



## Biogen Idec Announces Collaboration with Leading Research Institutions to Sequence Genomes of Patients with ALS

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-- Labs at Duke University and HudsonAlpha Institute to Lead Research Consortium --

-- Effort Could Pave the Way for Discovery of New Therapies for Deadly Neurodegenerative Disease --

WESTON, Mass.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--[Biogen Idec](#) (NASDAQ: BIIB) today announced that it has entered into a research collaboration with premier academic and research institutions to sequence the genomes of up to 1,000 patients with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) in an effort to gain a deeper understanding about the fundamental genetic causes of ALS.

Under the terms of the agreements, Biogen Idec will fund the project at the laboratories of David Goldstein, Ph.D., Director of the Center for Human Genome Variation at Duke University, and Richard M. Myers, Ph.D., President and Director of the HudsonAlpha Institute for Biotechnology. The researchers will sequence the genomes of approximately 500 patients with ALS over the next two years, with an ultimate goal of sequencing 1,000 ALS genomes within five years.

Duke and HudsonAlpha will work with several world-class researchers who have deep expertise and experience with ALS and the genes associated with the disease. Along with Dr. Goldstein and Dr. Myers, the consortium will include Robert Brown, D.Phil., M.D., a neurologist at the University of Massachusetts Medical School who has devoted his career to identify gene mutations that cause ALS; Aaron Gitler, Ph.D., a geneticist at Stanford University whose recent work has focused on risk factors associated with ALS; Tom Maniatis, Ph.D., a molecular biologist at Columbia University studying changes in gene expression associated with ALS; Guy Rouleau, MD, Ph.D., a neuro-geneticist at the University of Montreal with expertise in gene identification in multiple neurological diseases; and Neil Shneider, M.D., Ph.D., a neurologist and neuroscientist in the Motor Neuron Center at Columbia University, whose work focuses on mechanisms of motor neuron degeneration in ALS.

"We are proud to collaborate with these distinguished academic and research institutions as part of our mission to discover and develop therapies for patients with ALS," said Tim Harris, Ph.D., Senior Vice President of Translational Medicine and Biochemistry at Biogen Idec. "ALS is a devastating and deadly neurodegenerative disease, and there is an urgent need for effective therapies. This effort promises to yield a better understanding of the genetic underpinnings of the disease and possibly provide new targets for potential therapies."

"Identifying the mutations that can lead to neurodegenerative disease provides a key foothold for developing new therapies and a framework for understanding variation in how patients progress and respond to treatment," said Dr. Goldstein of Duke. "Biogen Idec understands the importance of academic and industrial partnership in the effort to build as complete a picture of ALS genetics as possible, and we are grateful for the tremendous support that Biogen Idec is providing in this effort."

"Our hope is that the scientific discoveries resulting from this project will be translated into treatments that alleviate suffering and save the lives of people touched by this terrible disease," said Dr. Myers of HudsonAlpha.

### About ALS

Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease and motor neuron disease, is a universally and rapidly fatal neurodegenerative disorder characterized by progressive muscle weakness and wasting. ALS affects adults in the prime of life and creates a substantial burden for caregivers. Worldwide incidence of ALS is approximately two people per 100,000. Only one drug has been approved for the treatment of ALS, and it typically extends survival by two to three months. Life expectancy after the onset of symptoms is usually three to five years. The cause of ALS is not yet known.

### About Biogen Idec

Through cutting-edge science and medicine, Biogen Idec discovers, develops and delivers to patients worldwide innovative therapies for the treatment of neurodegenerative diseases, hemophilia and autoimmune disorders. Founded in 1978, Biogen Idec is the world's oldest independent biotechnology company. Patients worldwide benefit from its leading multiple sclerosis therapies, and the company generates more than \$5 billion in annual revenues. For product labeling, press releases and additional information about the company, please visit [www.biogenidec.com](http://www.biogenidec.com).

### Biogen Idec Safe Harbor Statement

This press release contains forward-looking statements, including statements about the development of potential therapies for ALS. These forward-looking statements may be accompanied by such words as "anticipate," "believe," "estimate," "expect," "forecast," "intend," "may," "plan," "will" and other words and terms of similar meaning. You should not place undue reliance on these statements. Drug development and commercialization involve a high degree of risk. Factors which could cause actual results to differ materially from current expectations include the risk that adverse safety events may occur, regulatory authorities may require additional information or may fail to approve any potential new therapy, product reimbursement may be limited or unavailable, there may be problems with manufacturing processes, intellectual property rights may not be adequately protected, and the other risks and uncertainties that are described in the Risk Factors section of Biogen Idec Inc.'s most recent annual or quarterly report and in other reports Biogen Idec Inc. has filed with the SEC. These statements are based on current beliefs and expectations and speak only as of the date of this press release. Biogen Idec Inc. does not undertake any obligation to publicly update any forward-looking statements.

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