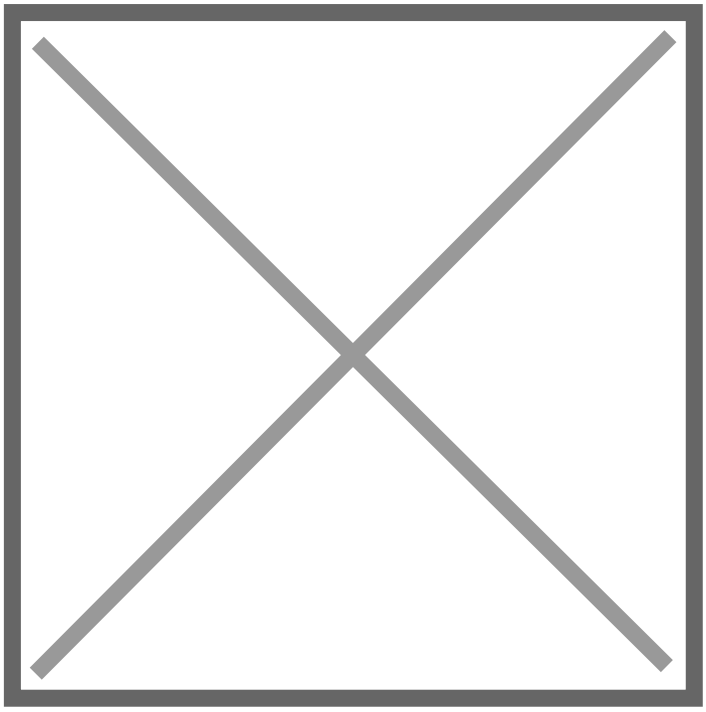
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Nutech beams over hESC therapy

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Indian medical innovation comes to the forefront with Dr Geeta Shroff, founder and medical director of Nutech Mediworld, announcing groundbreaking clinical findings on the safety and efficacy of Human Embryonic Stem Cell (hESC) therapy in the various disease treatments. The clinical study reports were released on June 07, 2012 by Dr C Rangarajan, chairman of the Economic Advisory Council to the prime minister of India.

This was followed by a symposium entitled 'Human Embryonic Stem Cell Therapy: Life-changing innovation from India' with the keynote address by Dr Amiram Katz from the Yale University School of Medicine. Several leading medical experts and more than 50 eminent doctors were present on the occasion. The clinical study reports released provide in-depth safety and efficacy data of hESC therapy in multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy, stroke, chronic spinal cord injury, lyme disease, and ALS.

Commending Nutech Mediworld's efforts, Dr Rangarajan said, Ã¢â?¬Å?I congratulate Nutech Mediworld and Dr Geeta Shroff for their pioneering work in demonstrating the safety and efficacy of human embryonic stem cell therapy. We must support and encourage medical practitioners like her who have the vision and tenacity to focus on research aimed at bringing innovative healthcare technologies to the world. Medical research and innovation in India should aim to alleviate the suffering of millions, and Dr Shroff's efforts are a major step forward in this direction.Ã¢â?¬?

Sanofi announces results of ORIGIN

Sanofi has announced the results from the landmark ORIGIN (Outcome Reduction with Initial Glargine Intervention) trial, which showed that Lantus, its brand of insulin glargine [rDNA] injection, had no statistically significant positive or negative impact on cardiovascular outcomes versus standard care, during the study period. Results also showed that insulin glargine delayed progression from pre-diabetes to type 2 diabetes and there was no association between insulin glargine use and increased risk of any cancer.

ORIGIN was a six-year randomized clinical trial designed to assess the effects of treatment with insulin glargine versus standard care on cardiovascular (CV) outcomes. The study involved over 12,500 participants worldwide with pre-diabetes or early type 2 diabetes mellitus and high CV risk, with 6,264 participants randomized to receive insulin glargine titrated to achieve fasting normoglycemia. The co-primary endpoints were the composite of CV death, or non-fatal myocardial infarction, or non-fatal stroke; or revascularization procedure, or hospitalization for heart failure.

Dr Ramachandran, President- India Diabetes Research Foundation, and National Coordinator of the ORIGIN trial for India and co-author of the ORIGIN primary papers, said, Ã¢â?¬Å?The rich data and findings of ORIGIN have provided us insights into many hitherto unanswered questions in diabetes management, and have also reinforced our confidence on the use of Lantus as a reference basal insulin with long-term proven efficacy and established safety.Ã¢â?¬?

DBT to focus on diagnostics in 2013

Despite tremendous opportunities in the disease screening, the areas such as personalized diagnostics have not seen much effort. This was stated by Dr M K Bhan, secretary, Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Government of India at the conference on Ã¢â?¬Å?Molecular Diagnostics: Challenges vis-Ã?Â -vis Growth PotentialÃ¢â?¬?, organized by Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), with support from DBT on June 08, 2012 at India Habitat Center, New Delhi.

Giving his key note address, Dr Bhan said, Ã¢â?¬Å?India needs to move from the current space of being a kit producer to one offering novel platforms, tests and technologies in molecular diagnostics. The increased expenditure on reagents because of import has been the biggest hurdle in affordability. Therefore, there is a need to create alternatives in India and a stringent quality analysis system need to be put in place.Ã¢â?¬?

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Rajesh Jain, chairman, CII National Committee on Biotechnology and joint managing director, Panacea Biotec, said, Ã¢â?¬Å?The global diagnostics market is witnessing a phenomenal growth, triggered from the various applications and technological sub-segments of molecular diagnostics. The increase in the aging population and high incidence of chronic diseases only work to fuel this growth world over.Ã¢â?¬?

The objective of the day long conference was to provide a forum to present and discuss the role of key stakeholders towards realizing India's potential in diagnostics especially molecular diagnostics.