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Tillotts Pharma AG, a part of Japan-based Zeria Group, and Numab AG have entered into an exclusive global licensing agreement to develop and commercialize new antibody-based therapies that act against tumor necrosis factor alpha (TNF-Ã?Å½Ã?Â±) for people with inflammatory bowel disease (IBD).

TNF-Ã?Å½Ã?Â± is a cell signaling protein involved in the body's immune system. When overproduced, it is associated with IBD, a group of conditions consisting of ulcerative colitis and Crohn's disease that affects up to five million people worldwide. Anti-TNF therapy has been shown to reduce hospitalizations and surgeries, and improve quality of life.

Under the terms of the agreement, Tillotts will develop and commercialize new formulations of anti-TNF- antibody fragments identified by Numab. Numab is eligible to a signing fee and, upon successful development, will receive down- and milestone payments, as well as royalties up to double-digits.

After successful pre-clinical trials, and prior to submission of an investigational new drug (IND) application to the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Tillotts will be seeking a co-development and marketing partner for the US market with a strong interest in working with Tillotts to further develop antibody-based therapies that block TNF-Ã?Å½Ã?Â±.

Tillotts Pharma AG, part of the Zeria Group, is a fast-growing specialty pharma company with 200 employees in Switzerland and abroad. Tillotts is dedicated to the development, in/out-licensing and commercialization of innovative pharmaceutical products, medical devices and diagnostics, all in the field of gastroenterology.

Zeria Pharmaceutical Co. Ltd., based in Tokyo, Japan, focuses on R&D, manufacturing and sales of prescription drugs as well as OTC products. The company is listed on the First Section of Tokyo Stock Exchange. Zeria holds a leading position within the gastroenterology field in Japan and operates internationally through a number of subsidiaries.