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AdipoPharma Targets Root Cause Of Diabetes With First 'Adipeutic' Drug Candidate

by Ayisha Sharma

Emerging Company Profile: The French biotech is developing a constrained peptide that targets an interaction in body fat tissue in the hopes of treating type 2 diabetes.

AdipoPharma SAS is developing what it hopes will be the first drug candidate to target adipose tissue in an attempt to address the root cause of type 2 diabetes, namely insulin resistance.

The company's approach is based on more than a decade of research into the ultra-rare genetic disorder Alström syndrome, which is characterized by early-onset obesity, diabetes and multiple organ dysfunction. The research was carried out by Vincent Marion and his team at INSERM, the French national institute for health and medical research.

Marion founded AdipoPharma, formerly known as ALMS Therapeutics, earlier this year and serves as its CEO. The Strasbourg-headquartered firm is in the midst of a fundraise aiming for \$30m that should support its activities through to Phase II development. The raise is expected to complete in the autumn.

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“During our research into Alström syndrome, we identified and focused on a mutation in a single gene and realized that adipose tissue was a driver for insulin resistance throughout the body,” Marion told *Scrip*. Adipose tissue, commonly known as body fat, affects lipid biosynthesis and the management of whole-body lipid homeostasis. “Essentially, in order for things to go in and out of our cells, we need lipids,” added chairman James Nolan.