

GRIFOLS

With a contribution of 2 million euros

Grifols promotes European research into liver cirrhosis

- **The European Consortium for the Study of Chronic Liver Failure, created today, brings together 70 centres from across Europe, and will be coordinated from Barcelona's Hospital Clínic by Professor Vicente Arroyo**

Barcelona, 11 June 2009. Grifols has signed a cooperation agreement with the *Fundació Clínic for Biomedical Research (FCRB)* to promote and fund the development of the *European Consortium for the Study of Chronic Liver Failure*. This agreement reflects Grifols' commitment to supporting research projects involving some of the world's leading centres. Grifols' contribution, of two million euros, will cover the initial development phase of the agreement for a period of 4 years.

The Consortium is led by Professor Vicente Arroyo, Professor of Medicine and Director of the Clinical Institute for Digestive and Metabolic Diseases of the Hospital Clínic i Provincial of Barcelona. For Professor Arroyo, "Grifols' donation is of vital importance in establishing the Consortium. It will be used to create the Consortium's shared research infrastructure (administration department and data analysis centre) and to fund the first multi-centre projects addressing the natural history and treatment of the complications of liver cirrhosis."

The long-standing relationship between Grifols and the research team led by Dr. Arroyo is based on their cooperation in a number of clinical trials investigating the use of albumin for the treatment of liver diseases. "We are well aware of the high scientific standards of this internationally recognized research team, and we have complete confidence in the quality of their work in this ambitious project," explains Víctor Grifols, president of the pharmaceutical company. "In addition to the agreement," he adds, "we have also signed an accord with FCRB to perform a clinical trial with albumin in patients with advanced cirrhosis and ascites, while another clinical trial at the preparation stage will study plasmapheresis with albumin in patients with acute decompensation in chronic liver failure."

The Consortium is backed by the *European Association for the Study of the Liver (EASL)* and its members are 70 European hospitals in Austria, Belgium, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Georgia, Germany, Holland, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Rumania, Spain, , Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, the Ukraine and the United Kingdom.

About chronic liver failure

Chronic liver failure is the most advanced phase of cirrhosis, when patients develop complications relating to functional failure of the liver. It is characterized by the appearance of complications including the development of ascites, digestive hemorrhages, and brain function disorders which may lead to hepatic coma. Recent research indicates that chronic liver failure is a highly complex disorder which in addition to liver failure also involves failure of cardiovascular, kidney, intestinal, suprarenal function and anti-bacterial defense mechanisms. It is, then, a special form of multi-organ failure. The probabilities of survival after the appearance of the syndrome are low, and the only treatment is liver transplant. Unfortunately, the imbalance between the number of patients and donors means that only 1 in every 5 patients with chronic liver failure is able to receive a transplant. There is therefore a vital need to develop new treatment strategies to improve the quality of life and survival rate of these patients. Liver cirrhosis is a very frequent illness. It is the eighth most common cause of death among people aged between 18 and 59 years of age. It is estimated that over 200,000 people die from this disease in developed countries every year.

About Grifols

Grifols is a holding company specialized in the pharmaceutical-hospital sector and is present in more than 90 countries. Since May 2006, it has been quoted on the Spanish Stock Market, and forms part of the Ibex-35 Spanish index of medium capitalized companies. It is the leading European company in plasma derivatives and the fourth largest producer in the world. In coming years, Grifols will strengthen its leading position within the industry as a vertically integrated company, thanks both to investments which have already been made and a programme of investments for the period 2008 to 2012. In terms of raw materials, Grifols can rely on the supply of plasma from 80 plasmapheresis centres in the United States, while the fractionation capacity of its production facilities in Barcelona (Spain) and Los Angeles (United States) allow it to respond to the growing demand in the market. However, the company is not resting on its laurels and has implemented an ambitious investment plan which will deliver sustained increases over the next 8 to 10 years.

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