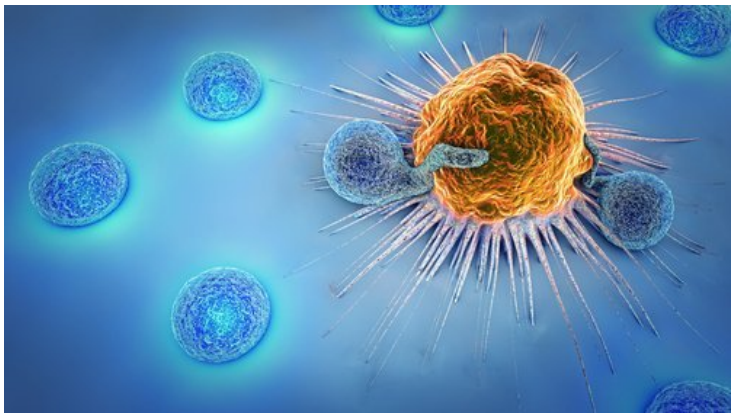
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Novartis, Harvard team up for cancer immunotherapies

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Novartis will have worldwide rights, in target-limited applications, to bring the biomaterial-based cancer immunotherapies into clinical development and translate this approach to treat patients.



The Wyss Institute for Biologically Inspired Engineering at Harvard University and the Harvard John A. Paulson School of Engineering and Applied Sciences (SEAS) have granted British pharmaceutical company Novartis access to commercially develop their therapeutic, biomaterial-based, cancer vaccine technology.

Under the licensing agreement, spearheaded by Harvard's Office of Technology Development (OTD), Novartis will have worldwide rights, in target-limited applications, to bring the biomaterial-based cancer immunotherapies into clinical development and translate this approach to treat patients. The technology will aim to promote anti-cancer immunity.

The trial followed extensive preclinical studies performed by a collaborative team headed by Mooney and Glenn Dranoff. The team demonstrated that the cancer vaccine could potentially shrink or eradicate multiple types of tumours, in addition to providing prophylactic protection, in various animal models.

Dranoff is now global head of exploratory immuno-oncology at the Novartis Institutes for Biomedical Research. Novartis has also established a collaboration agreement with the Wyss Institute to further develop biomaterial systems for its portfolio of second-generation immuno-oncology therapies.