

BMS Out of Biocon's Oral Insulin Project

NEW TIEUP LIKELY Experts say Bengaluru-based pharma company will continue to look for other partners for the programme

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Mumbai: Bengaluru-based Biocon will have to develop oral forms of insulin on its own as US drugmaker Bristol Myers Squibb, its global partner for the project, has "not exercised the option". Sector experts, however, said Biocon will continue to look for other partners.

In 2012, Biocon and BMS had signed an agreement to jointly develop oral forms of insulin - an ambitious project spearheaded by the Indian biotech company.

BMS confirmed the decision to ET. The move, however, does not come as a surprise. Sources said the decision was taken a few months ago.

In 2013, BMS had taken a wider decision to sell its entire diabetes franchise to British drug maker AstraZeneca, while narrowing its own focus on developing cutting-edge biotech therapies for cancer and other areas like virology and cardiovascular products.

But, even while BMS was undergoing

questions, a Biocon spokesperson said, "The results of the global phase I study conducted in the US has established the important role of insulin. Tregopil in post prandial glycemic control. It has demonstrated fast action of insulin. Tregopil with distinct properties compared to other prandial insulins like Aspart.

Staying On Course

BMS decision part of focus shift to biotech drugs in cancer and other areas

US drugmaker sold its diabetes franchise to AstraZeneca



2012: Biocon and BMS had inked a pact to jointly develop oral insulin. The drug was later named Tregopil

Under the terms, BMS had the right to exercise an option to obtain an exclusive worldwide licence to the product

Biocon had agreed to conduct clinical trials

Tregopil reported positive phase I data in the US

Indian co plans to move to the next phase of clinical development on its own

Based on the positive results of these clinical studies, Biocon plans to move to the next phase of clinical development on its own."

Biocon has asserted the feasibility of an orally delivered form of insulin

Biocon's Tregopil is closely watched as part of a hot global chase to develop an improved or disruptive version of insulins that can be delivered in forms other than injections. Danish drugmaker Novo Nordisk, the world leader in insulins, is also known to be working on an oral form of insulin and has acknowledged that such products can be developed and commercialised.

regulatory and commercial milestones payments and royalties on commercial sales of IN-105 (the name code used at that time) outside India with the rider that it will retain exclusive rights to IN-105 in India.

In January this year, along its quarterly updates, Biocon announced

positive outcomes from phase I data on its product Tregopil in the US. The company said it "validates and provide the basis for the next phase of clinical development of this important molecule" while asserting the feasibility of an orally delivered form of insulin. In response to ET's

Company