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Korea's OliX Pharmaceuticals identifies target genes for NASH treatment candidate

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OliX Pharmaceuticals identifies inhibition of target gene expression in nonhuman primate models for NASH Candidate

Korea's OliX Pharmaceuticals, Inc., a leading developer of RNAi therapeutics, has identified effective inhibition of target gene expression in a non-clinical monkey trial for its nonalcoholic steatohepatitis (NASH) treatment program.

OliX's NASH pipeline, OLX702A, leverages its GalNAc-asiRNA platform and is currently under a non-clinical efficacy trial performed by a contract research organization. According to the Company, efficient suppression of the target mRNA gene expression as well as a reduction in liver markers, alanine transaminase (ALT), and aspartate aminotransferase (AST) were observed in monkey models. The levels of these liver markers were recovered to the normal range.

ALT, mainly present in hepatocytes, is a key liver enzyme released in the blood when liver cells are damaged. AST, which can be found in the liver, heart, and muscles, also acts as a key liver enzyme as it is secreted due to hepatocyte damage.

NASH is one of the most common chronic liver diseases worldwide in which excess fat accumulates in the liver along with inflammation regardless of heavy alcohol consumption. Given that there are no approved drugs on the market, there is a significant unmet need as aggravated conditions can develop into liver cirrhosis and liver cancer.