



**PRESS RELEASE**  
**16 October 2003**

## **BioInvent acquires the rights to develop a new drug to treat osteoarthritis**

**Lund, Sweden: BioInvent International AB (SAX:BINV), a listed company on the O-list of the Stockholm Exchange (Stockholmsbörsen), has today acquired the rights to specific proteins for the development and commercialisation of an antibody-based drug to treat osteoarthritis. The aim is to slow the progression of this disease and also to restore functionality of the joint.**

Osteoarthritis is a disease of the joints caused by an imbalance in the formation of cartilage. The disease leads to stiffness, poor function and pain in joints such as the fingers, knees and hips. The only treatment alternatives today for osteoarthritis are pain medication and surgery where the affected joints are ultimately replaced with new artificial ones.

Osteoarthritis is very widespread, and in the US alone, an estimated 40 million people suffer from osteoarthritis. For seven million of these the disease limits the activity level and causes costs for the society of over USD 60 billion.

BioInvent has acquired the rights from Cartela AB. Cartela has shown that specific proteins can be linked to the progression of osteoarthritis. The proteins belong to a class of receptors called integrins and are protected by patent applications owned by Cartela.

In the first pre-clinical phases of the project, BioInvent and Cartela will collaborate to identify antibody-based product candidates that can restore the imbalance in the formation of cartilage. In return for an initial fee, entitlement to success-related milestone payments and royalties on sales of the finished product, BioInvent has secured all rights to develop and commercialise such product candidates.

Svein Mathisen, President and CEO of BioInvent, says:

*"Osteoarthritis is a disease that causes considerable suffering for many people. We are therefore enthusiastic about the prospect of working with Cartela to develop therapeutic antibodies against the integrins for which Cartela has applied for patents. A drug that effectively slows down the progression of osteoarthritis and possibly also restores functionality of the joints will be able to improve the quality of life for many people and also has considerable market potential."*

Evy Lundgren Åkerlund, CEO of Cartela, says:

*"We have for many years been working with the integrins **a10b1** and **a11b1** and have accumulated data that shows a connection between the integrins and the function of the cartilage tissue. We see great potential with antibody-based drugs against these integrins to*

*stimulate the reforming of cartilage tissues and counteract the disease process in osteoarthritis. We are therefore delighted to be able to work with BioInvent which has unique expertise in the production of specific human antibodies for the development of drugs."*

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**For more information**

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***Legal disclaimer***

This press release contains statements relating to future scenarios. Research and development activity within the biotech field is associated with risk and/or uncertainty. With this in mind, the actual outcome may deviate significantly from what is described in this press release.

The description of the above-mentioned agreement does not claim to be comprehensive, but only to provide a summary of its main points.

***Background information:***

**BioInvent International AB**, listed on the O-list of the Stockholm Exchange (Stockholmsbörsen), is an innovative research and development company active in the biotechnology field. The Company develops antibody-based drug candidates against diseases where there is a significant unmet medical need. BioInvent is currently conducting proprietary drug projects in major disease areas such as HIV, arteriosclerosis, cancer and arthrosis.

The Company's technology platform – the n-CoDeR<sup>®</sup> antibody library and a production facility approved for the manufacture of biological drugs – provides the necessary conditions for the development of antibody-based drugs. The technology platform is also used for the development and manufacture of drugs on behalf of the Company's partners. BioInvent's partners include Antisoma, Celltech, GlaxoSmithKline, Igeneon, ImmunoGen and Pfizer.

The Company has 104 employees and operates in the Ideon Research Park in Lund.

**Please visit our website [www.bioinvent.com](http://www.bioinvent.com)**

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