

Targeted Drug Development

New biotech company founded with the participation of the Deutsches Krebsforschungszentrum

Dr. Eberhard Amtmann and Dr. Marc Rösel at the Deutsches Krebsforschungszentrum (German Cancer Research Center) have collaborated with chemist Dr. Otto Schuster to found BioSphings AG, a new biotechnology company. The Deutsches Krebsforschungszentrum will have shares in BioSphings. Dr. Otto Schuster is a managing director with PAZ GmbH in Frankfurt and specializes in drug development. The aim of the new company is to develop innovative drugs against cancer, viral infections, and autoimmune diseases such as multiple sclerosis, rheumatism, and Crohn's disease.

The scientists involved have many years of experience in the fields of signal transduction, immunology, and drug development. The treatment approaches followed by BioSphings are aimed at new drug targets from enzymes called phospholipases, which take part in the lipid metabolism. These could facilitate highly targeted therapies with little side effects.

BioSphings owns several innovative drug patents. A drug against the herpes simplex virus, which causes painful blisters around the mouth and in the genital area, has already successfully passed Phase I and II clinical studies. This drug intervenes specifically in the activation mechanism of herpes viruses. Approval and marketing of the drug are expected within the next three to four years.

The new biotech company does not intend to market their own drugs. Therefore, BioSphings has now entered into licensing negotiations with potential cooperation partners in the pharmaceutical industry.

The task of the Deutsches Krebsforschungszentrum in Heidelberg (German Cancer Research Center, DKFZ) is to systematically investigate the mechanisms of cancer development and to identify cancer risk factors. The results of this basic research are expected to lead to new approaches in the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of cancer. The Center is financed to 90 percent by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research and to 10 percent by the State of Baden-Wuerttemberg. It is a member of the Helmholtz Association of National Research Centers (Helmholtz-Gemeinschaft Deutscher Forschungszentren e.V.).

This press release is available at www.dkfz.de/pressemitteilungen

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