BioSpectrum the business of Bio & Health Sciences ASIA EDITION

Merck, BioNTech accelerate supply of urgently needed lipids

February 5, 2021 | News

The lipids will be used for the production of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine (BNT162b2)



Merck and BioNTech are further expanding their strategic partnership. Merck, in close collaboration with BioNTech, will significantly accelerate the supply of urgently needed lipids and increase the amount of lipid delivery towards the end of 2021. The lipids will be used for the production of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine (BNT162b2).

Lipids are critical to the drug delivery system of mRNA therapies to the body for a vaccine to be effective. Only very few companies in the world are currently able to produce custom lipids in significant quantities and according to the highest quality requirements needed for vaccine production.

“What unites BioNTech and Merck is our strong belief in mRNA technology and our trustful collaboration in vaccine development. We are convinced that now is the time to pull together to supply as much vaccine as possible to the world. Extraordinary times like these require bold steps, and we are ready to take these steps to tackle one of the biggest challenges of humanity,” said Stefan Oschmann, Chairman of the Executive Board and CEO, Merck.

With the outbreak of the pandemic, Merck and BioNTech had started to intensify their previously existing collaboration.

In the past weeks, Merck has been working hard to expand its already very high lipid production capacity. This required the further development of production technologies and the implementation of new, highly complex process steps. BioNTech and Merck are currently defining exact requirements and are aiming for a timely execution of their joint efforts.

Merck is active across multiple steps of the process flow and collaborates with many companies using lipid-based technologies to address COVID-19 vaccines and treatment.