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Novartis finds no evidence of wrongdoing in clinical trials

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Singapore: Novartis Pharma KK has found no evidence that data on clinical trials for its hypertension drug Diovan had been manipulated, the company said in a report.

Mr Yoshiyasu Ninomiya, president of the Tokyo-based unit of the Swiss drug giant Novartis AG, announced the results of investigation into the matter at a press conference in Tokyo.

A law office investigated suspected manipulation of Diovan clinical trial data on behalf of the Novartis group. It examined e-mails sent and received by a Novartis Pharma employee involved in the clinical trials and a boss of the employee, and also interviewed the pair. The employee quit the company in May 2013.

The clinical trials for Diovan, a prescription drug, were carried out between 2001 and 2004 by five universities: Kyoto Prefectural University of Medicine, Jikei University, Chiba University, Nagoya University and Shiga University of Medical Science.

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According to the report, the former Novartis Pharma employee was involved in the analysis of the clinical trial data. But the former employee denied any manipulation, the report said, adding that no hard evidence for such wrongdoing has been found.