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Venus Remedies partners with UK-based Infex Therapeutics to develop anti-bacterial MET-X in India

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MET-X is a novel metallo-beta-lactamase inhibitor that has shown best-in-class performance in preclinical studies



Panchkula-based pharmaceutical company Venus Remedies has entered into an exclusive license agreement with Infex Therapeutics, a UK-based anti-infectives specialist for the clinical development of MET-X.

This agreement authorises Venus Remedies to spearhead the clinical development, registration, and commercialisation of MET-X, an innovative metallo-beta-lactamase (MBL) inhibitor. The initial development phase will focus on integrating MET-X with meropenem to tackle drug-resistant Gram-negative bacteria, with Venus Remedies holding exclusive marketing rights within India.

In India, meropenem resistance is reported to be as high as 62-87% in WHO critical priority pathogens like *K. pneumoniae* and *A. baumannii* as per the ICMR's Antimicrobial Resistance Research and Surveillance Network-Annual report 2023, with as high as 50% being directly attributable to MBL prevalence.

Under the terms of the agreement, Venus Remedies will commence with a Phase I trial involving healthy volunteers in India, evaluating MET-X in combination with meropenem. Following successful Phase I outcomes, the focus will shift to Phase II/III trials targeting drug-resistant Complicated Urinary Tract Infections (cUTIs), prevalent in hospital settings.

All trials conducted in India will adhere to international standards, compliant with regulations from the FDA, EMA, and MHRA, which will also support further development and global commercialization efforts for MET-X. The agreement grants both Infex Therapeutics and Venus Remedies the option to expand their collaboration to include other MET-X/beta-lactam combinations under mutually agreed terms.

MET-X is Infex Therapeutics' broad spectrum MBL-inhibitor, targeting Gram-negative bacteria. These pathogens produce MBL enzymes to deactivate beta-lactam antibiotics, such as meropenem, and evade antibiotic clearance of disease. MET-X blocks MBL resistance, restoring antibiotic activity. The drug is being developed to be one of the first broad-spectrum MBL inhibitors to address a wide range of bacterial species and MBL-resistant strains, such as *E.coli* and *K.pneumoniae*.