

News Release

July 3, 2023
Maruho Co., Ltd.
Alchemedicine, Inc.

Maruho and Alchemedicine Enter into Exclusive License Agreement for Aldehyde Dehydrogenase 2 (ALDH2) Activator

Osaka and Ibaraki (Japan), July 3, 2023 – Maruho Co., Ltd. (“Maruho”; Head Office: Osaka; President and CEO, Atsushi Sugita) and Alchemedicine, Inc. (“Alchemedicine”; Head Office: Tsukuba, Ibaraki; CEO, Keigo Tanaka) announced that they have entered into an exclusive license agreement to develop and commercialize Alchemedicine’s aldehyde dehydrogenase 2 (ALDH2) activator (hereinafter referred to as “the compound”) following Maruho’s exercise of the option right included in the exclusive negotiation and evaluation agreement¹⁾ that had already been executed between the companies.

Under the terms of the license agreement, Alchemedicine grants Maruho exclusive, worldwide rights to develop, manufacture, and commercialize the compound in designated disease areas (details undisclosed). Maruho will pay Alchemedicine an upfront payment and potential development and commercial milestone payments, as well as tiered royalties based on sales. The license agreement includes backup compounds possessed by Alchemedicine that selectively activate ALDH2.

ALDH2 is a mitochondrial enzyme, which is generally known to detoxify acetaldehyde, a toxic substance that is produced after alcohol consumption. As ALDH2 also acts on various substances other than acetaldehyde, the compound is expected to have potential for use in a wide range of indications.

This license agreement was achieved through the shared intention of Maruho and Alchemedicine. Namely, Maruho strives to develop new treatments with the mission “More smiles, brighter life for you.” and Alchemedicine is committed to creating compounds for drug candidates through the proprietary medicinal chemistry platform HiSAP® with the vision “We discover life-changing treatments for various diseases that make a lasting positive contribution to society.” Maruho will pursue the development of drugs using the compound as an active ingredient.

Both Maruho and Alchemedicine are committed to further contributing to the improvement of patients’ quality of life by providing new therapeutic agents.

About Maruho

Maruho Co., Ltd. has its head office in Osaka and leads Japan in research and development, manufacturing and commercialization of dermatological products. Founded in 1915, Maruho has 1,547 employees (as of the end of September 2022), and net sales were approximately 85.67 billion yen in its fiscal year ended September 30, 2022. With the mission "More smiles, brighter life for you.", Maruho aims to help realize a society where everyone can live with a smile.

For more information, please visit <https://www.maruho.co.jp/english/>.

About Alchemedicine

Alchemedicine, Inc. is an enterprise specializing in the research and development of new small-molecule drugs. With the vision "We discover life-changing treatments for various diseases that make a lasting positive contribution to society," Alchemedicine is committed to creating compounds for drug candidates by quickly resolving efficacy and/or safety issues of compounds through proprietary medicinal chemistry platform HiSAP[®]. The broad range of applications of HiSAP[®] in drug discovery research enables simultaneous operations of multiple drug discovery programs without disease foci.

For more information, please visit <https://alchemedicine.com/en/>.

Reference information

- 1) Official website of Alchemedicine Inc.

Announcement of exclusive negotiation and evaluation agreement for "Aldehyde Dehydrogenase 2 Activator" with Maruho Co., Ltd. (dated July 27, 2022) <https://alchemedicine.com/en/news>

- 2) About HiSAP[®]

HiSAP[®] is a medicinal chemistry platform comprised of unique synthetic materials and an original compound-design support system. HiSAP[®] rapidly improves efficacy and/or safety issues of existing bioactive compounds across a broad range of therapeutic areas, sustaining desirable drug profiles.

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