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Amgen, Sanofi, Ono, collaborate with academia on proteins project

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Singapore: Three pharma giants, US-based Amgen, France's Sanofi and Ono pharmaceuticals Japan have entered into strategic collaboration with three research institutes to study a super-family of proteins, called the G-protein coupled receptors that have implications in various diseases.

The three collaborating academic research institutes are the iHuman Institute at Shanghai Tech University, Shanghai Institute of Materia Medica and the University of Southern California.

The ambitious international partnership, called the GPCR consortium will focus on generating high resolution pictures of hundreds of medically important proteins. The not-for-profit initiative brings together major pharmaceutical companies and academic institutes to advance GPCR research and thus aid drug development.

The human body is controlled by 826 GPCR, however, their physiology is poorly understood. GPCRs are a hot topic of research and is a part of the growing trend to pool in early-stage drug research.

Professor Raymond Stevens, founding director of the iHuman Institute at ShanghaiTech University, said, "Partnerships between industry and academia will maximize the impact of our research on human health and disease and will also provide a means to support early-stage basic research."