



NEWS RELEASE


Merz and Israeli start-up Vensica launch partnership for needleless treatment of overactive bladder

Frankfurt, Germany, August 11, 2021 --- Merz Therapeutics, a business of the Merz Group and a leader in the field of neurotoxins, and the Israeli start-up Vensica Therapeutics Ltd., a urology company, announced today that they have entered into a strategic license and collaboration agreement for the delivery of botulinum neurotoxin A (Xeomin®) to the bladder wall by using Vensica's innovative ultrasound-assisted delivery catheter. By this, Merz Therapeutics becomes the exclusive toxin supplier of any needleless application for urological indications, such as overactive bladder, neurogenic bladder and interstitial cystitis and other urology indications.

Stefan Brinkmann, CEO Merz Therapeutics: "This strategic, long-term partnership with the Israeli Start-up Vensica allows us to expand into the attractive market of overactive bladder. It perfectly reflects the potential and capabilities of our neurotoxin platform for the development of sizeable non-movement disorder indications, pursuing our promise to create better outcomes for more patients. We strongly believe in the innovative and less invasive treatment of bladder diseases using Vensica's ultrasound-assisted delivery catheter and are therefore looking forward to bringing this new treatment option to the patients together with our partner Vensica."

Vensica CEO, Avner Geva commented, "We are very excited about our strategic partnership with Merz. By licensing Merz's Botulinum Toxin A, Xeomin®, we've achieved an important milestone in our journey to changing the lives of urological patients. We hope that together with Merz, we will be able to provide, needle-less and minimal invasive procedures to over 85 million patients around the world, enabling them to benefit from a minimal discomfort, anesthesia-free, outpatient experience. The partnership with Merz, which includes not only exclusive licensing of Xeomin®, but also development support, enables us to accelerate our clinical trials and regulatory process. We are thrilled Merz realized the potential and need and chose to invest in innovative medical technologies that can benefit patients worldwide."

"The collaboration with Vensica is a great example for our Merz Corporate Venture Capital Initiative," states Jörg Bergler, COO Merz Group. "Here, we are investing globally in companies who are pursuing innovative, breakthrough science. As an experienced partner, we are not only granting Vensica access to our toxin but also offer know-how and experience for the development and preparation of the regulatory approval process in an advisory capacity."




The long-term partnership includes Merz's intention to participate and invest in Vensica. Under the terms of the agreement, Merz already received, in addition to royalties, equity shares from Vensica with the option for further investment in the upcoming years and will be represented with a seat in the Board of Directors. Vensica will be responsible for the pre-clinical and clinical development of the needleless device and will prepare and file the marketing approval application. Upon the marketing approval, Merz will be responsible for the manufacturing and supply of Xeomin[®] (incobotulinumtoxinA) and Vensica will manage commercial activities worldwide, except of Japan.

Vensica's proprietary ultrasound-assisted drug delivery system is an innovative minimally invasive solution to urology. The system enables needleless delivery of drugs to the bladder wall in a simple and quick procedure. The platform drives treatment from the surgical center to the private clinics, as it removes the need for a highly trained urologist, staff, and anesthesia. The unique delivery profile enables uniform delivery of the neurotoxin to greater area of the bladder wall, which may increase its efficacy, such as earlier onset and longer effect. The device is at clinical development stage by Vensica Therapeutics an Israeli based company.

Xeomin[®] is being distributed by Merz Pharmaceuticals GmbH in more than 70 countries to treat patients with upper and lower limb spasticity, cervical dystonia, blepharospasm or hypersalivation. Merz uses state-of-the-art technology in its dedicated facility in Dessau, Germany, meeting the highest international standards for biologic manufacturing. The highly purified neurotoxin, the only active ingredient in Xeomin[®], is made by removing complexing proteins from botulinum toxin type A, which is produced by *Clostridium botulinum*, using purification technology developed by Merz Pharma GmbH & Co. KGaA. The lack of complexing proteins enables Xeomin[®] to reduce the production of neutralizing antibodies capable of lowering efficacy.

About Merz Therapeutics

Merz Therapeutics, a business of Merz Pharmaceuticals GmbH, is dedicated to improving the lives of patients around the world. With its relentless research, development, and culture of innovation, Merz Therapeutics strives to serve unmet patient needs and realize better outcomes. Merz Therapeutics seeks to address the unique needs of people who suffer from movement disorders, neurological conditions, liver disease, and other health conditions that severely impact patients' quality of life. Merz Therapeutics is headquartered in Frankfurt, Germany and is represented in more than 90 countries, with a North America affiliate based in Raleigh, North Carolina. Merz Pharmaceuticals GmbH is part of the Merz Group, a privately held, family-owned company that has dedicated more than 110 years to developing innovations that meet patient and customer needs.





About Vensica Therapeutics Ltd.

Vensica is a urology therapeutics company based out of Israel. The company is developing a unique platform for drug delivery for several urinary bladder indications, based on a proprietary ultrasound-assisted drug delivery system. The company was founded in 2015 by Avner Geva, (Yale, B.Sc, Technion, M.Sc) and is led and backed by medical and therapeutic's leaders, including chairman M.D., Ph.D, Nissim Darvish, Lew Pell, Laborie and The Trendlines Group.

About Merz

Merz Group is a global, diversified company based in Frankfurt, Germany, with the three businesses Merz Aesthetics, Merz Therapeutics and Merz Consumer Care. The company is family-owned for over 112 years and is distinguished by its commitment to innovation, long-term perspective, and focus on profitable growth. In fiscal year 2019/20 (June 30), Merz generated revenue of EUR 981.5 million. The company employs 3,212 people in 28 countries worldwide. To learn more, please visit www.merz.com.

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