BioSpectrum
the business of Bio & Health Sciences
ASIA EDITION

Celltrion signs agreement for atherosclerosis drugs development

September 20, 2018 | News

Celltrion will have a preferential right to license-in the new drug candidates

Celltrion, a leading biopharmaceutical company headquartered in Incheon, Korea has signed an 'Incubation' agreement with Emory University in Atlanta to support the research and development of new drug candidates for atherosclerosis.

'Incubation' agreement is one of the open innovation measures by which a company provides its internal resources and capabilities, such as research space and facility, manpower and business operation consulting, to an external research institute or startup so as to support the research and ensure autonomy of the research aimed at developing new drugs or next-generation technology on the condition that the company can preferentially discuss commercialization of the research output.

Under the agreement, Celltrion will share Celltrion's accumulated biologics development expertise with Emory University School of Medicine and the Wallace H. Coulter Department of Biomedical Engineering at Emory University and Georgia Institute of Technology, and provide research costs and manufacturing materials of new drug candidates for atherosclerosis. Celltrion will have a preferential right to acquire a license for inventions resulting from the agreement.

Atherosclerosis is a vascular disease, in which the blood vessels are narrowed or clogged due to plaque made up of fat, cholesterol, immune cells and vascular wall cells in the blood vessel. This results in ischemic heart diseases (e.g., myocardial infarction and angina), stroke and peripheral arterial disease. Ischemic heart disease and stroke are the world's leading causes of death, accounting for a combined 15.2 million deaths worldwide in 2016.

Statins that lower cholesterol and lipid levels in blood are widely used to alleviate the onset and progression of atherosclerosis. Despite the success of lipid lowering drugs, atherosclerotic diseases continue to be the major cause of death worldwide. This highlights the need to develop new drugs that can complement the lipid lowering drugs by targeting new mechanisms of action to prevent and reduce the risk of atherosclerotic diseases.

“We are delighted to cooperate with the internationally renowned research team at Emory University led by Dr. Hanjoong Jo, John and Jan Portman Endowed Professor and Associate Chair in the Department of Biomedical Engineering and the Division of Cardiology, who is a leader in the area of mechanically regulated genes in atherosclerosis research,” says the official of Celltrion. “Based on this Incubation agreement, Celltrion will make further plans to secure more various new drugs and technologies. We are hoping that more research institutes and corporations will take an interest in our open innovation.”

Meanwhile, Celltrion recently announced a plan of launching Bio CDMO (Contract Development and Manufacturing Organization) business, in a bid to pursue open innovation for development of new drugs.