

AQILION

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Press release

Aqilion presents new preclinical data in the Alnitak program showing unique results in rheumatoid arthritis disease model

AQILION AB (publ) is presenting preclinical data in the Alnitak program for the first time at the conference BIO-Europe 2021. The Alnitak program focuses on inhibition of the TAK1 target protein. By directly inhibiting TAK1, the biology underlying the inflammatory processes that arise in various autoimmune diseases is affected. Aqilion is now presenting positive efficacy data from studies in a rheumatoid arthritis disease model with one of its TAK1 inhibitors. This is the first time that a drug-like substance that specifically inhibits TAK1 demonstrates favorable data in a disease model, supporting the biological hypothesis that TAK1 is a relevant target protein for the treatment of autoimmune and inflammatory diseases.

The goal of the Alnitak program is to develop an oral medication that specifically binds to and inhibits the TAK1 target protein. It has been shown that TAK1 (MAP3K7) acts as a master regulator of inflammatory signaling. Recent scientific publications have also shown that TAK1 serves as a central mediator of NLRP3 signaling in human cells. NLRP3 is the most studied inflammasome, a cellular complex that is formed in the presence of stress or inflammation, and dysregulated NLRP3 activation is involved in harmful inflammation and linked to many diseases.

Aqilion has identified highly potent TAK1 inhibitors through advanced structure-based molecular design. Public domain and internal data suggest that these compounds are among the most potent known TAK1 inhibitors that have drug-like properties. The Alnitak program is based exclusively on internal innovation and is run as a wholly owned program within Aqilion.

The results from the rheumatoid arthritis model show that treatment with Aqilion's TAK1 inhibitor provides extremely clear and significant effects on disease markers compared with both untreated controls and a well-proven medication that is currently available in the market. The effect is dose-dependent and data show that treatment was well tolerated in the selected disease model. However, further studies are needed to analyze and summarize potential side effects and to select a clinical drug candidate.

Aqilion is now presenting the Alnitak program to potential partners, including at the BIO-Europe digital conference October 25 - 28.

“We are delighted to have reached this milestone with data that clearly show a significant effect, providing Alnitak with unique positioning in inflammation. We aim to select a drug candidate in 2022 and then initiate the necessary preclinical development studies. The results so far confirm our internal innovation power and our ability to select innovative projects that we can efficiently and successfully move forward. The Alnitak program also has great strategic and market relevance,” says Sarah Fredriksson, CEO of Aqilion.

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About Aqilion

Aqilion is a biotech company that focuses on developing new innovative treatments for diseases caused by chronic inflammation and dysfunctional immune reactions such as autoimmune diseases. The company is mainly active in the early phases of drug discovery, from idea to early clinical development.

Aqilion combines its experience from major pharmaceutical companies with the drive and entrepreneurship of small growth companies. With solid experience of business development in innovative biotech and pharmaceutical companies, Aqilion's experienced team and board have successfully shepherded drugs all the way from discovery to market.

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