

Cadila's new compound to rejuvenate obsolete antibiotics

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Mumbai: Ahmedabad-based Cadila Pharmaceuticals and UK based antibiotics discovery company, Helperby Therapeutics, inked a joint agreement on antibiotic drug resistance R&D. This deal is a major breakthrough in the fight against resistance with the discovery of patented 'resistance breaker' compounds, and has been hailed by the UK's Prime Minister David Cameron as another great example of UK-India collaboration.

R&D would be conducted on these new compounds are called antibiotic resistance breakers. When an antibiotic resistance breaker is combined with an old obsolete antibiotic, it can rejuvenate it and make it active against highly resistant bacteria. Antibiotic resistance breakers can potentially rescue several different classes of antibiotics. Furthermore, this approach requires the development of fewer novel compounds, is less risky and less costly than the traditional 'one antibiotic' route.

Cadila Pharmaceuticals will take the new discovery through phase III and into commercialization. The company is now actively considering a presence in the UK with a corresponding programme for UK microbiologists as part of the collaboration. The licensing agreement will allow Cadila Pharma to bring the first product to market in around 18 months.

Helperby will supply Cadila Pharmaceuticals with antibiotic resistance breakers whilst Cadila Pharmaceuticals will develop the combinations with old antibiotics. The deal value was undisclosed but could contribute to Helperby scaling up in the UK to a potential £500 million operation, creating employment for 500-to-1,000 persons by 2019.

Cadila Pharmaceutical's chairman and managing director, Dr Rajiv I Modi, said, "The founder chairman of our company, Shri IA Modi, believed in providing affordable medicines for the masses through innovative and cutting-edge R&D. This discovery will open new avenues against resistant organisms and is very timely in view of global concerns about rapidly growing bacterial resistance against current antibiotics"

Helperby's chief scientific officer (CSO) Professor Anthony Coates said, "The emergence and spread of drug-resistant pathogens has accelerated whilst the pipeline for new anti-microbial drugs has all but run dry, this exciting and timely partnership with Cadila Pharmaceuticals offers us all hope."