CLAIMS:

1. Use of an anti-VHZ agent in the manufacture of a medicament for the treatment, prophylaxis or alleviation of cancer, wherein the cancer is not an invasive or metastatic cancer.

2. The use according to claim 1 wherein the cancer is breast cancer.

3. The use according to claim 1 or claim 2 wherein the anti-VHZ agent is capable of down-regulating any combination of the expression, amount or activity of a VHZ sequence shown as GenBank accession number NM_017823 or NP_060293, or a sequence which has at least 90% sequence identity to that sequence,

4. The use according to claim 1 or claim 2 wherein the anti-VHZ agent is an anti-VHZ antibody.

5. The use according to claim 4 wherein the anti-VHZ antibody is a humanised antibody.

6. The use according to claim 4 wherein the anti-VHZ antibody is an anti-peptide antibody generated against RRLRPGSIETYEQEK corresponding to amino acid residues (126-140) of human VHZ.

7. The use according to claim 4 wherein the antibody is selected from the group consisting of:

chicken anti-human VHZ antibody (catalogue numbers LS-C32281, amino acids 35 to 90, LS-C42458, LS-A6806 and LS-A6803, LS-C32281, LifeSpan Inc, Seattle, Washington, USA);

rabbit anti-human VHZ antibody (catalogue number DS-PB-00676, RayBiotech Inc, Norcross, Georgia, USA);

chicken anti- human VHZ antibody (catalogue number XW-7857, ProSci Incorporated, Poway, California, USA);

rabbit anti-human VHZ antibody (catalogue number F4560 and D9840-66A, United States Biological, Swampscott, Massachusetts, USA);

chicken anti-human VHZ antibody (catalogue number D9840-66, United States Biological, Swampscott, Massachusetts, USA);

rabbit anti-human VHZ antibody (catalogue number AHP1142, AdB Serotec, Oxford, United Kingdom);

rabbit anti-human VHZ antibody (catalogue number NBII0-40452, Novus Biologicals, Littleton, Colorado, USA); and

chicken anti-human VHZ antibody (catalogue number NB100-75328, Novus Biologicals, Littleton, Colorado, USA).

8. The use according to claim 1 or claim 2 wherein the anti-VHZ agent is capable of downregulating VHZ by RNA interference

9. The use according to claim 8 wherein the anti-VHZ agent is a Small Interfering RNA (siRNA), Short Hairpin RNA (shRNA), or Chimera RNAi, or a DUSP23 Pre-design Chimera RNAi (catalogue number H00054935-ROI, Novus Biologicals, Littleton, Colorado, USA).

10. A method of detecting a cancer cell, the method comprising detecting modulation of expression, amount or activity of VHZ in a cell in a sample obtained from an individual.

11. The method of claim 10 wherein the modulation is up-regulation.

12. The method of claim 10 in which the expression of VHZ is compared to the expression, amount or activity of VHZ in a control cell known to be non-cancerous.

13. The method according to Claim 10, in which the method comprises detecting a VHZ nucleic acid or a VHZ polypeptide.

14. The method according to claim 10 wherein the VHZ nucleic acid is detected by means of a probe comprising at least a portion of a nucleic acid having a sequence shown as GenBank accession number NM_017823 or NP_060293 or a sequence having at least 90% sequence identity to such a sequence, or in which the method comprises detecting a VHZ polypeptide by means of an anti-VHZ antibody.

CLAIMS:

1. Use of an anti-VHZ agent in the manufacture of a medicament for the treatment, prophylaxis or alleviation of cancer.

2. The use according to claim 1 wherein the cancer is breast cancer.

3. The use according to claim 1 or claim 2 wherein the anti-VHZ agent is capable of down-regulating any combination of the expression, amount or activity of a VHZ sequence shown as GenBank accession number NM_017823 or NP_060293, or a sequence which has at least 90% sequence identity to that sequence,

4. The use according to claim 1 or claim 2 wherein the anti-VHZ agent is an anti-VHZ antibody.

5. The use according to claim 4 wherein the anti-VHZ antibody is a humanised antibody.

6. The use according to claim 4 wherein the anti-VHZ antibody is an anti-peptide antibody generated against RRLRPGSIETYEQEK corresponding to amino acid residues (126-140) of human VHZ.

7. The use according to claim 4 wherein the antibody is selected from the group consisting of:

chicken anti-human VHZ antibody (catalogue numbers LS-C32281, amino acids 35 to 90, LS-C42458, LS-A6806 and LS-A6803, LS-C32281, LifeSpan Inc, Seattle, Washington, USA);

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chicken anti-human VHZ antibody (catalogue number D9840-66, United States Biological, Swampscott, Massachusetts, USA);

rabbit anti-human VHZ antibody (catalogue number AHP1142, AdB Serotec, Oxford, United Kingdom);

rabbit anti-human VHZ antibody (catalogue number NBII0-40452, Novus Biologicals, Littleton, Colorado, USA); and

chicken anti-human VHZ antibody (catalogue number NB100-75328, Novus Biologicals, Littleton, Colorado, USA).

8. The use according to claim 1 or claim 2 wherein the anti-VHZ agent is capable of downregulating VHZ by RNA interference

9. The use according to claim 8 wherein the anti-VHZ agent is a Small Interfering RNA (siRNA), Short Hairpin RNA (shRNA), or Chimera RNAi, or a DUSP23 Pre-design Chimera RNAi (catalogue number H00054935-ROI, Novus Biologicals, Littleton, Colorado, USA).

10. A method of detecting a cancer cell, the method comprising detecting modulation (preferably up-regulation) of expression, amount or activity of VHZ in a cell in a sample obtained from an individual.

11. The method of claim 10 in which the expression of VHZ is compared to the expression, amount or activity of VHZ in a control cell known to be non-cancerous.

12. The method according to Claim 10, in which the method comprises detecting a VHZ nucleic acid or a VHZ polypeptide.

13. The method according to claim 10 wherein the VHZ nucleic acid is detected by means of a probe comprising at least a portion of a nucleic acid having a sequence shown as GenBank accession number NM_017823 or

NP_060293 or a sequence having at least 90% sequence identity to such a sequence, or in which the method comprises detecting a VHZ polypeptide by means of an anti-VHZ antibody.