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J&J acquires investigational Bermekimab from XBiotech

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Janssen Biotech, Inc., a Janssen Pharmaceutical Company of Johnson & Johnson, has entered a definitive agreement to acquire all rights to the investigational compound bermekimab from XBiotech Inc. Bermekimab is an anti-IL-1alpha monoclonal antibody (mAb) in Phase 2 development for the treatment of atopic dermatitis and hidradenitis suppurativa. It is the only antibody targeting IL-1a currently in clinical development and has the potential for superior efficacy and safety compared to the current standard of care.

"Janssen is a world leader in immunology, and we are particularly proud of our long legacy of helping patients with dermatological disease, including psoriasis," said David M. Lee, M.D., Ph.D., Immunology Therapeutic Area Head, Janssen Research & Development, LLC. "The acquisition of bermekimab allows us to build on our expertise in immuno-dermatology, while expanding to atopic dermatitis and hidradenitis suppurativa, immune-mediated disease areas that have incredible unmet need."

Under terms of the agreement, Janssen will assume responsibility for the clinical program, working closely with XBiotech as it completes the ongoing Phase 2 studies in atopic dermatitis and hidradenitis suppurativa. Janssen will pay XBiotech a purchase price of $750 million for the rights to bermekimab; should Janssen pursue bermekimab indications outside of dermatology, XBiotech may be eligible to receive additional payments upon the receipt of certain commercialization authorizations.

"This is an important step to enhancing our ability to help patients, leveraging our decades-long heritage and deep expertise in immunology," said Mathai Mammen, M.D., Ph.D., Global Head, Janssen Research & Development. "It's that heritage that drives us to seek the best solutions from within our own laboratories as well as from the exciting and innovative work happening in companies like XBiotech."

The transaction is subject to customary closing conditions, including clearance under the Hart-Scott-Rodino (HSR) Antitrust Improvements Act, and is expected to close shortly after HSR approval.