

## Protagen and OncoTyrol form strategic alliance to validate the UNIarray® technology platform

Date: 06-11-2009 03:13 PM CET

Category: [Health & Medicine](#)

Press release from: [Protagen AG](#)

Agency: **Biotech Consulting**

Dortmund, Germany and New Jersey, USA, June 10, 2009. Protagen AG and the Medical University Innsbruck, Department of Urology, have recently identified autoantigen candidates present in serum of patients with prostate cancer using the proprietary UNIArray® technology platform. In Europe, prostate cancer is the second most frequent lethal malignancy in men. Yearly about 40,000 men die of prostate cancer in the European Union.

Current standard of screening for prostate cancer is focused on serum Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) in combination with Digital Rectal Exam. Although routine PSA screening has resulted in earlier detection of prostate cancer, PSA levels can be elevated due to other conditions such as non-specific prostatitis and benign prostatic hyperplasia. A major disadvantage of the PSA marker is its low specificity, resulting in a significant amount of false biopsy indications. The novel test of Protagen targets the intermediate patient risk group, which requires frequent urological intervention (PSA range 2.5 ng/ml – 4.0 ng/ml). This validation study represents the next step in determining the most robust combination of putative prostate cancer markers and optimizing the diagnostic protein biochip to proceed to clinical trials, says Dr. Stefan Müllner, CEO of Protagen AG.

The UNIarray® technology platform of Protagen allows the development of novel diagnostics based on indication-specific autoantibody patterns in blood samples from patients. These autoantibody patterns are not only present in several autoimmune diseases, but also in cancer, neurodegenerative disorders, and even in apparently healthy individuals. Therefore, the systematic and indication-specific determination of autoantibody patterns will serve as a unique basis to address hitherto unmet diagnostic needs. In addition, UNIarray® serves as platform for the development of product specific companion diagnostics and patient stratification for clinical studies. Protagen presently is focused on research at novel diagnostics for numerous oncology indications including Breast, Colon and Pancreas, Multiple Sclerosis, Rheumatoid Arthritis, Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis, Morbus Parkinson, and Alzheimer's Disease.

### About Protagen AG

Protagen AG ([www.protagen.de](http://www.protagen.de)) is a leading provider of products, services and software solutions for protein research with sites in Dortmund, Germany, and Chester, New Jersey, USA. Technology innovations of Protagen are UNIClone®, a patented platform for development and use of protein expression libraries, and UNIChip®, a versatile and highly efficient family of products for the development of antibodies, as well as UNIarray®, unique technology base for the development of new diagnostics.

### About OncoTyrol

The K1 project for Personalized Cancer Medicine (OncoTyrol) has a project volume of €28 Mio over the next 4 years. The vision of OncoTyrol is to harness the benefits of the molecular revolution in cancer medicine by translating genomic, proteomic and metabolomic research into innovative, individualized and cost-effective approaches for cancer prevention, diagnosis and treatment. The consortium of researchers at the Biomedical Campus Innsbruck, which is close to three local universities and the University Hospital Innsbruck, together with national and international academic and industrial partners has joined efforts to develop and feed a pipeline of basic, translational, clinical and decision-analytic cancer research, and consequently establish a European center of excellence in cancer research with strong international visibility and an outstanding reputation. Due to the substantial scientific strengths and clinical expertise in breast and prostate cancer, chronic myeloid and lymphocytic leukemia, these paradigm malignancies were chosen as the primary targets of research. OncoTyrol research is supported by core facilities, which include technology platforms for genomic, epigenomic and proteomic profiling, SNP analysis and flow cytometry, a bioinformatics unit, tissue and serum banks, animal testing facilities and a clinical trial center within a comprehensive cancer center.

Contact

Dr. Stefan Müllner  
CEO  
Protagen AG  
Otto-Hahn-Str. 15  
44227 Dortmund  
Tel: +49 (0) 231 9742 6300  
Fax: +49 (0) 231 9742 6301  
E-Mail: [info@protagen.de](mailto:info@protagen.de)

Media Enquiries

Dr. Holger Bengs  
Biotech Consulting  
Tel: +49 (0) 69 6199 4273  
Fax: +49 (0) 69 6199 4249  
E-Mail: [info@holgerbengs.de](mailto:info@holgerbengs.de)

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