

JUVABIS IS PARTNER IN THE PANEUROPEAN ENABLE CONSORTIUM



THE SWISS START-UP COMPANY, JUVABIS, IS PROJECT PARTNER IN THE ENABLE CONSORTIUM WITHIN THE INNOVATIVE MEDICINES INITIATIVE OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION. AIM IS TO DEVELOP NEW DRUGS TO COMBAT ANTIBIOTIC-RESISTANT GERMS, WHICH REPRESENT AN INCREASING CONCERN FOR THE HEALTH SECTOR.

Antimicrobial resistance is a growing threat to public health. Recently, researchers have called for a global fight against resistant germs. Authors of a recent study, commissioned by the UK Government, reported that, in the future, without appropriate countermeasures, up to ten million people per year could die from infections caused by antibiotic-resistant germs. Already today, 700,000 people per year die as a result of being infected with resistant germs. By 2050, this figure could increase more than tenfold. According to the report, should antibiotics lose their effectiveness due to the resistance of pathogens, surgical procedures are likely to become very dangerous.

Over the past decades, very few new antibiotics have come onto the market, despite the great need for new antimicrobial agents. The ENABLE Consortium within the Innovative Medicines Initiative is working to promote the development of new antibiotics against gram-negative bacteria. The primary goal of the Consortium is to develop antimicrobial agents for clinical trial. The Innovative Medicines Initiative is a pan-European public-private partnership between the European Commission and the European Federation EFPIA (European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations) with a total budget of EUR 3.27 billion to promote biomedical research.

At the Institute for Medical Microbiology at Zurich University, under the direction of Prof. Dr. Erik Böttger, together with co-operation partners Prof. Dr. Andrea Vasella at ETH Zurich and Prof. Dr. David Crich at Wayne State University in the United States, new agents from the group aminoglycosides have been developed in recent years, which, with high effectiveness against bacteria, show a low development of resistance and are thereby less ototoxic. Extensive preclinical data prove the benefits of these agents.

Prof. Dr. Erik Böttger, together with his academic co-operation partners and with strong support of Unictetra, the technology transfer agency of the universities Basel, Bern and Zurich, founded a start-up company to make these active substances available to patients as quickly as possible. Juvabis GmbH, with Managing Director Dr. Gunter Festel, has the exclusive license for these active substances and is, in addition to Zurich University, project partner in the ENABLE Consortium.

With the support of funds of the ENABLE Consortium, in which well-known pharmaceutical companies, such as GlaxoSmithKline and Sanofi, are involved, the preclinical stage should be completed within a short period of time and in the next 2 to 3 years a clinical study is to be started. With the agents developed at the University of Zurich with the help of the co-operation partners, the ENABLE Consortium can expand its earlier portfolio of new active substances with substances, which are near the clinical trial stage.

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