



ASX/Media Release

Benitec's Pain Program Validated by Independent Study

Using Benitec's gene silencing technology an independent study significantly reduces pain in animals without side effects and validates Benitec's chronic neuropathic pain program.

20 June 2011, Melbourne, Australia: Benitec Ltd (ASX:BLT), a world leader in RNA-based gene silencing for human therapeutics, announced today that China-based researchers have proved the concept behind Benitec's in house neuropathic pain program.

This independent research was published in the prestigious international scientific journal *Human Gene Therapy**

Using a form of Benitec's gene silencing technology in a rat model, the researchers silenced a key gene associated with pain and achieved a significant reduction in pain without side effects.

"Currently, treatment of neuropathic pain is still a challenge, as it is insensitive to traditional pain drugs and surgical interventions," the researchers state in their paper.

They concluded, "These results support the potential use of shRNA expression vectors as a gene therapy approach to neuropathic pain..."

Dr Peter French, CEO of Benitec said, "Remarkably the independent researchers on this study utilized an almost identical experimental design to that currently being used in our own in-house program.

Their finding of significant efficacy with no adverse effects in the preclinical model has the potential to substantially accelerate our efforts in bringing a novel pain therapeutic to the clinic supported by our dominant patent position in the underlying DNA-directed RNAi technology."

***Reference:**

Wangyuan Zou, Zongbin Song, Qulian Guo, Chang Liu, Zhong Zhang and Yanfeng Zhang. "Intrathecal lentiviral-mediated RNA interference targeting PKC attenuates chronic constriction injury-induced neuropathic pain in rats." *Human Gene Therapy*. April 2011, 22(4): 465-475. doi:10.1089/hum.2010.207.

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About Benitec www.benitec.com

Benitec Limited is developing novel treatments for chronic and life-threatening conditions based on a transformational technology, DNA-directed RNA interference (ddRNAi) - sometimes called expressed RNAi. The technology's potential to address unmet medical needs and, potentially, to cure disease results from its demonstrated ability to permanently silence genes which cause the condition.

Benitec now either owns or exclusively licences from CSIRO more than 40 granted or allowed patents in the field of RNA interference for human therapeutic applications. Patents have been granted in key territories such as the USA, the UK, Japan, Europe, Canada and Australia. In addition, Benitec has almost 50 patent applications pending for which it is the owner or exclusive licensee from CSIRO, and has further intellectual property under development as a result of its pipeline program.

Benitec trades on the Australian stock exchange under the symbol "BLT". The Company was founded in 1997 and has been publicly held since 2001. The Company aims to deliver a range of novel ddRNAi-based therapeutics to the clinic in partnership with the pharmaceutical industry. In-house it is pursuing a focused R&D strategy in infectious diseases, cancer and chronic cancer-associated pain, as well as programs with licensees that have advanced to pre-clinical and/or clinical trials.