

## **GANYMED extended Research Collaboration with the Cantonal Hospital St. Gallen**

Mainz, November 18, 2003

GANYMED Pharmaceuticals AG, an independent biotechnology company that identifies and validates antigen targets to improve therapeutics for life threatening diseases, today announced that the research collaboration with the Cantonal Hospital St. Gallen, Switzerland, will be continued for a further year. The objective of the research collaboration is the search for new disease-relevant targets and drug candidates. Under terms of the agreement, GANYMED will acquire the rights for commercialization of diagnostics and therapeutics.

The discovery and prioritization of target genes and proteins causing disease represent a major challenge for both the biotechnological and pharmaceutical industries. Although genome data are available for many organisms including humans, the most important task that remains is the functional characterization of the proteins encoded by the genes. GANYMED has developed potent discovery methods to identify validated and disease-relevant targets.

The objective of the collaborative research project between GANYMED and the Cantonal Hospital in St. Gallen is a genome scan of human pathogen *Chlamydia pneumoniae* using the MicroGATE™ technique (microbial genome amplification tag expression screening). MicroGATE™ facilitates the comprehensive characterization of viral and bacterial immunomes. *C. pneumoniae* may cause acute respiratory tract disease, and is most likely involved in chronic diseases such as atherosclerosis and asthma. The major difficulty in the serological diagnosis of *C. pneumoniae* remains the high cross-reactivity with other *Chlamydia* species such as *C. psittaci* or *C. trachomatis*. Development of improved diagnostic tests will therefore be beneficial for the treatment many patients. In addition, highly immunogenic antigens could serve as a basis for the development of subunit vaccines.

The first phase of the collaboration has been successfully completed in August 2003. The team of the research department of the Cantonal Hospital in St. Gallen is continuing to further characterize the bacterial antigens that have been found with the MicroGATE™ approach. "The first year of our collaboration was very successful and we are happy that we have established the link with such a competent partner" said PD Dr. Oezlem Türeci, CSO of GANYMED.

GANYMED Pharmaceuticals AG is an independent biotechnology company based in Mainz, Germany. GANYMED uses its proprietary technology to rapidly discover, identify and validate highly selective, disease specific cell-surface and intra-cellular antigens to accelerate the commercialization of highly effective therapeutics, initially in cancer, and also in the areas of both infectious and autoimmune diseases. GANYMED intends to become the preferred partner for pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies that develop monoclonal antibodies, small molecule compounds, vaccines, and diagnostic tools.

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