

December 10, 2009

## VACCINE TO TREAT GUM DISEASE ON THE WAY

CSL Limited, Australia's leading biopharmaceutical company, has today announced that a vaccine to treat severe gum disease is being developed in a new collaboration with Sanofi Pasteur, the world's leading global manufacturer of vaccines.

CSL has signed an agreement with Sanofi Pasteur to fund a program in the CRC for the further development of a vaccine to prevent and treat the severe gum disease periodontitis.

Up to 30% of Australian adults suffer from the wide-spread gum disease, which causes gums to bleed and teeth to fall out. The condition has also been linked with heart disease, stroke, adverse pregnancy outcomes, dementia and cancer.

Following more than ten years of research, scientists from The University of Melbourne and CSL, in the Cooperative Research Centre for Oral Health Science have identified candidate vaccine antigens for periodontitis.

"Periodontitis is a serious disease and dentists face a major challenge in treating it, because most people will not know they have the disease until it's too late and the infection has progressed to advanced stages" said Professor Eric Reynolds, AO, CEO of the CRC for Oral Health Science and the Head of The University of Melbourne's Dental School.

"Traditional treatment for the disease often involves scaling and cleaning, and even surgery in an effort to contain the bacterial infection." He said.

This new vaccine approach targets the 'ring leader' of a group of pathogenic bacteria that cause periodontitis, the bacterium called *Porphyromonas gingivalis*.

"We are very excited about this novel approach to the disease," said Professor Reynolds. "It will provide dentists and patients with a specific treatment, which prevents disease progression, rather than managing its symptoms and damaging consequences."



## Press Release

“It has taken over ten years to develop the vaccine to this stage,” said Dr Andrew Cuthbertson, CSL’s Chief Scientific Officer. “CSL is pleased to advise of an agreement with Sanofi Pasteur to undertake a funded program to develop a vaccine for the treatment of periodontal disease caused by *Porphyromonas gingivalis*.”

The vaccine development program involves identifying the bacterial peptides and proteins that trigger the immune response, and using these as the basis of vaccines. The vaccines are being trialled in mouse models of periodontal disease and following a positive response, a vaccine will progress to clinical trials.

Should this program be successful, Sanofi Pasteur has an option to an exclusive world-wide license to commercialise the intellectual property associated with these products.

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### **About CSL:**

The CSL Group has a combined heritage of outstanding contribution to medicine and human health with more than 90 years experience in the development and manufacture of vaccines and plasma protein biotherapies.

With major facilities in Australia, Germany, Switzerland and the US, CSL has over 10,000 employees working in 27 countries



# Press Release

## **About the CRC for Oral Health**

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The Cooperative Research Centre for Oral Health brings together scientists, dentists, population health experts and manufacturers to find new and efficient ways of reducing the burden of oral disease in Australia.

The Centre is based at The University of Melbourne and collaborates with institutes and manufacturers from around the world. It is funded by the Federal Government's CRC Program.

## **About The University of Melbourne**

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The University of Melbourne is one of Australia's oldest universities and celebrated its 150th anniversary in 2003. It is ranked among the top 100 research institutes worldwide and is ranked number one in Australia for employability of its graduates. The University is renowned as Australia's leading biomedical enterprise, training more health professionals, and attracting more nationally competitive grants for biomedical research than any other Australian university.

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