

## **Ascenion Mediates License Agreement on Autoantibody Targets between Max-Delbrück Center and Ortho Clinical Diagnostics**

September 17, 2008, Munich, Germany – The Max-Delbrück Center (MDC), Berlin, Germany, and Ortho Clinical Diagnostics (OCD), Raritan, U.S.A., a Johnson & Johnson Company, have entered into a license agreement on autoantibody targets discovered by Gerd Wallukat, group leader at the MDC, and his team. OCD will use these targets for the development of new methods for the diagnosis or monitoring of certain cardiovascular diseases.

The deal is the first license agreement initiated by Ascenion relating to the MDC's comprehensive patent estate around Wallukat's work covering a range of well characterized autoantibody targets. All of them are located on G-protein coupled receptors, a class of cellular receptors that, amongst others, play an important role in the regulation of stress. In over 20 years of intense research, Wallukat demonstrated that autoantibodies against this class of receptors contribute to the onset, progression and maintenance of manifold diseases. In chronic heart muscle disease, for instance, such antibodies are present in about 70% of patients, and their specific removal was shown to result into improved cardiac function.

"While it has long been known that autoantibodies play pivotal roles in autoimmunity or chronic inflammation, their involvement in cardiovascular diseases or other conditions has long been ignored in the scientific community," Karen Uhlmann, Technology Manager with Ascenion, comments. "The agreement with OCD underlines the commercial potential of the MDC's work in this field. Profound data together with a sound IP position provide an ideal basis for the development of new products for a more specific diagnosis or treatment of various diseases."

Autoantibody targets and applications in the fields of kidney transplant rejection, malignant hypertension and Raynaud's Syndrom are still available for licensing through Ascenion who advises and supports the MCD in the identification, protection and marketing of commercially attractive research results. Since the partners first began to collaborate in the end of 2001, Ascenion has negotiated a total of 23 revenue carrying agreements on behalf of the MDC.

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### **About Ascenion GmbH**

Ascenion GmbH is an IP asset management company focused on the life sciences. Ascenion advises and supports public research institutions with regard to the protection and exploitation of their intellectual property (patents, know-how, materials), and initiates and mediates license agreements between research institutions and industry. The company places particular emphasis on coaching company founders and on active equity management. Ascenion was founded in 2001 as a 100% subsidiary of the Life-Science Foundation for the Promotion of Science and Research and has since acquired 12 research institutes in the Helmholtz and Leibniz Associations and also the Hanover Medical School as exclusive partners. Ascenion currently markets around 600 technologies on behalf of these institutes, and closes an average of about 60 agreements between research and industry per year. The team has also coached numerous spin-offs through their foundation and early growth and Ascenion holds equity in 14 of these companies. Ascenion's headquarters are in Munich, with further offices in Berlin, Braunschweig, Hamburg, Hanover and Neuherberg. Further information at [www.ascenion.de](http://www.ascenion.de)