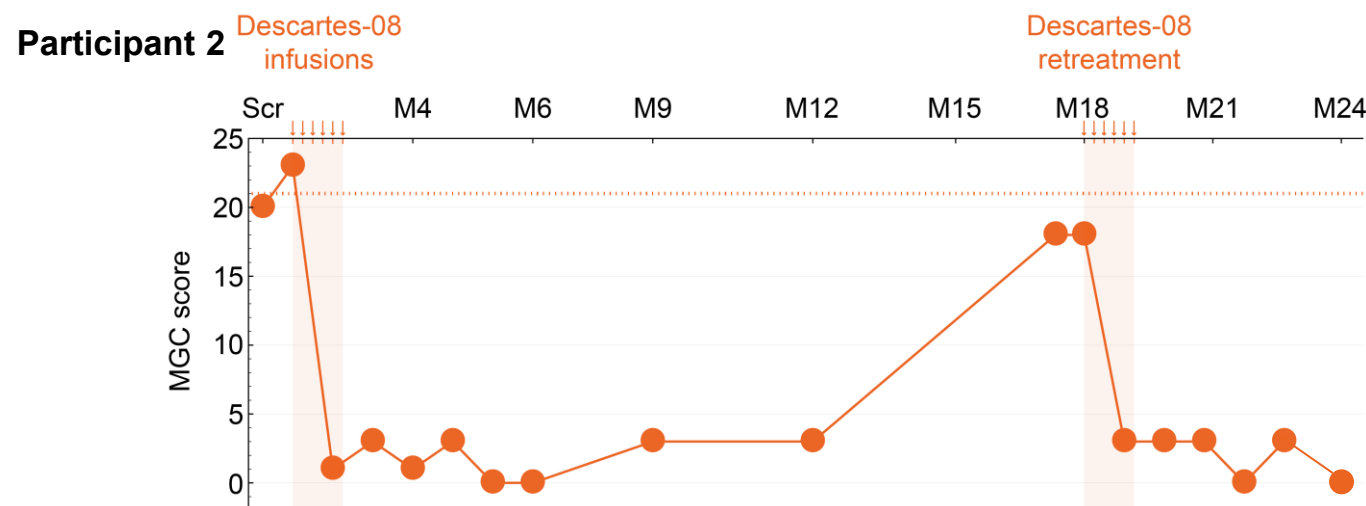
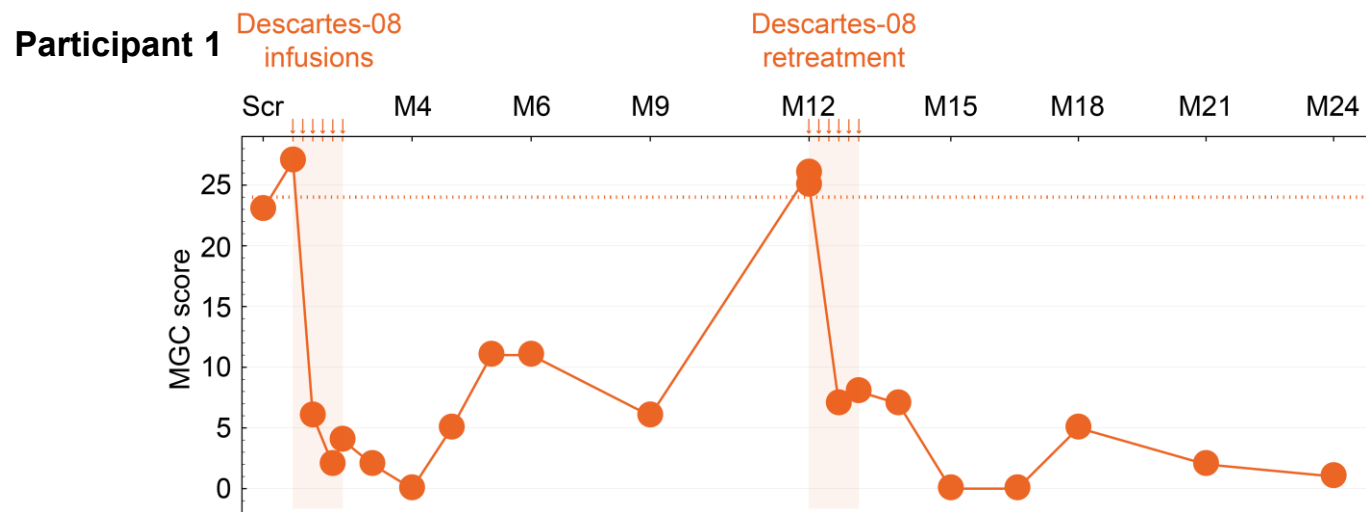
- **Most commonly observed AEs through Month 3 include: headache, chills, nausea and fever, all of which typically resolved within 24 hours of infusion**
- **No AEs reported after Month 3**
- **No hypogammaglobulinemia or increased infections reported**
- **No difference in vaccine titers between Descartes-08 and placebo**

Total AEs reported through Month 12 for Descartes-08-treated patients and through Month 3 for placebo-treated patients

Safety dataset comprises all subjects who received at least one dose of Descartes-08 (n=20) or placebo (n=16)

All Grade 1–2 adverse events deemed possibly, probably or definitely related to the study drug with a cumulative incidence  $\geq 10\%$  and all Grade 3 adverse events deemed possibly, probably or definitely related to the study drug are reported. There were no Grade 4 adverse events

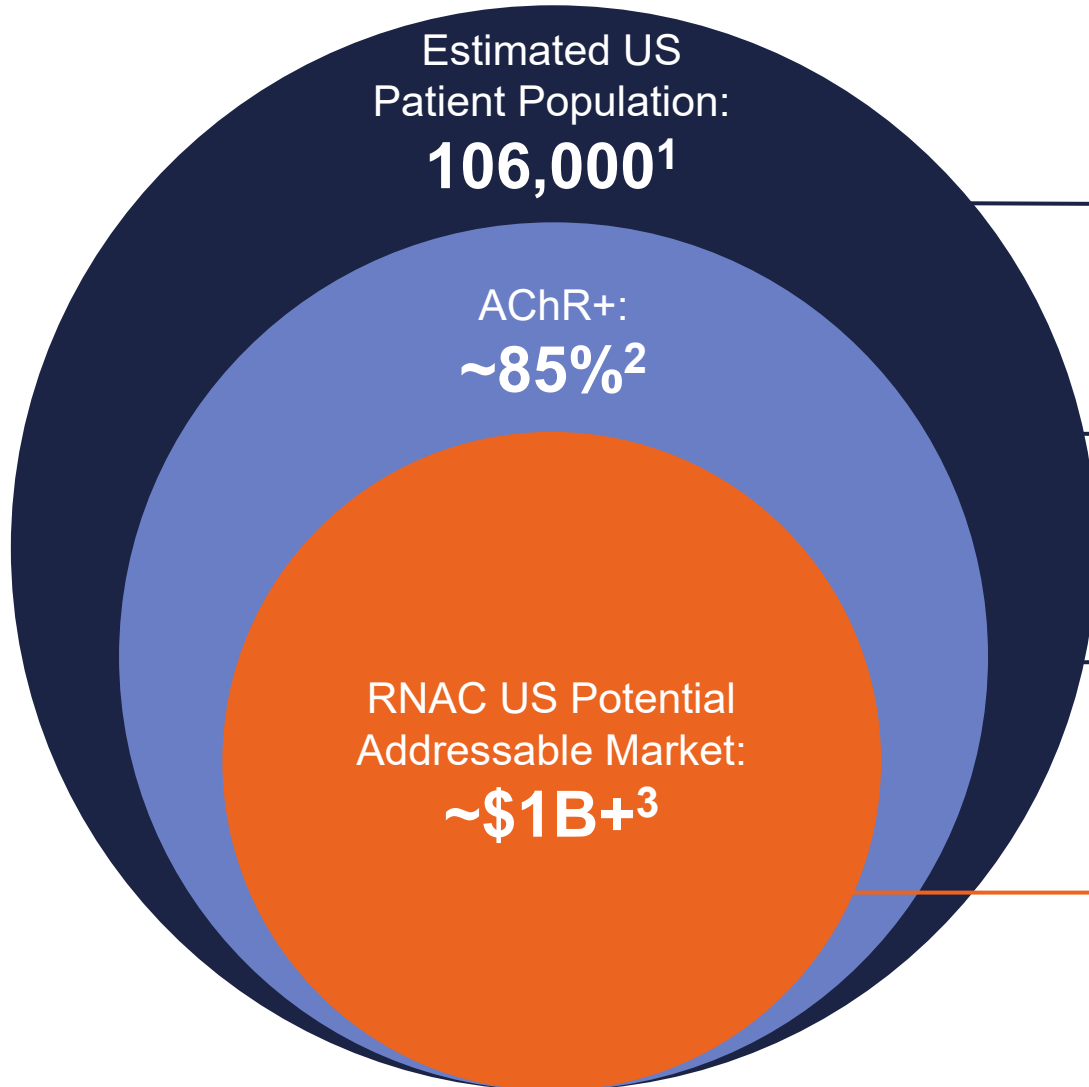
# Phase 2a trial update: Descartes-08 retreatment continues to elicit deep and durable responses



- Three participants retreated to date, two of whom maintain minimum symptom expression 2 years after initial treatment
- Third participant's response deepened from a 4-point MG-ADL reduction at Month 2 to a 9-point improvement in MG-ADL at Month 12 following retreatment

Nature Medicine publication can be found [here](#)

# Current gMG market lacks disease modifying treatments creating the potential to access a \$1B+ market opportunity for Descartes-08 in the US



## DESCARTES-08 OBSERVATIONS

**Significant reduction in MG-ADL of 7.1 at Month 12<sup>4</sup>** with a single course of therapy

**57% of patients achieved minimal symptom expression** at Month 6 and maintained it through Month 12<sup>4</sup>

Safety profile **supports biologic-like outpatient administration**

**Significant unmet need remains** given current treatment options, creating a potential \$1B opportunity

1. [Rodrigues et al.](#), 2023

2. [Lazaridis et al.](#), 2020

3. Company internal projections, inclusive of opportunity to retreat patients

4. Metrics reflective of results from biologic naive population

# Descartes-08 is optimally designed for autoimmune diseases

## Key Characteristics for a Differentiated Therapy Designed for Patient Adoption in MG



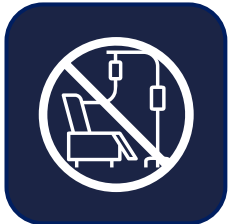
### Durability of Response

Descartes-08 delivers deep and durable responses through 12 months after a single course of therapy



### Single Course of Therapy

Unlike current biologic therapies requiring chronic dosing and immunosuppression, Descartes-08 delivers deep and durable responses after a single course of therapy through a precision immune reset



### Outpatient Administration

mRNA cell therapy enables reliable and safe outpatient dosing without lymphodepletion, avoiding the risks of CRS and ICANS



### Redosing Optionality

The favorable safety profile of mRNA cell therapy enables repeat dosing if needed, providing flexibility

# Descartes-08

## Expansion into Myositis

# Expansion into myositis provides new opportunity in an area with significant unmet need and compelling market

**80,000+**  
Patients in the U.S.<sup>1</sup>

Characterized by debilitating muscle weakness and skin rashes<sup>2</sup>



Limbs



Respiratory



Rashes



Swallowing

**60%**

of Patients Eligible for a  
**3L+ Treatment<sup>3</sup>**



## Residual Unmet Needs in Myositis<sup>4-5</sup>



**Treatment options have limited efficacy** in broader organ involvement and refractory patients



**Better tolerated therapies desired** given concern over infusion-related reactions



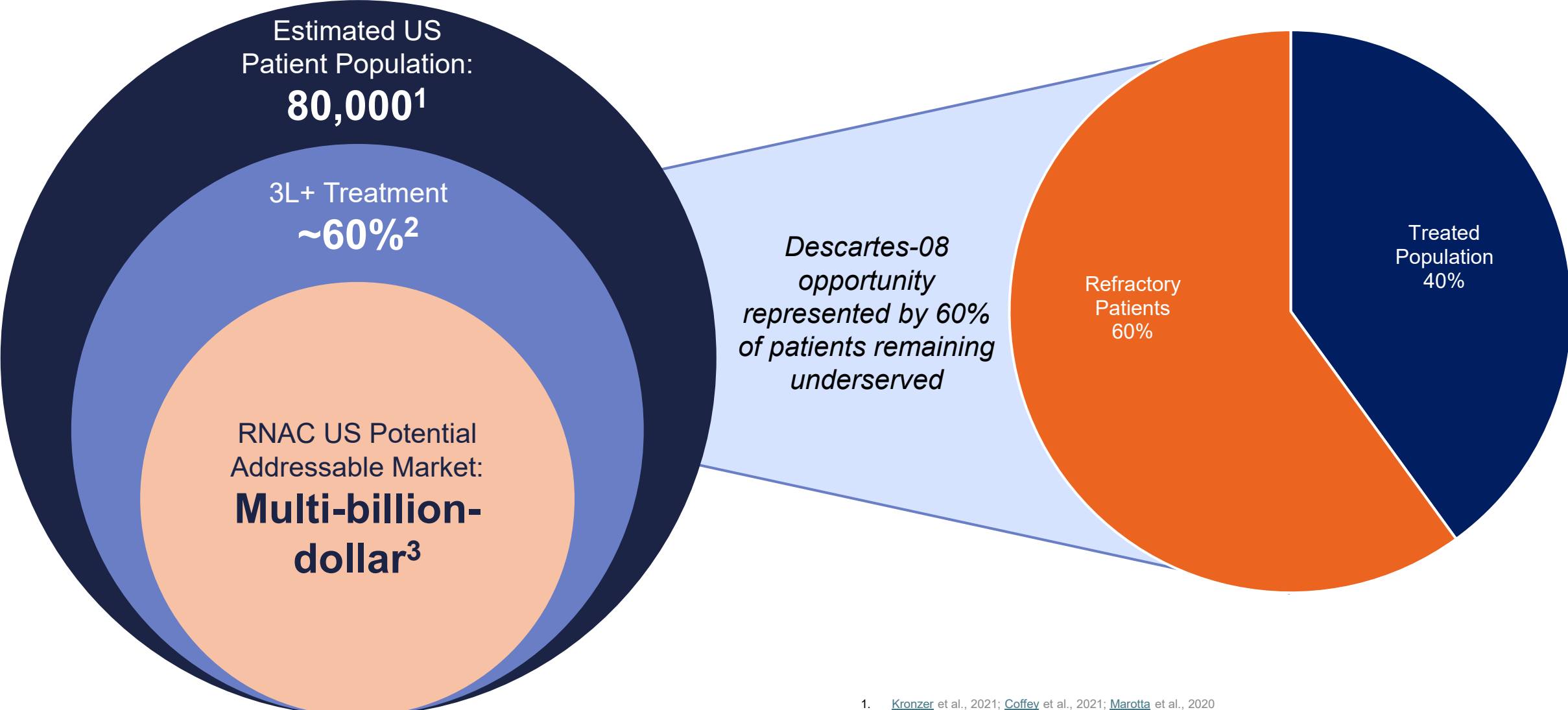
Highly heterogenous disease leads to **suboptimal speed and accuracy of diagnosis**

***Refractory, moderate-to-severe myositis patients likely to remain underserved despite new drug developments***

1. [Kronzer et al., 2021](#); [Coffey et al., 2021](#); [Marotta et al., 2020](#)  
2. [HSS - Myositis](#)  
3. [OCTAGAM](#) efficacy data

4. [Gupta et al. 2023](#);  
5. [Meyer et al. 2019](#);

# Strong mechanistic alignment with existing clinical data in MG and SLE underscores a potential multi-billion-dollar opportunity in myositis for Descartes-08



1. [Kronzer et al., 2021](#); [Coffey et al., 2021](#); [Marotta et al., 2020](#)  
2. [OCTAGAM](#) efficacy data  
3. Internal company projections, inclusive of opportunity to retreat patients

# Myositis seamless clinical trial design provides potential opportunity for single pivotal trial with data expected in 1H27

## INCLUSION CRITERIA

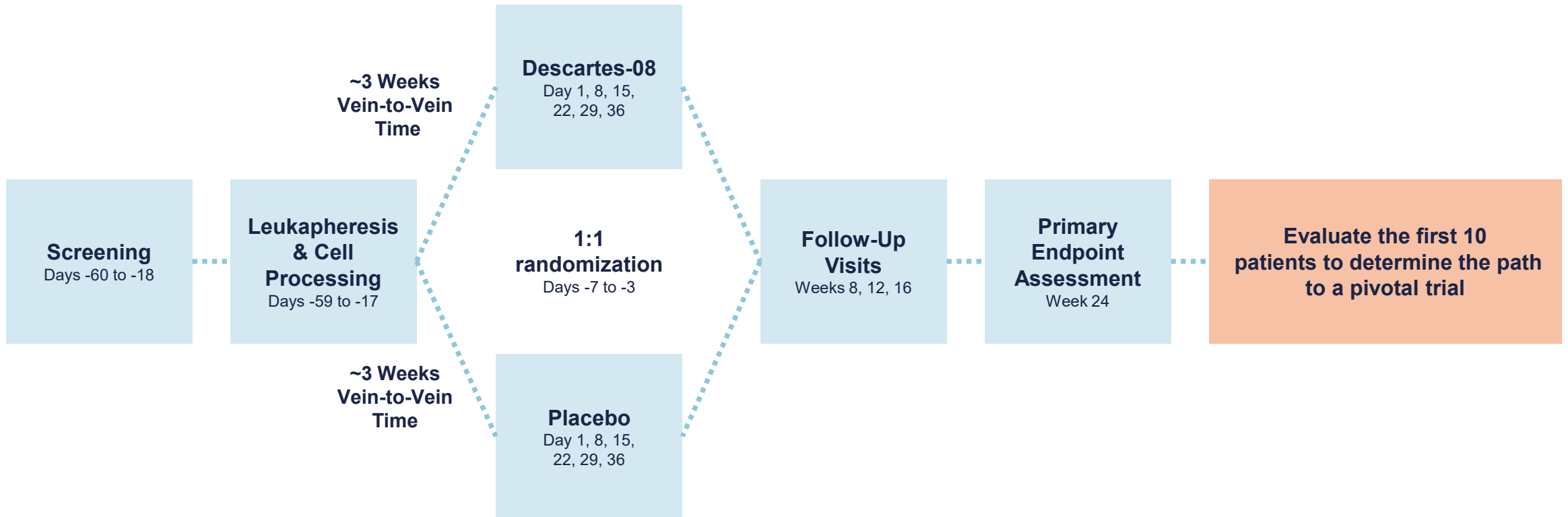
- Adults with moderate to severe multi-refractory dermatomyositis and antisynthetase syndrome

## SAMPLE SIZE

- 10 participants prior to interim analysis
- Up to 50 participants total treated (25 each arm)

## PRIMARY OBJECTIVE

- Assess safety and efficacy of Descartes-08 compared to placebo added to standard of care in patients with myositis at Week 24



# Phase 1/2 trial of Descartes-08 in children and young adults with autoimmune diseases initiated with data expected in 1H27

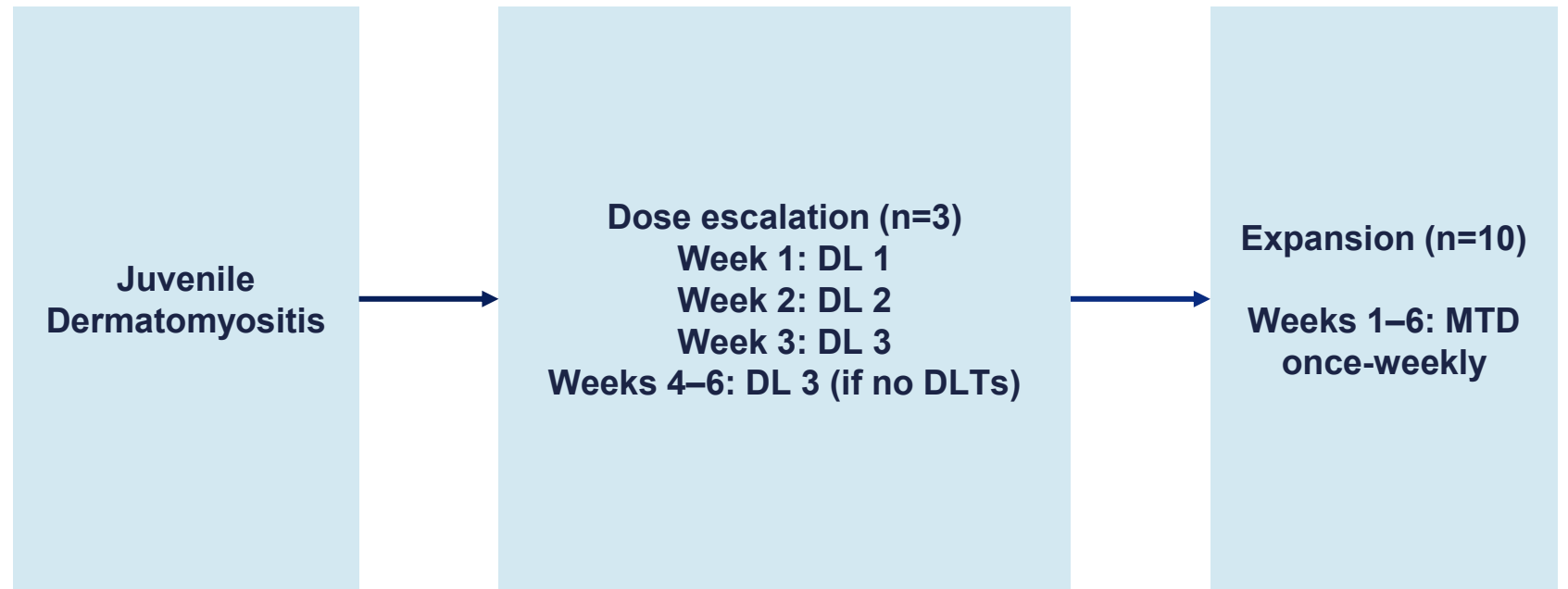


## Anticipated Pediatric Basket Trial Timeline

- Rare Pediatric Disease Designation for DC-08 in juvenile dermatomyositis granted in September 2024
- Trial initiation announced on January 9, 2026
- Data expected in 1H27

**DC-08's observed safety profile combined with significant unmet need in pediatric autoimmune disease supports clinical development plan**

- No lymphodepleting chemotherapy
- No integrating vectors
- Fully outpatient treatment with 1hr post-infusion monitoring
- No observed CRS or ICANS



# In Vivo Expansion



# Strategic licensing agreement with WestGene Biopharma accelerates in vivo CAR-T development in autoimmune diseases

## EARLY PROOF OF CONCEPT ESTABLISHED FOR WESTGENE'S IN VIVO APPROACH

- Therapy dosed to date **demonstrated a favorable safety and tolerability profile**, with no DLTs, SAEs, ICANS, or IRRs reported\*
- **Robust in vivo CAR-T generation following administration**, including high levels of circulating CD8<sup>+</sup> CAR-T cells and rapid, sustained B-cell depletion, observed in clinical data to date
- CAR expression and biological activity were maintained following repeat dosing, supporting the **potential for long-term, multi-cycle administration**

WestGene's LNP platform combined with Cartesian's mRNA payload from Descartes-08 **integrates two independently, clinically tested technologies with the goal of rapid clinical translation**

**Plans to advance multiple internally developed** next-gen anti-BCMA CAR constructs and a **BCMA-directed TCE** as part of Cartesian's expanding mRNA payload

Partnership provides an **accelerated and efficient path** to human clinical data

***Clinical trial expected to initiate in 2H 2026 with clinical data expected in 1H 2027***

\*One subject experienced Grade 1 CRS  
DLTs, dose-limiting toxicities  
SAEs, serious adverse events  
ICANS, Immune effector cell-associated neurotoxicity syndrome

IRRs, infusion-related reactions  
LNP, targeted lipid nanoparticle  
TCE, T-cell engager

# Manufacturing



# Wholly-owned, in-house, US-based manufacturing



Over 35,000 sq. ft. state-of-the-art cGMP facility

Facility located  
in Frederick, MD



## **FUTURE GROWTH**

Clinical and commercial manufacturing scale capabilities support maturing pipeline and future growth



## **QUICK TO ADAPT**

Continuous process optimization creates opportunity for progressive margin expansion



## **WHOLLY-OWNED**

Ownership of quality control and production timelines



## **COST EFFICIENT**

Supports commercial readiness for MG launch with potential for biologic-like margins

FINANCIAL POSITION:

**Current Cash and  
Cash Equivalents  
Expected to  
Support Pipeline  
Through Key  
Milestones**

**\$120.4M**

In cash, cash equivalents  
and restricted cash

**~75 FULL TIME  
EMPLOYEES**

Based in Gaithersburg, MD  
and Frederick, MD

**28.5M**

Basic shares outstanding

**38.0M**

Fully diluted shares outstanding\*

All metrics as of 3/31/26; excludes cash obtained or available through non-dilutive financing deal with K2 HealthVentures

\*Includes Series A Non-Voting Convertible Preferred Stock and Series B Non-Voting Convertible Preferred Stock that remain subject to beneficial ownership limitations that are convertible into shares of common stock and includes outstanding options, RSUs and warrants.

# Our team | Management



Carsten Brunn, PhD  
PRESIDENT AND CEO



Blaine Davis  
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER



Emily English, PhD  
CHIEF OPERATIONS OFFICER



Peter Traber  
HEAD OF R&D



Matthew Bartholomae  
GENERAL COUNSEL, SECRETARY



# Key takeaways



Cartesian's lead asset, Descartes-08, **delivers deep and durable responses in MG through 12 months** following a single course of therapy—administered outpatient without lymphodepletion—positioning it to transform the current treatment landscape.



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**Cash runway into 2028**

# Appendix



# Descartes-08 is designed for dual action, precisely targeting two key BCMA+ cell populations involved in a spectrum of autoimmune diseases

Descartes-08 is designed to target BCMA, a surface antigen expressed on **plasma cells/plasmablasts** and **plasmacytoid dendritic cells**

## PLASMA CELLS (PCs) AND PLASMABLASTS

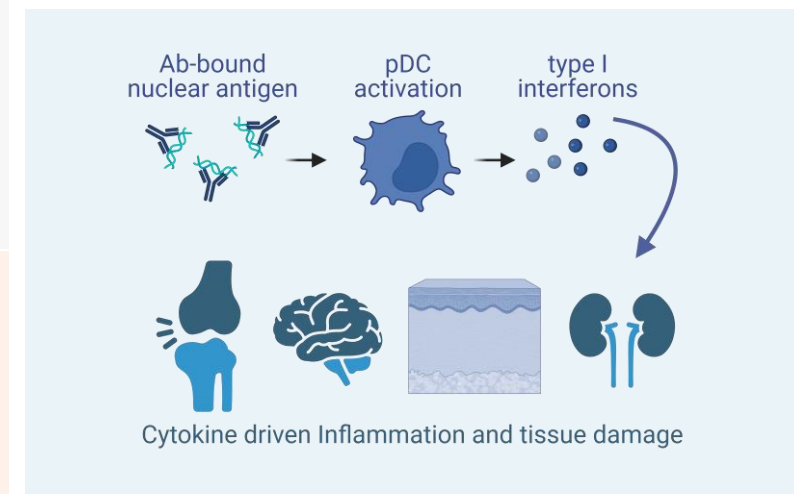
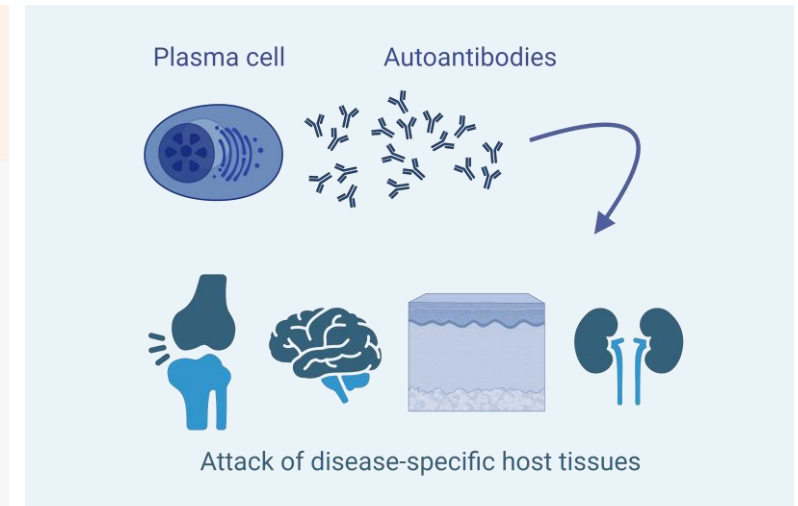
- PCs, plasmablasts and proliferating B cells targeted by Descartes-08 represent a tiny fraction of B cells
- These cells are entirely responsible for secreting pathogenic autoantibodies
- During autoimmunity, autoantibodies attack host tissue and drive inflammation

## PLASMACYTOID DENDRITIC CELLS (pDCs)

- pDCs, which Descartes-08 is designed to target, are a rare subset of antigen-presenting cells
- These cells secrete high levels of cytokines (i.e., type I interferons) that cause inflammation and tissue damage during many human autoimmune diseases
- pDCs are increased in patients with autoimmunity and interfere with optimal treatment

Several autoimmune disease segments involve pathogenic contributions from **both PCs/plasmablasts and pDCs**, including rheumatology, nephrology, neurology, and others

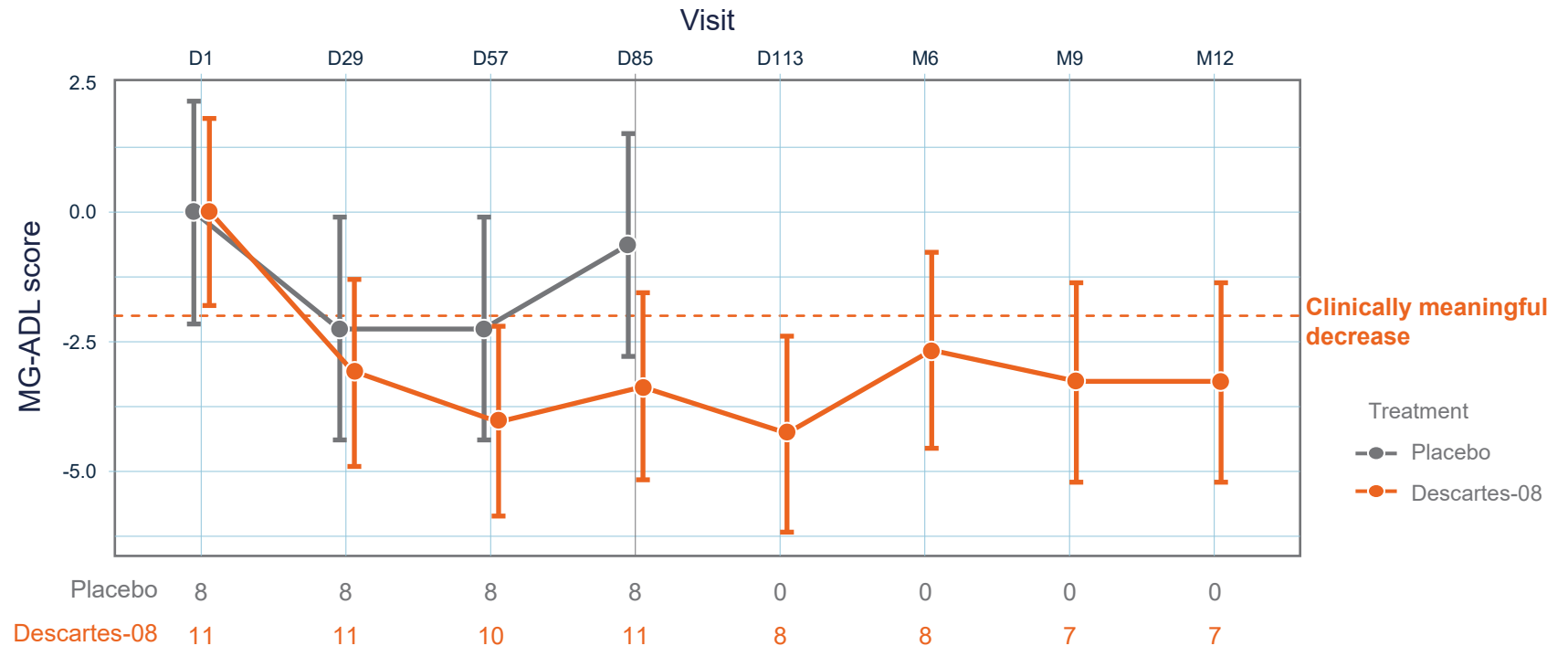
Selectively deleting PCs/plasmablasts and pDCs, if successful, may create a differentiated cell therapy platform



# Meaningful reductions in MG-ADL at Month 3 were sustained through Month 12 with Descartes-08 in AChR+ gMG

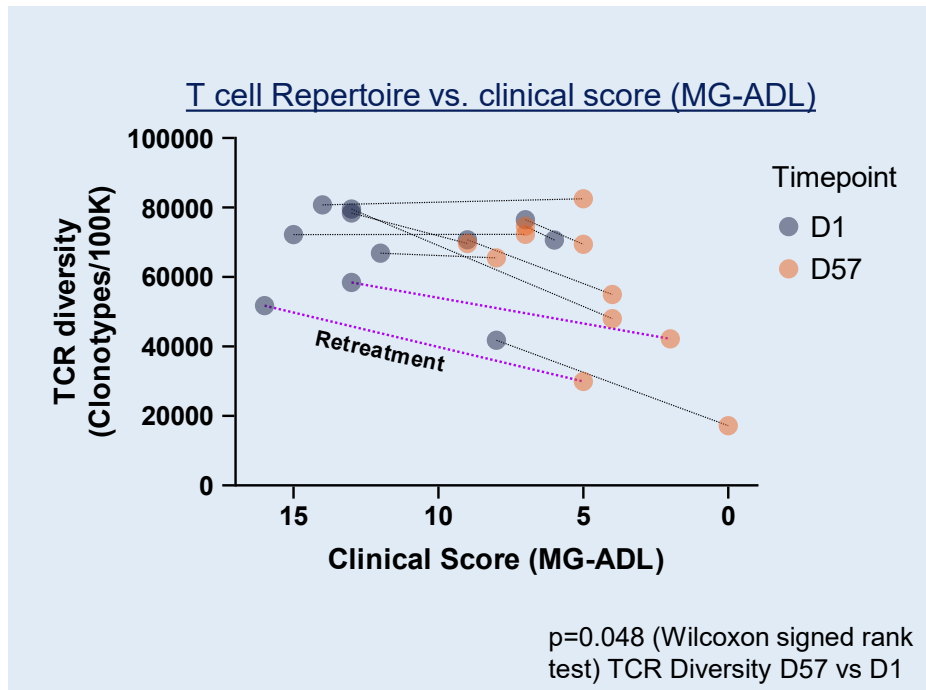


There was a **significant** and **clinically meaningful reduction** in mean [SD] MG-ADL score at Month 3 for the **Descartes-08 AChR+ group** versus placebo (-3.4 [2.8] vs -0.6 [2.9],  $p=0.0409$ ), which was **sustained through Month 12**<sup>1</sup>



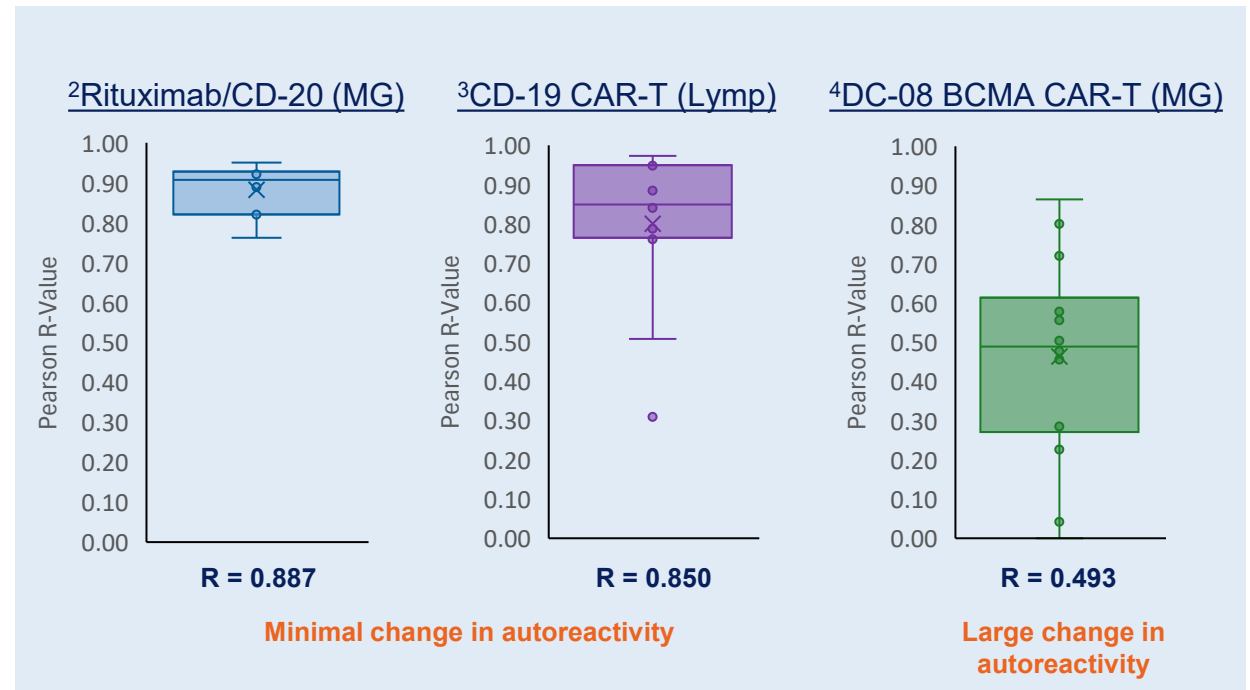
# Descartes-08 focuses the T-cell repertoire and selectively alters the autoreactome, showing clear biological activity

Descartes-08 focuses the T-cell repertoire in a manner that correlates with clinical effect



Data show Clinical Score and TCR Sequencing TCR Diversity (Downsampled Rearrangements) in Phase 2a samples analyzed at Adaptive Biotechnologies (R06 dataset). For certain subjects where TCR sequencing sample data was unavailable, D1 data was imputed from Screen, and D57 data was imputed from D85. Samples from one re-treated patient were analyzed as indicated. P-value is provided for Wilcoxon matched-pairs signed rank test on all primary-treatment data pairs from D1 vs D57.

Descartes-08 selectively alters the self-reactive branch of the antibody repertoire (i.e., autoreactome<sup>1</sup>)



<sup>1</sup>Bodansky et al., *Journal of Clinical Investigation* 2024, doi: 10.1101/2023.12.19.23300188.

Serum analysis of <sup>2</sup>Myasthenia gravis patients receiving Rituximab targeting CD20+ B cells, <sup>3</sup>lymphoma patients receiving conventional CD19 DNA CAR-T, or <sup>4</sup>gMG patients following infusion with DC-08. Data compare D85 to D1 for MG open label cohort (N=13).

# Baseline characteristics: Patients in open-label Phase 2 SLE trial



Participant	Sex	Age	SLE Duration (years)	Baseline SLEDAI-2K	Prior Rx	Ongoing Rx
Patient A	F	44	19	8	MMF	MMF, HCQ
Patient B	F	42	23	12	-	Prednisone 2.5mg, HCQ, MMF
Patient C	F	54	15	8	Prednisone 20mg, HCQ, Leflunomide, Benlysta	Prednisone 2.5mg, MTX, Sulfasalazine
Patient D	F	26	13	13	-	Prednisone 5mg, HCQ, MMF

MMF: Mycophenolate mofetil,  
 MTX: methotrexate  
 HCQ: hydroxychloroquine