

AstraZeneca licenses novel antidepressant compounds discovered by Mayo Clinic, Virginia Tech collaboration

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BLACKSBURG, VA., February 9, 2009 -- AstraZeneca, Mayo Clinic, and Virginia Tech Intellectual Properties Inc. today announced that AstraZeneca has licensed a portfolio of preclinical Triple Reuptake Inhibitor (TRI) compounds for depression. Researchers at Virginia Tech and Mayo Clinic collaborated to discover the compounds.

The agreement provides AstraZeneca with a global license for all uses of the compounds, as well as exclusive manufacturing and commercial rights. It also establishes a research collaboration that will focus on jointly generating additional novel TRI compounds. Financial details were not disclosed.

Current classes of antidepressant therapies such as selective serotonin (SSRI) and dual serotonin/norepinephrine (SNRI) reuptake inhibitors are proven treatments for depression and anxiety. However, they only address the imbalances of one or two of the neurotransmitters in the brain.

Paul R. Carlier, professor of organic and medicinal chemistry in the [College of Science](#) at Virginia Tech, explains, "Together with our colleagues at Mayo Clinic, we have been seeking wider-spectrum behavior and have developed a portfolio of TRIs to address imbalances associated with the three major neurotransmitters. Besides incorporating all the benefits associated with serotonin and norepinephrine inhibition, our TRI compounds include the additional action of the dopamine neurotransmitter. We are excited to discover additional compounds that work through this unique mechanism."



Paul R. Carlier

Elliott Richelson, M.D., Mayo Clinic, co-inventor of the technology, adds, "Through our clinical practice, we recognize the need for improved therapies to treat individuals suffering from depression or anxiety. The additional dopamine action of our TRI compounds has the potential to deliver a superior antidepressant in terms of greater efficacy and an improved side effect profile. By collaborating with AstraZeneca, a company with a strong history of developing new medicines, we have the opportunity to both advance and expand upon these scientific discoveries to address better the needs of patients worldwide."

Christer Köhler, vice president for AstraZeneca's Global Discovery Research Area focused on Central Nervous System and Pain, said, "Besides enabling us to harness the combined power of two outstanding, world-class institutions, this agreement also establishes a strong footing for AstraZeneca in the strategically important TRI research area. We continue to build alliances and collaborations within the scientific community and this deal is another example of our strong commitment and ability to leverage innovation with the aim of making a meaningful difference in patients' lives."

Notes To Editors

About AstraZeneca

AstraZeneca is a major international healthcare business engaged in the research, development, manufacturing and marketing of meaningful prescription medicines and supplier for healthcare services. AstraZeneca is one of the world's leading pharmaceutical companies with healthcare sales of \$29.55 billion and is a leader in gastrointestinal, cardiovascular, neuroscience, respiratory, oncology and infectious disease medicines. In the United States, AstraZeneca is a \$13.35 billion dollar healthcare business with 12,200 employees committed to improving people's lives. AstraZeneca is listed in the Dow Jones Sustainability Index (Global) as well as the FTSE4Good Index. For more information, visit www.astrazeneca-us.com.

About Mayo Clinic's Office of Intellectual Property

Mayo Clinic has one of the most highly evolved intellectual property and technology commercialization efforts in academic medicine, with a 20-year history of supporting Mayo's mission. The Office of Intellectual Property at Mayo Clinic, serves as a bridge between discoveries and the marketplace. Our staff work closely with Mayo physicians and scientists to evaluate and develop inventions, ideas and discoveries that have the potential to transform healthcare and generate income to support Mayo patient care, education and research. At Mayo Clinic, we work with inventors and industry to determine the right fit for each innovation, whether a sponsored research agreement, licensing agreement, technology-based venture, start-up company or entirely new business model. Mayo Clinic's Office of Intellectual Property has filed more than 2,800 patent applications resulting in more than 500 active licensing agreements with companies in the biomedical and manufacturing industries. For more information, visit www.mayoclinic.org

About Virginia Tech

Founded in 1872 as a land-grant college, [Virginia Tech](#) is the most comprehensive university in the Commonwealth of Virginia and is among the top research universities in the nation. The university's nine colleges are dedicated to quality, innovation, and results through teaching, research, and outreach activities. At its main campus in Blacksburg and six other campus centers across the state, Virginia Tech enrolls more than 28,000 undergraduate and graduate students from all 50 states and more than 100 countries in 180 academic degree programs.

About Virginia Tech Intellectual Properties, Inc. (VTIP)

Formed in 1985 as an affiliated corporation of Virginia Tech, VTIP is passionate in its pursuit of excellence in technology commercialization, creating market opportunities from scientific innovation. VTIP facilitates the licensing of technology to companies, encourages new faculty startup ventures, works with publishers and distributors of software, and supports the transfer of research and knowledge to other universities, research institutes and companies. For more information about VTIP, contact Mark Coburn at (540) 951-9378 or visit www.vtip.org.

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