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AstraZeneca ties up with German biotech Ethris

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The alliance with AstraZeneca and its biotech division MedImmune will focus on asthma and other respiratory diseases.



AstraZeneca has invested €25million into gene messenger drug development, through a research tie-up with German biotech Ethris.

The drugmaker has agreed to pay Munich-based Ethris the sum upfront, with further payments and royalties possible depending on development progress.

Ethris, which was founded by two German scientists in 2009, specialises in RNA drugs, which instruct human cells to produce therapeutic proteins. The alliance with AstraZeneca and its biotech division MedImmune will focus on asthma and other respiratory diseases.

Scientists believe the RNA approach holds potential to treat a range of conditions, including cancer and heart disease.

It is not AstraZeneca's first investment in the field. Last year the company invested a further $140 million in RNA specialist Moderna Therapeutics, upping its stake to 9pc.

AstraZeneca is looking to bounce back after a negative readout from its lung cancer drugs trial Mystic last month led to its biggest single day share price fall, wiping £10 billionn from the company's market value.