## University of Arizona startup Regulonix, LLC receives $300,000 from the NIH for development of novel therapeutics for chronic pain

***Federal Grant Award to Support its Indirect Regulators of Sodium Channels Platform for the Prevention of Chemotherapy-Induced Peripheral Neuropathy***

A life sciences startup that licenses University of Arizona intellectual property has received federal funding to develop novel small molecules regulators to indirectly target the Nav1.7 voltage-gated sodium channel, a key channel linked to pain.

Regulonix, LLC has received a 12-month Phase I STTR grant worth $300,000 from the National Institutes of Health. The proposed award will fund Regulonix, LLC to develop small molecule regulators of the Nav1.7 sodium channel, which has been linked to many human pain disorders. Chemotherapy-induced peripheral neuropathy (CIPN) is a frequent complication of potentially curative cancer therapy regimens. 30-40% of cancer patients treated with chemotherapeutics develop lifelong CIPN that can affect the patient as well as the family's long-term quality of life and can potentially result in chemotherapy dose reduction or treatment discontinuation.

"The funding will allow us to develop novel preclinical candidates that engage in a unique way to control the activity of this channel and curb excitability," said **Rajesh Khanna, PhD,** principal investigator of the STTR grant, is an Associate Professor in the Department of Pharmacology, College of Medicine, Tucson and a scientific co-founder of the company along with May Khanna, PhD, an Assistant Professor in the Department of Pharmacology and co-founder. A provisional patent application has been filed by Tech Launch Arizona on behalf of The University of Arizona (U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 62/238,182) on several of these compounds. **Vijay Gokhale**, PhD, Scientist, BIO5 Institute, will lead medicinal chemistry optimization efforts while, **Todd Vanderah**, PhD, Professor and Chair of the Department of Pharmacology, will evaluate lead candidates in validated rodent pain models.

Dr. Stephen J. Arneric, a leading industry scientist with over 25 years of ion channel drug discovery efforts for the treat of pain disorders is a consultant on the grant. Dr. Arneric said, "this is the most specific and creative approach to reduce NaV1.7 generated pain transmission that I have ever evaluated." Frank Porreca, PhD, Professor, Department of Pharmacology, a world-renowned pain scientist, is confident that the "molecules developed by Regulonix will significantly impact and advance our treatment of chronic pain by focusing on indirectly targeting Nav1.7."

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