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AbbVie, Harbour BioMed to develop Ab therapy for COVID-19

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US based company AbbVie, Harbour BioMed (HBM) with operations in US and China, Utrecht University (UU) in Europe and Erasmus Medical Center (EMC)in the Netherlands have announced they have entered into a collaboration to develop a novel antibody therapeutic to prevent and treat COVID-19, the pandemic respiratory disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

The focus of the collaboration is on advancing the fully human, neutralizing antibody 47D11 discovered by UU, EMC and HBM and recently reported in Nature Communications. This antibody targets the conserved domain of the spike protein of SARS-CoV-2.

Under the terms of the collaboration, AbbVie will support UU, EMC and HBM through the preclinical activities, while simultaneously undertaking preparations for later stage preclinical and clinical development work.

AbbVie will receive an option to exclusively license the antibody from the three parties for therapeutic clinical development and commercialization worldwide.

The antibody discovery, targets a conserved region of the virus’ spike protein. In cell culture studies the antibody blocked infection by the SARS-CoV-2 and a second coronavirus SARS-CoV. The antibody is fully human, which is designed to facilitate its development and minimize immune-related side effects.