

UW-Milwaukee: Pharmaceutical company licenses drug development compounds from UWM Research Foundation

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MILWAUKEE_ New Jersey-based RespireRx Pharmaceuticals Inc. has licensed a group of patented drug development compounds from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Research Foundation.

The newly licensed compounds, developed by the laboratory of James Cook, act on a particular neurotransmitter receptor in the brain, which has shown promise for treatment of epilepsy and other convulsant disorders.

New drugs are needed to treat epilepsy, [according to RespireRx](#), because currently available anticonvulsants are often not effective or become less effective at some point in the disease's progression.

Cook, a UWM distinguished professor of chemistry at UW-Milwaukee, has developed a vast library of compounds for drug development that can potentially treat illnesses of the central nervous system without the adverse side effects of existing medications, such as sedation, loss of muscle control or addiction.

The group of compounds licensed has also shown potential for treating other illnesses, such as depression, anxiety and pain, without the negative side effects. The compounds have been tested with Dr. Jeffrey Witkin of the Indiana University School of Medicine.

According to the license agreement, royalties on net sales would be paid to the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Research Foundation (UWMRF) upon the

approval of new drug applications with the Food and Drug Administration and royalties on net sales of products developed with the licenses.

“The recently exercised option, which licenses a portfolio of patent-protected neuromodulator compounds from UWMRF, further strengthens the collaboration and is a key milestone in realizing the progression of drug product candidates that have, from an early stage in development, garnered much promise in the treatment of epilepsy and other disorders, without the debilitating side effects of existing and less effective medicaments,” said RespireRx President and CEO Tim Jones.

The UWMRF’s intellectual property portfolio includes 93 issued patents and 47 active license agreements. Cook holds 64 patents or patent applications for drug compounds his research group created. More than half are filed through the UWMRF.