

World Vitiligo Day- More Invention and Intervention needed

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The current bottleneck in Vitiligo is that the patho-mechanisms of the disorder are not well understood. Hence, the current treatments for Vitiligo provide only temporary and symptomatic relief.

Many life science companies are now focused on developing and commercializing novel therapeutics to address this unmet medical need.

Ahammune Biosciences Pvt Ltd is a Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion (DIPP) recognized startup company based in Pune, with current focus on this de-pigmenting disorder. "Vitiligo therapeutics has a projected market of \$2.7 billion, with a CAGR of 8.8 per cent, making it an excellent business proposition. Ahammune is, to our knowledge, the first Vitiligo-centric drug discovery company. The emphasis at Ahammune is to first develop novel therapeutics in-house, and then establish collaborations or joint ventures, as necessary, to take the treatment options forward", says Dr. Parul Ganju, Co-founder, Executive Director-Strategic planning and operations, Ahammune Biosciences Pvt Ltd.

At the same time innovative stem cell products are being developed by nurturing cutting edge research and clinical applications for fighting vitiligo. Mumbai-based Reliance Life Sciences has got government approval for conducting clinical trials with stem cells for vitiligo. The company has invested around Rs 1,000 crore in this business of stem cell therapies for many diseases with vitiligo being one of them.

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Zydus Group deputy MD Sharvil P Patel emphasized on the step taken by the company in acquiring the lotion Melgain from Issar Pharma. "It is used for treatment of skin depigmentation and this product has strengthened our dermatological portfolio. With a strong presence in the hyperpigmentation, acne, haircare and anti-fungal segments, the expansion into the re-pigmentation segment gives Zydus an edge in the fast growing dermatology market which is currently growing at 14 per cent and valued at over Rs 6,000 crore", he added.

PhotoMedex, a global skin health major from USA has invested about Rs. 300 crore to bring advanced VTRAC laser technology to treat Vitiligo and Psoriasis in India.

PhotoMedex India Private Limited, a subsidiary of global skin health company PhotoMedex Inc, has launched VTRAC certified clinics in Hyderabad. The company, in association with city-based Medium Healthcare Consulting (MHC), has set up five clinics in Hyderabad on a franchisee basis.

Pharmaceutical companies are also moving in the direction of promoting herbal products. The herbal drug, Lukoskin, developed by the scientists of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) is now under commercial production by AIMIL Pharmaceuticals India Ltd.

Of the 1 per cent of world's population suffering from vitiligo, 8.8 per cent of the cases are recorded in India. Vitiligo Day on June 25 is one such initiative, aimed to build global awareness about this disease and learn more facts.