

Pharmigene Collaborates to Battle Stevens-Johnson Syndrome (SJS) and Toxic Epidermal Necrolysis (TENS)

Genetic tests being developed for prevention of life-threatening skin diseases caused by treatments for hyperuricemia, epilepsy, trigeminal neuralgia, and bipolar disorder

Palo Alto, CA – November 17, 2010 – Pharmigene, a leader in advancing personalized medicine and reducing severe adverse drug reactions through genetic-based diagnostic solutions, today announced the licensing of its patented and patent-pending intellectual property to Mayo Clinic to develop in-house genetic tests. The tests are being designed for use in detecting the presence of key genetic alleles in individual patients being considered for treatment with drugs that have been linked to the development of Stevens-Johnson Syndrome and TENS.

The Food and Drug Administration has determined that individuals testing positive for a particular human leukocyte antigen (HLA) allele, HLA-B*1502, in their DNA should not be treated with carbamazepine, a drug used for epilepsy, trigeminal neuralgia, and bipolar disorder. These same individuals should not be treated with phenytoin or fosphenytoin, drugs use for seizures, due to a higher risk than the general population of developing Stevens-Johnson Syndrome. Additionally, several scientific studies have concluded that patients with the HLA-B*5801 allele, who are administered allopurinol therapy for hyperuricemia and its complications, including gout, are also at a higher risk of developing Stevens-Johnson Syndrome. Allopurinol is used to reduce uric acid level in patients receiving cancer chemotherapy, and also used to treat certain types of kidney stones.

Stevens-Johnson Syndrome is a potentially deadly skin disease that usually results from an adverse drug reaction. A more severe form of the disease is called Toxic Epidermal Necrolysis. These diseases can be deadly as well as painful and distressing for those afflicted. “Our research and subsequent licensing of our technology to Mayo Clinic should help make enormous strides in preventing the emergence of SJS, and reducing the overall health care burdens to the individuals and also to the health care system,” reported Dr. Luke Chen, CEO of Pharmigene.

About Pharmigene

Pharmigene’s mission (www.pharmigene.com) is to improve personal health and advance personalized medicine by providing genetic-based diagnostic solutions that enable individuals to become more informed about their genetic makeup and allow them and their healthcare professionals to make better health decisions. Pharmigene was founded in 2005 with exclusive worldwide intellectual property rights related to warfarin sensitivity and other adverse drug reactions from Academia Sinica in Taiwan. Currently Pharmigene has offices in Palo Alto, California, as well as offices and a research and GMP/ISO manufacturing facility in Taiwan.

About Mayo Clinic Department of Laboratory Medicine and Pathology and Mayo Medical Laboratories

The Department of Laboratory Medicine and Pathology at Mayo Clinic maintains an active diagnostic test development program. These activities also incorporate discoveries from other diagnostic and biotechnology companies and academic organizations. Mayo utilizes these proven diagnostic technologies in the care of its patients and offers them to more than 5,000 health care institutions around the world through Mayo Medical Laboratories, a global reference laboratory for over 40 years, and outreach arm of Mayo Clinic's Department of Laboratory Medicine and Pathology. Revenue from testing is used to support medical education and research at Mayo Clinic.

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